

LOCATION: SINNOH
INSIDE IRON ISLAND MINES



#448: LUCARIO MISSION START

TRUDGING THROUGH THE DEPTHS OF IRON ISLAND, I SEE THE LIGHT OF AN OPENING UP AHEAD, A BLUE RIBBON HANGING OFF TO THE SIDE WALL. THIS IS THE LIKELY LOCATION THAT THE LUCARIO WHO SENT THE INVITATION SPOKE OF.



I MAKE MY WAY TO THE LEFT OF THE CHAMBER, SHIMMYING ACROSS THE LEDGE TO FIND A BACKPACK LEFT BEHIND. I SEARCH THROUGH IT AND ONLY FIND A CHOPLE BERRY INSIDE, WHICH SHOULD PROVE USEFUL IN TAKING A FIGHTING-TYPE HIT.



I LEAVE THE CAVERNS AND ASCEND TO A PLATFORM WHERE A LUCARIO AND THREE RIOLI ARE SITTING TOGETHER. IT'S NOT LONG BEFORE THE LITTLE ONES SPOT ME, THEIR MASTER EVENTUALLY NOTICING ME AS WELL.



THE MASTER WALKS TOWARDS ME WITH AN AURA OF CONFIDENCE. HE SAYS HE APPRECIATES MY PUNCTUALITY AND KNOWS WHO I AM: THE LUCARIO THAT HAS BESTED INSURMOUNTABLE ODDS IN TOURNAMENTS. HE KNOWS OF MY AURA SHAPING POWERS AND AIMS TO PROVE TO HIS STUDENTS THAT HE HAS MASTERED AURA AT AN EVEN HIGHER LEVEL.

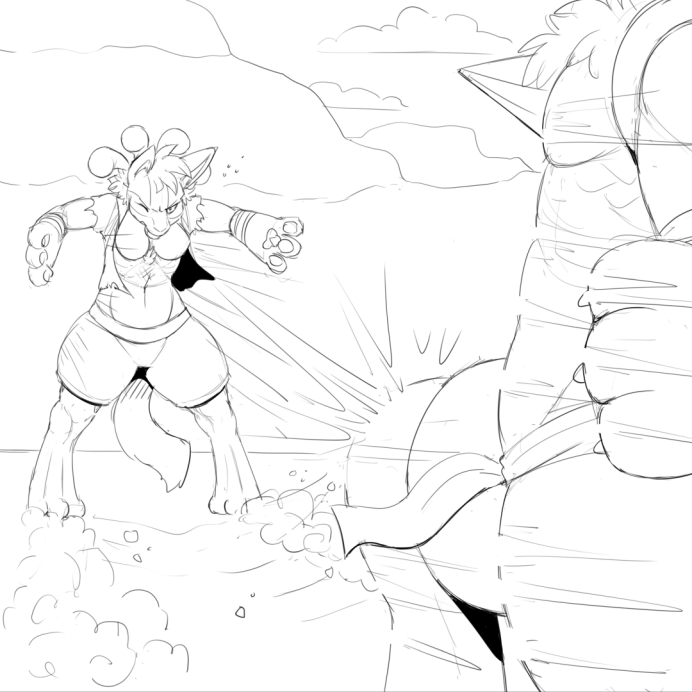


I ACCEPT HIS CHALLENGE BUT WARN THAT HIS AURA WILL BE MINE IF HE LOSES THE FIGHT.

HE DOES NOT FALTER AND INSTEAD SCOFFS, CONFIDENT THAT HE WILL DEFEAT ME. WE MAKE DISTANCE AND FACE EACH OTHER, READY TO BATTLE.



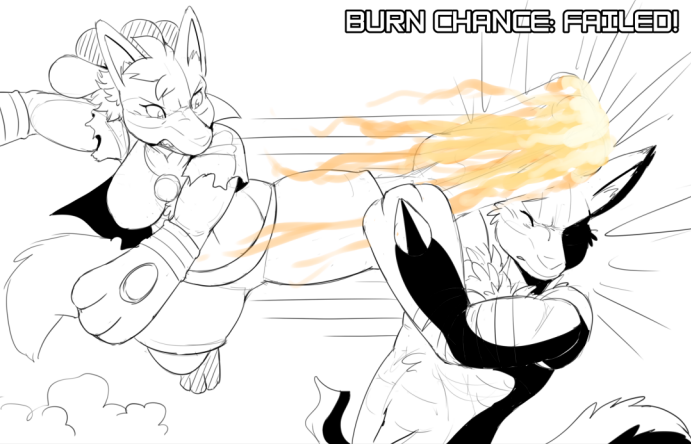
I EXECUTE A SWORDS DANCE AND PREPARE TO STAY ON THE DEFENSIVE, BUT THE MASTER RESPONDS QUICKLY AND RUSHES ME WITH BLINDING SPEED.



HE USES HIS MOMENTUM AND BRINGS UP HIS KNEE TO LAND A HARD BLOW THAT SENDS ME SKIDDING BACKWARDS SEVERAL FEET.



BURN CHANCE: FAILED!



RIGHT WHEN I COME TO A HALT, I BALANCE ON MY TOES AND SUMMON A WAVE OF FLAMES THAT LICK THE SURFACE OF MY LEG AS I PUSH MYSELF BACK FORWARD.

I LAUNCH MYSELF TOWARDS THE MASTER WITH A LINGING BLAZE KICK, HITTING HIM SQUARE IN THE HEAD.



THE MASTER FALLS ONTO HIS BACK, SKIDDING A GOOD DISTANCE AWAY.
THE CHILDREN CLAMOR IN PURE AWE.

"WOW!" "SO COOL!" "HOW DID SHE DO THAT!?"



AS HE GETS BACK UP, I CAN SENSE THEM: BITTER JEALOUSY AND BEWILDERMENT.

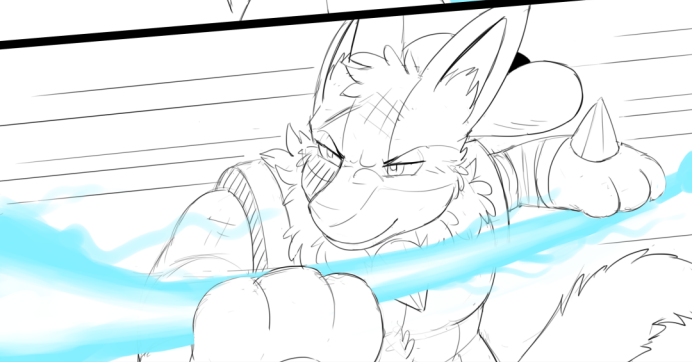


WHEN THE MASTER RISES, HE REGAINS HIS COMPOSURE, COMPLIMENTING MY SHEER POWER.

"BUT WE ARE BOTH MASTERS OF AURA, YES?" HE OFFERS THAT WE FIGHT WITH NOTHING BUT, CREATING AN AURA CLUB OUT OF THIN AIR. THE RIOLLIS SEEM RATHER EXCITED ABOUT THIS PROSPECT.



MORE AND MORE THIS SEEMS PARTIALLY LIKE A SHOW TO IMPRESS THE YOUNG ONES, BUT I'M NOT AVERSE TO IT. I JUST HOPE THEY AREN'T SCARRED BY THE FINAL ACT.

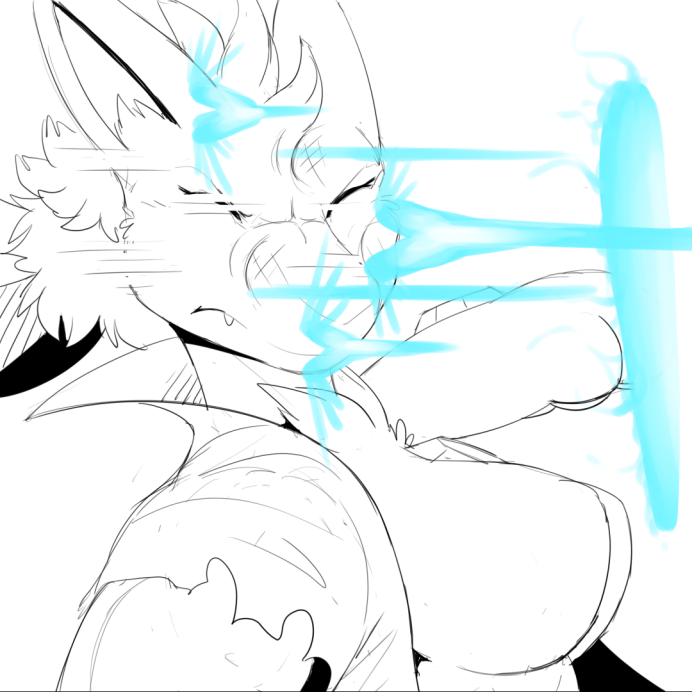


I FORM A SHIELD NEXT, WHICH COULD BE MORE SIZEABLE IF I DIDN'T ALREADY HAVE A BLADE ON MY OTHER PAW. THE MASTER WASTES NO TIME RUSHING ME.



THE MOMENT HE THRUSTS WITH HIS CLUB, IT SUDDENLY SPLITS INTO A BARRAGE, EACH RAPID-FIRE STRIKE HITTING MY SHIELD WITH CONSISTENT FORCE.

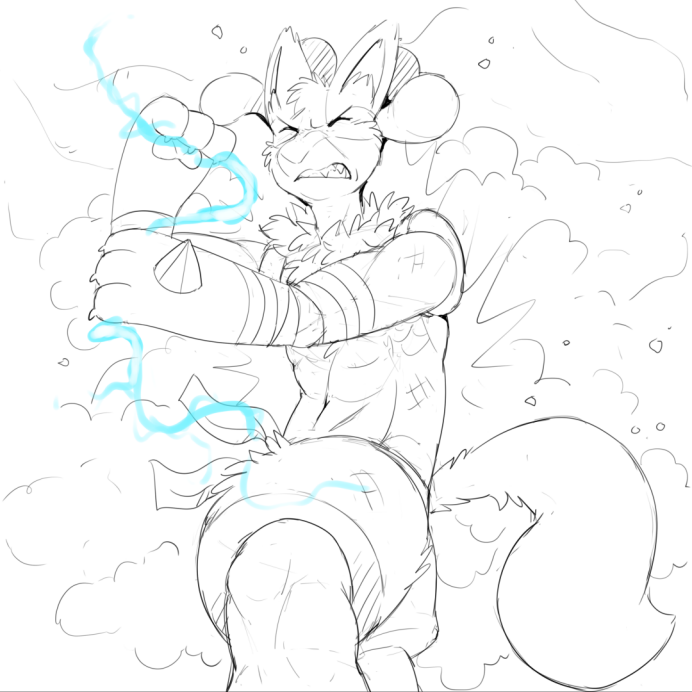
IT IS CEASELESS AND MY BODY STARTS TO LOSE BALANCE AND STABILITY.



I ATTEMPT TO DEFLECT THE BLOWS BY TILTING AND SWINGING MY SHIELD AT THE CLUBS, BUT WITH THE FORCE COMING FROM THE AURA ITSELF RATHER THAN THE MASTER'S OWN BODY, IT IS A VAIN ATTEMPT.



I STOP MY INEVITABLE FALL WITH MY AURA BLADE, SWEEPING THE MASTER'S LEGS WHILE HE IS OCCUPIED.



THE MASTER DOESN'T SEE IT COMING AND FALLS TO THE GROUND HARD, HIS AURA WARPING AND DISSIPATING IN THE CHAOS AND HIS OWN BEWILDERMENT.



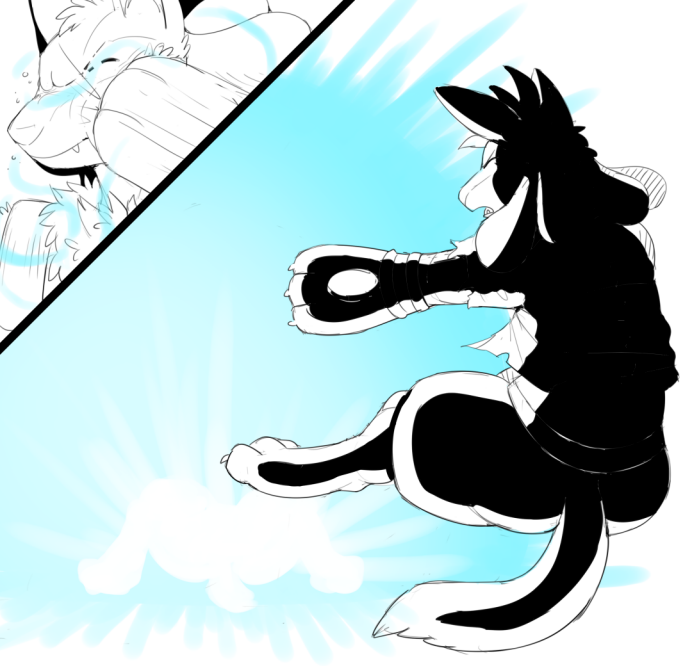
WHILE HE'S DOWN, I JUMP ONTO THE MASTER, PINNING HIM DOWN AS I
READY MY AURA BLADE AND TAKE AIM FOR HIS VULNERABLE CHEST.



STRANGELY, HE DOESN'T STRUGGLE AND LETS THE BLADE SINK INTO HIS BODY. HE HARDLY GRUNTS, BUT WHAT HAPPENS NEXT SHOCKS ME.



MY BLADE DISSIPATES AND MELTS INTO HIS BODY. HE SMIRKS MENACINGLY AS I FEEL LARGE, COMPRESSED QUANTITIES OF AURA SWELL UP INSIDE HIM, ALMOST AS IF VOLATILE.

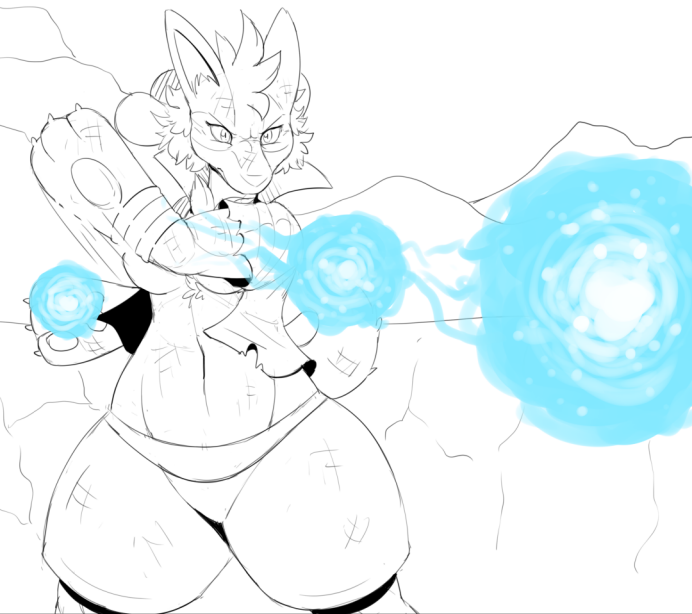


I THROW A QUICK AND HARD PUNCH AT THE MASTER'S FACE, BUT THE AURA THAT HE ABSORBED SUDDENLY EXPLODES. THE EXPLOSION IS LARGE, BUT NOT TOO POWERFUL. IF HE ABSORBED MORE, IT WOULD'VE BEEN OVER FOR ME.

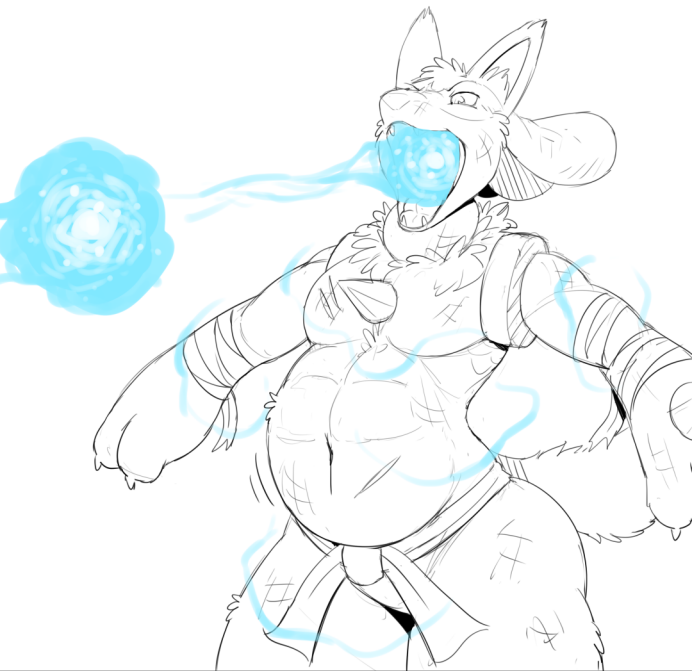


AS I COLLECT MY BEARINGS, THE MASTER APPROACHES ME, LOOKING RATHER WEAKENED, THOUGH MY STATE ISN'T ANY BETTER. HE CLAIMS HE KNOWS OF MY ABILITY IN AURA VAMPYRISM AND TRAINED HIMSELF IN A VARIANT OF THE SKILL INVOLVING MOMENTARILY ABSORPTION.

ALL THAT TELLS ME IS HE IS UNABLE TO TAKE IN AND HOLD AS MUCH AURA AS I CAN.



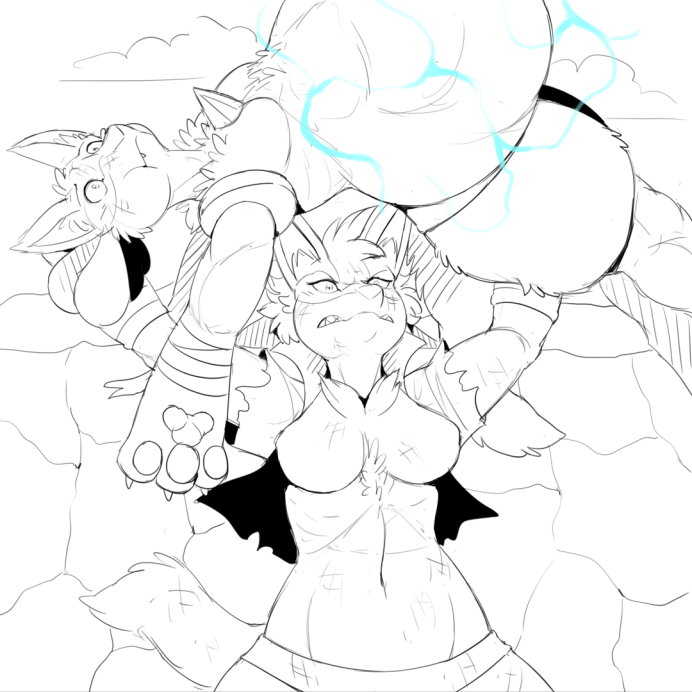
I GET UP AND START TO FLING AS MANY SMALLER AURA SPHERES AT THE MASTER THAT I CAN.



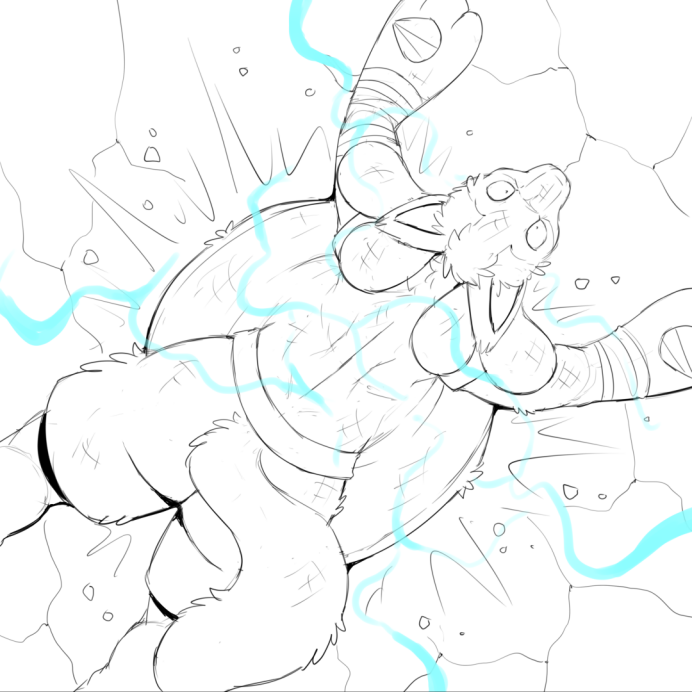
THE MASTER OPENS HIS MOUTH AND SWALLOWS THE SPHERES ONE BY ONE. HIS AURA GROWS RAPIDLY AND HIS BELLY STARTS TO BLOAT.



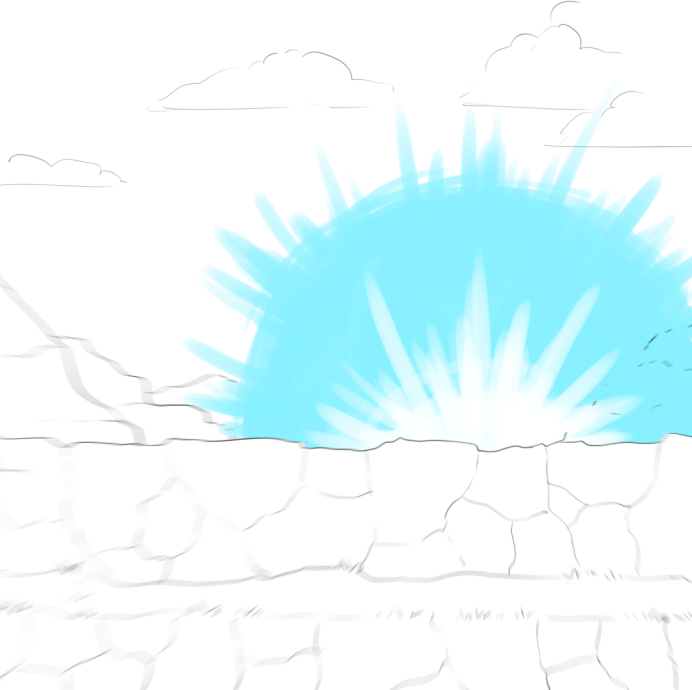
I STOP AND REST AFTER I NOTICE HE IS GETTING UNCOMFORTABLE. HIS STOMACH SWELLED UP LIKE A BALLOON, AURA LEAKS OUT OF HIM AS HE STRUGGLES TO ABSORB ALL THE AURA I JUST SHOT INTO HIM. THE MASTER STRUGGLES TO FOCUS AND HIS BALANCE STARTS TO WANE.



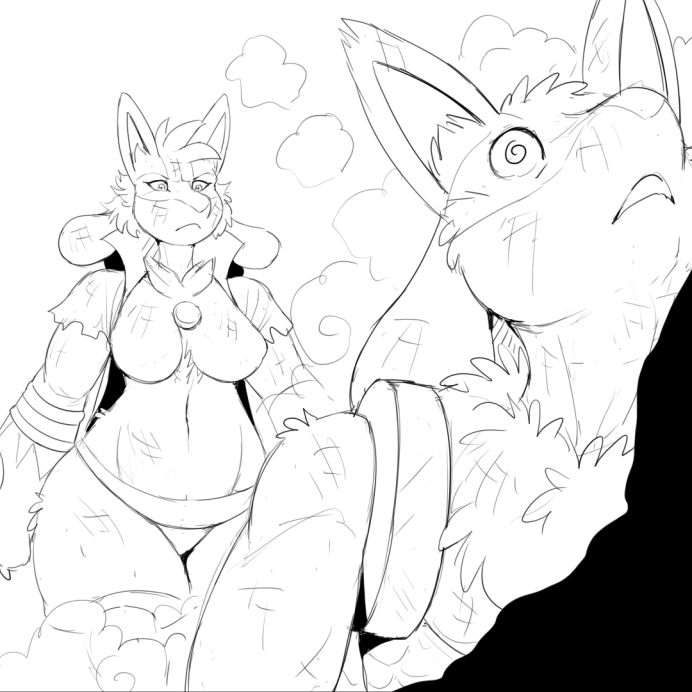
WHILE THE MASTER IS STILL DAZED, I RUSH OVER AND LIFT HIM UP WITH ALL MY MIGHT, READY TO WREST HIM AWAY.



**I THROW THE MASTER INTO THE CLIFF FACE, AWAY FROM THE CHILDREN
BEHIND ME, A THICK TRAIL OF AURA FOLLOWING HIM AS HE SPLATS
AGAINST HARD ROCK.**



AN AURA EXPLOSION MORE THAN HALF THE SIZE OF THE ARENA IS SET OFF, MAKING THE ENTIRETY OF IRON ISLAND TREMBLE.



AFTER THE DUST CLEARS, I WALK UP TO THE MASTER, RESOLUTE IN MY GOAL WHETHER THE CHILDREN ARE WATCHING OR NOT. MY STOMACH GROWLS IN ANTICIPATION, EAGER FOR THE MASTER AND HIS AURA.



GULP Gulp!
GURP HFF!

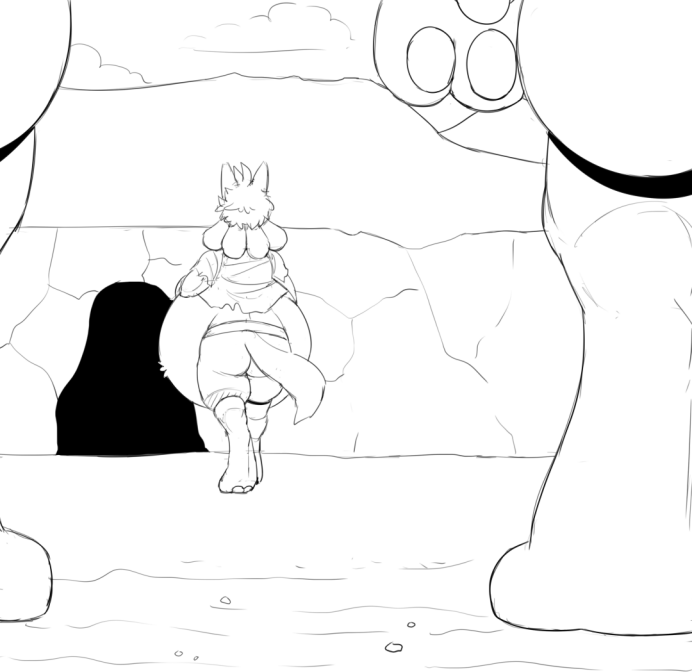
ON
SAVECH

GRUUU~
♡

I SHIVER IN PLEASURE AS I DEVOUR THE MASTER WHOLE. HE IS DELICIOUS, AND HIS AURA SUCCULENT. MY FUR STANDS ON END AS I FEEL HIM AND HIS WARM AURA GRADUALLY FILL MY BELLY.



THE RIOLLUS WATCH IN AWE AS I GUZZLE DOWN THE REST OF THE MASTER HUNGRILY, SECURING HIM IN MY STOMACH AND CLAIMING HIS BOUNTIFUL AURA FOR MY OWN.



I TRY TO AVOID LOOKING AT THE CHILDREN AS I MAKE MY WAY OUT OF THE ARENA. UNTIL...



THE MASTER BEGS ME TO STAY. "MY STUDENTS... PLEASE TRAIN THEM RIGHT IN MY PLACE!" HE IS WILLING AND READY TO SUCCUMB, BUT MAKES HIS LAST WISH KNOWN.

I LOOK BACK AT THE PUPS, SIGHING. I CURSE MYSELF FOR WHAT I'M ABOUT TO DO.



#448: LUCARIO
MISSION COMPLETE!

I FEEL I'M GOING TO BE ON IRON ISLAND FOR A LITTLE WHILE LONGER.