

POKÉMON

Written by

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Based on the Nintendo video game series

INT. HALLWAY, CINNABAR LABS - TIME UNKNOWN

A FEMALE SCIENTIST in a lab coat pushes a cart down a brightly lit, white hallway. Behind her a MALE SCIENTIST in a matching lab coat follows closely. They pass other scientists examining charts, none of whom pay them much attention.

INT. DARK ROOM, CINNABAR LABS - CONTINUOUS

They push the cart through hanging surgical curtains, entering a dimly lit lab. On the far side of the room is a large, glass cylinder filled with green liquid. There's something roughly human-sized inside, but it's obscured.

We see the lab from the POV of the CREATURE in the cylinder. The perspective is warped by the curve of the glass, and the liquid bubbles with each of the creature's labored breaths.

Back outside, the female scientist sets the cart aside and sits at a computer terminal. She types away and opens a file titled "Project 150."

Creature POV: Our view bobs slightly as if trying to stay awake but failing. The labored breathing continues.

The female scientist opens a screen titled "Sedation Dosage" accompanied by a long red bar. She continues to type, and the red shrinks to the left until the bar is completely black.

INT. HALLWAY, CINNABAR LABS - TIME UNKNOWN

The duo walk back down the hallway with the cart.

They set the cart aside as they reach a set of large metal doors, stepping through them into a garage.

INT. GARAGE, CINNABAR LABS - CONTINUOUS

The two scientists enter a white van. The man gets behind the wheel while the woman sits shotgun.

NASALLY VOICE (O.S., BACKSEAT)
What took you guys so long?

FEMALE SCIENTIST
(to male scientist)
Drive, James.

JAMES
With pleasure, Jessie.

JAMES starts the car and begins to drive. JESSIE removes her lab coat and wig, revealing her dyed pink hair and the prominent red "R" on her previously obscured uniform.

INT. DARK ROOM, CINNABAR LABS - TIME UNKNOWN

Creature POV: Looking out at a now empty room, the creature's breathing and bubbling steadily increases.

EXT. BASEBALL DIAMOND, PALLET TOWN - DAY

ASH KETCHUM, a determined looking teenage boy, grips the bill of his baseball cap and turns it backwards on his head. He winds up his signature throw and lets it loose.

A baseball collides with a catcher's mitt.

CATCHER

Strike three! Way to get 'em, Ash!

We pull back to see the worn down baseball diamond where the local boys are playing a casual game. Beyond the diamond, we can see a thick forest.

ASH

(smugly)

Well, it's easier when they don't swing...

BATTER

What? No way that was over the plate, that was a ball!

GARY OAK approaches the plate and gives the batter a patronizing pat on the shoulder. His polo shirt's collar is popped, and his hair is slicked up. If anyone's cockier than Ash, it's this kid.

GARY

No, see, that was just one of Ash's usual freak throws. They usually work on the small-fry, but unfortunately for him...

Gary picks up the bat and squares up, shooting Ash a smug look.

GARY (CONT'D)

...now he's up against the very best.

Ash's expression turns serious. He really wants to strikeout Gary.

ASH

Maybe you haven't been paying attention, Gary, but I'm on my way to a no-hitter here. Sure you want to embarrass yourself before your big going away party?

GARY

So confident, Ashy-boy! Tell you what, just for you, buddy, I'll hit one more home run off ya. Something to remember me by.

CATCHER

(mumbling tiredly)
They're doing it again...

Several other players groan collectively.

ASH

(forcing himself to laugh)
A home run?? Dude, you'll be lucky if you can even see this one, let alone hit it.

GARY

Oh you wanna bet?

ASH

You know I wanna bet.

GARY

Alright, when I hit a home run-

ASH

Never gonna happen.

GARY

You have to, hmm...

Gary strokes his chin thoughtfully.

GARY (CONT'D)

...you have to take my home run ball and write, "Gary is great, Ash is a loser" on it. And SIGN it!

There are a few laughs from the background. One player yells for Ash to just throw the ball.

ASH
And when I strike you out, what do
I get?

GARY
Name it, bro. I'm not scared.

ASH
Your car.

There are audible gasps from the other players. Gary looks taken aback, his swagger finally disturbed.

GARY
What?

ASH
Your car. When you strike out, it's
mine.

GARY
Dude I'm not giving you my car!

ASH
I thought you weren't scared?

GARY
Dude I'm just making you sign a
ball, don't be a dick.

ASH
(chuckling)
Alright, alright. But I get to
drive it, whenever I want.

GARY
I'm leaving town tomorrow! You get
to drive it *once*.

Ash tosses the ball to himself and catches it.

ASH
Eh, good enough.

Ash squares up and readies his pitch. Gary hunches over and grips the bat. Everyone is quiet now, it's tense.

Ash lets loose his signature curveball. It's so fast, nobody could hit this.

SMACK. Gary's bat connects. Ash watches in shock as the ball soars over the field and into the forest.

Gary laughs in amazement, throwing the bat aside and taking off around the bases, making obnoxious gestures towards Ash as he goes. Ash hangs his head in shame as his teammates bitterly toss aside their mitts and stomp off.

Gary's teammates scoop him up and begin carrying him off towards Pallet Town. He calls back to Ash as he goes.

GARY

Hey! Come find me at my party
tonight, Ashy-boy! I want my ball!

GARY'S TEAM

(fading into the b.g.)
Gary! Gary! Gary!

Ash frowns and turns towards the forest, watching some birds fly from the treetops. He looks nervous.

EXT. OUTSIDE THE FOREST - DAY

Ash trudges bitterly towards the forest. The area outside the tree line is extremely overgrown with tall grass, similar to a sugarcane field. Ash stomps through some of the shorter grass, already hip-deep in the growth.

Just before reaching the taller grass, he stops as a deep animal noise growls from somewhere ahead.

Curious, Ash creeps in the direction of the noise, pulling the long grass shoots apart slightly and peering in. All he sees is more dense foliage, and the noise doesn't return.

Ash hesitates.

ASH

(to himself, patronizing)
"Gee, I'm sorry, Gary. I really
looked everywhere..."

Ash walks back the way he came, out of view.

ASH (O.S.) (CONT'D)

"...guess I'll just have to sign
something else, you know I could
probably scratch it onto your car
instead..."

There is a beat. After, Ash comes stomping back. He's not someone who welches on a bet.

Pushing through the wall of grass, Ash takes a step in before he's suddenly yanked out by the scruff of his jacket.

He stumbles backward as he's released, looking up to see the renowned but currently frazzled old researcher, PROFESSOR OAK. The professor, at least in his mid-50s, is donning his usual lab coat and slacks. A satchel is slung over his shoulder.

OAK

What're you crazy, kid? Don't you know there's POKÉMON in the tall grass??

ASH

Uh-

OAK

(condescending)

You know, POH-KEH-MON, the strange and fantastical creatures that inhabit the wilderness you were just strolling into?

ASH

(annoyed)

I know what a pokémon is.

Oak takes a step back and clasps his hands to the side of his face in faux-astonishment. He's a bit theatrical.

OAK

Oh, *really!* Because the way you were just zippity-doo-da-ing in there, I don't think you do! Unless of course you *want* to end up as lunch for, I don't know...

(listing with his fingers)

...a pinsir, or an arbok. Or heck, the other day in the field I think I may have even seen a-

He's interrupted as a terrifying screech erupts from the grass as a FEAROW, an enormous bird of prey nearly the size of a car, takes flight.

The pokémon lands nearby and hangs its head low as it hisses at them, blocking off their way back to town.

Ash and Oak freeze in terror.

ASH

Oh no, oh no...it's a freaking pidgeot.

Momentarily forgetting the peril, Oak turns his head slowly towards Ash. His expression one of annoyed disbelief.

OAK
...What? Kid, that's a fearow.

The fearow raises its wings and screeches. Oak grabs Ash's arm and bolts, pulling him into the tall grass.

OAK (CONT'D)
Run. *Run!*

EXT. THE FOREST - CONTINUOUS

The pair dash madly between trees as the massive raptor pursues on foot.

Suddenly Ash is pulled behind a tree by Oak. Ash nearly cries out in shock but Oak clasps a hand over his mouth, raising a finger to his own to demand silence.

The fearow races by, seeming to have missed them. The echo of its screeches fade deeper into the forest.

Oak sighs in relief and slumps against the trunk of the tree.

OAK
...got away safely.

A screech rings out from above as the Fearow crashes through the canopy and swoops towards them, talons out.

Oak pushes Ash out of the way but is too slow to escape himself. The fearow grasps Oak by the shoulders and flaps its powerful wings, working hard to carry the weight of its prey.

Oak struggles to free himself before giving up and grabbing for his dangling satchel.

OAK (CONT'D)
Alright, you asked for it!

Oak is jerked by the bird suddenly, causing him to drop his satchel down to the ground.

OAK (CONT'D)
(calmly)
...that's not good.

The fearow slowly carries Oak further into the forest. Oak calls back to Ash, trying to remain concise despite his fear.

OAK (CONT'D)
Kid! Inside my bag, there are poké balls! Grab one!

Ash rushes to the satchel and opens it, tossing out a few books and papers before pulling out a small box. Opening it, Ash freezes as he sees four red and white poké balls seated in a foam casing.

ASH
...which one??

OAK
(impatiently)
Any one! Just pick one and push the button!

Ash grabs one of the poké balls. There is a small thunderbolt decal on it. Oak notices this and immediately ceases his struggle as a realization dawns on him.

OAK (CONT'D)
Wait. Not that one-

It's too late. Ash clicks the button and the ball pops open, erupting dazzling light towards the ground. The light slows and takes form, fading to reveal PIKACHU, the electric mouse pokémon, yellow with stripes and the size of a small cat.

Pikachu looks around curiously, tweaking its ears.

PIKACHU
Pi?

Ash stares at the rodent that has yet to notice him.

ASH
Um, hi?

Noticing Ash, Pikachu hops back into a defensive stance, its ears pointed back as electric sparks crackle from its cheeks.

PIKACHU
Chuuu...

Still being carried off, Oak give a defeated sigh.

OAK
Oh boy...

As he's lifted higher into the canopy, Oak rips a branch from a tree and begins using it to ward off the fearow's large beak, which has begun to peck at him.

OAK (CONT'D)
Try another one, kid..! I (oof!) never finished training that one!

Ash tries to reach for the parcel, but freezes when Pikachu tenses up and sparks menacingly at him.

ASH

Uh, I don't think he likes it when I do...anything.

OAK (O.S.)

Yeah, he's a mean one!

ASH

Now what?

OAK

Alright, plan B: you train him right now.

ASH

Wait, what? Like RIGHT now??

OAK

There's a reason this wasn't Plan A, kid! But don't worry, I'll talk you through it!

Oak grips a nearby branch to prevent the fearow from carrying him away.

OAK (CONT'D)

(straining)

It's very...simple...you just point at your target...and tell it to attack..!

ASH

Okay...

(pointing towards fearow)

...get 'em?

Startled, Pikachu sends an electric warning shot at Ash's feet.

ASH (CONT'D)

Ow! Come on!

OAK

You have to say its name..!

(branch begins to break)

...say it's name and tell it what kind of attack to make!

Ash looks down at Pikachu then back up at Oak blankly. Oak stares back at Ash in horror.

OAK (CONT'D)

Oh come on...how do you not know
that one??

The branch breaks, Oak is carried off through the canopy.

OAK (CONT'D)

EVERYBODY KNOWS THAT ONE!

Desperate now, Ash crouches down and pleads with Pikachu.

ASH

Okay, please. I need you to...do
some kind of electrical attack,
um...

(beat)

...Jigglypuff?

Pikachu's eyes narrow as if deeply offended.

Pikachu lets loose a storm of electricity. It strikes Ash,
but also the surrounding trees. Ash's cries of pain
reverberate as the electricity travels through him.

EXT. ABOVE THE FOREST - CONTINUOUS

Still being carried away by the fearow, Oak looks resigned to
his fate. He pats the talon gripping his shoulder.

OAK

Well, you win this round, old
friend. Personally I'd recommend
starting with my thighs, probably
get the most meat there...

There is a glow beneath the canopy before bolts of
electricity launch out in several directions.

Oak ducks his head just in time to dodge a thunderbolt that
strikes the fearow, causing it to screech in pain and drop
him. Oak screams as he tumbles down towards the forest.

EXT. THE FOREST - CONTINUOUS

Pikachu's attack finally ceases. Ash collapses onto his back,
slightly charred. His hair stands on end as bits of
electrical current continue to spark across his body.

Distant yelling rings out from above as Oak crashes through
the canopy, his descent comically slowed by several
collisions with branches.

He lands on his back next to Ash in a similarly sorry state. Both stare up at the sky blankly, too pained to emote.

PIKACHU

Pik-a-chu!

ASH

Oh yeah, that's it. Pikachu.

OAK

Gee, kid. How'd you figure that one out?

The branches above rustle as the baseball comes loose and drops onto Ash's face.

EXT. BASEBALL DIAMOND, PALLET TOWN - NIGHT

Pikachu springs forth from the tall grass, full of energy. Ash and Oak wearily emerge a moment later.

OAK

...And that's why you don't go into the tall grass.

Ash pulls out the baseball and looks at it.

ASH

Don't worry, I got what I was looking for.

(beat)

Hey, you got a pen?

Oak hands him one from his coat pocket and watches in confusion as Ash signs "Gary is great, Ash is a loser. -Ash"

OAK

...You're a weird kid, you know that?

(beat)

Wait a minute, have we met before?

ASH

You're Professor Oak, the pokémon researcher. We met a few times when I was younger when you were visiting your grandson, Gary.

OAK

Oh, you're Delia's kid, Ash! I knew you seemed familiar. How's she doing these days?

ASH

She's fine. Still working at the restaurant.

OAK

That's good to hear, Delia was always a treasure...your dad's a lucky man.

(beat)

You know, I don't think I ever met him.

Ash puts the ball away and presses on towards town.

ASH

Neither did I.

OAK

Oh.

They walk in silence across the field. Pikachu bounds ahead.

OAK (CONT'D)

So, you going to tell me what the ball's about?

ASH

Lost a bet. It happens.

OAK

Gary made you do that? Aren't you kids friends?

ASH

Not exactly.

OAK

Oh, I get it. You're rivals.

(stroking his chin)

It's good to have a rival. Rivals drive us to do better. I supposed you'll be heading off soon to be a pokémon trainer like Gary too, eh?

ASH

Nope.

OAK

No? You don't want to become a trainer? I mean, you couldn't tell a sandshrew from cubone, kid, but you showed some promise out there today with that pikachu.

ASH
 (nodding forward)
 He's getting away.

OAK
 Hm?
 (noticing Pikachu running
 hastily down the road)
 Oh no you don't!

Oak digs the poké ball out and clicks its button, pointing it towards Pikachu. A thin beam of red light shoots out and strikes Pikachu. Pikachu yelps as he's dematerialized back into dazzling light and sucked into the ball.

OAK (CONT'D)
 Little rascal...like I said, never could quite get this one trained.
 (looking up at Ash)
 But did you see that thunderbolt attack back there! There's real potential packed in this rodent, it just needs focus...and the right trainer to teach it to them.

Oak leans his head towards Ash slightly and smiles.

OAK (CONT'D)
 Hint-hint, kid. You were the one that coaxed the attack out of him, after all.

ASH
 (cringing slightly)
 Yeah, so you were kinda far away...I don't think it really went down like you think it did.
 (shaking his head)
 Besides, I can't just go off and be a pokémon trainer, okay? Someone needs to stay here and look after my mom. Sorry.

They stand in silence for a moment. Ash looks down at his feet. He's clearly conflicted.

ASH (CONT'D)
 Look, I really need to get going.

Oak puts the poké ball away and nods.

OAK
 It's alright. Say hello to Delia for me, Ash.

Ash nods back and heads down the trail alone.

EXT. GARY'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Ash steps onto the front porch of Gary's house. The muffled sounds of the party emanate from within. He knocks.

DAISY, Gary's older sister, opens the door. She looks tired.

DAISY

Didn't expect to see you here.

ASH

Hey, Daisy. I'm just here to give your brother something.

DAISY

(unenthusiastically)

Well, come on in...

INT. GARY'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Party music blares and red cups abound as teens chat and mingle throughout the house.

In the living room, Gary is leaned back into the couch surrounded by friends. A few girls sit suggestively close.

FRIEND 1

(to Gary)

C'mon, man! Quit holding out on us.

FRIEND 2

Yeah dude, we've waited all night!
What pokémon did your gramps give you?

Gary shakes his head and smirks, relishing the attention. He produces a poké ball from his pocket and holds it in his palm.

GARY

Look, he needs rest, alright? I'm trying to at least get as far as Viridian tomorrow, I've gotta have my bro at full energy.

A girl sitting next to Gary twirls her hair and leans close.

GIRL 1

C'mon, Gary...Pleeease?

Gary is dumbstruck for a moment, then regains his composure. He hops to his feet and holds the poké ball in front of him.

GARY

Oh, alright...go, squirtle!

He pushes the button, and light erupts onto a nearby coffee table. It fades to reveal the blue turtle pokémon, SQUIRTLE. He looks tired, blinking his eyes to adjust to the light.

GIRL 1

So cute!

GUY 1

Dude, no way!

GUY 2

Have you taught it any attacks yet?

GARY

Who do you think you're talking to here?

(to squirtle)

Squirtle: bubble.

Squirtle snaps to attention and inhales deeply before turning and letting loose a powerful stream of bubbles towards Guy 2, knocking him from his perch atop the couch.

The other teens laugh as Squirtle continues to spit bubbles into the air. Girl 1 watches a large bubble as it floats by her, her attention suddenly drawn towards Gary as he cups the bubble in his hand and smiles at her, holding it between their faces.

The moment is interrupted as the signed baseball lands in Gary's palm, popping the bubble.

Ash stands in the doorway with his hands in his pockets.

ASH

Congratulations, Gary.

GARY

(perking up)

Ash!

Gary looks down at the baseball and laughs, holding it up for his friends to see.

GARY (CONT'D)

Oh my god, you actually did it!
Best present of the night by far,
totally taking this with me...

(MORE)

GARY (CONT'D)

(turning to Ash)

Hey, you see my new pokémon? Take a good look--you'll be seeing him again someday on TV when I'm champion of the Pokémon League.

Ash ventures a bit further in, goaded by the trash talk.

ASH

Hey, I just can't wait for you to get out of here. Pallet Town will only smell half as bad with you gone.

Gary actually chuckles and walks over, throwing an arm over Ash's shoulder.

GARY

Oh man, you know I think I'm actually going to miss you, Ashy-boy. When I'm out there beating gyms and collecting badges, I'll roll tons of chumps, but it'll never be the same as humiliating you.

ASH

I hope a Snorlax sits on you.

Gary laughs and returns to his friends, scooping up Squirtle and plopping onto the couch. The teens gather around to play with the pokémon. Ash watches for a moment, then turns to go.

GARY

(calling after him)

Thanks for the ball, Ash!

INT. ASH'S HOUSE - NIGHT

On a TV screen we see a news anchor with an image of a cruise ship behind her.

ANCHOR

...trouble on the high seas yesterday when passengers of the cruise liner S.S. Anne were victims of the latest of many recent attacks on pokémon trainers in the region.

The image on screen changes to footage of the same cruise ship, docked offshore.

ANCHOR (O.S.) (CONT'D)
Witnesses claim the attack was carried out by the terrorist organization known as Team Rocket, in what many are calling the organization's boldest attack yet.

The anchor returns to the screen, the image behind her now a black square with the signature red "R" of Team Rocket.

ANCHOR (CONT'D)
Vermillion City authorities assure us that no passengers were seriously injured, however many are reporting their pokémon stolen from them by the Rockets.

We pull back to see Ash's mom, DELIA, on the couch watching TV. She looks over her shoulder as she hears Ash come in.

DELIA
Ash? Is that you?

Ash hangs his jacket and walks over, giving her a kiss on the cheek.

ASH
Hey mom. Sorry I'm late.

DELIA
You missed dinner, where've you been all night?

ASH
(heading for the stairs)
I, uh...was at Gary's going away party. Lost track of time.

DELIA
Oh that's right, he leaves tomorrow, right? I remember when you two were little, playing together. Are you going to miss your friend?

ASH
(climbing the stairs)
Oh, uh, yeah...sure. So much.

Delia looks up sadly after him as he goes.

DELIA

You know, I always thought by now you'd be leaving too to become a trainer. It's all you ever talked about as a kid.

ASH

I guess I changed my mind.

Ash continues up the stairs into his room.

INT. ASH'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Ash flops onto his bed and stares at the ceiling.

He reaches down the side of his bed and fishes out a crumpled Pokémon League poster. The text reads, "Be the very best!"

He stares at it for a second, then sets it down. Sighing, he closes his eyes and drifts off to sleep.

INT. HALLWAY, CINNABAR LABS - NIGHT

A fat scientist with a clipboard and a box of donuts walks down the hallway. He nods to two colleagues as he passes.

SCIENTIST 1

Ooh, Ralph. You got monster duty tonight?

RALPH

Your jealousy is showing. Watching that thing sleep is the easiest job you can get.

RALPH holds the clipboard and comically pretends to write.

RALPH (CONT'D)

Log entry number one billion: it's still asleep. Boom. Done.

Ralph continues down the hall as Scientist 2 laughs.

SCIENTIST 2

Just don't wake it up, Ralph!

INT. DARK ROOM, CINNABAR LABS - CONTINUOUS

Ralph enters the room with the green cylinder. He puts a donut in his mouth and struts about the room.

Creature POV: Ralph steps closer and looks towards us, munching on the donut.

RALPH
(muffled by liquid)
Man...

Ralph chews his snack as he studies the creature.

RALPH (CONT'D)
...they told me the original was
cute, but you are UH-HUG-LY!

He walks away and plops into a desk chair, spinning around.

RALPH (CONT'D)
But hey, that's genetics for you.
My brother's got a jaw like a talk
show host.

He looks off bitterly for a moment before kicking his feet up onto a terminal. He pulls out a Game Boy and turns it on.

RALPH (CONT'D)
Anyway Sleeping Beauty, try not to
snore or anything, I've got
important work to do...I think I'm
almost out of this cave.

Creature POV: We look down to inspect our slender, inhuman limbs with bulbous fingers. There are wires hooked into the skin. The arm reaches out and feels the inside of the glass then pulls away. We lean closer, and everything rumbles for a second as a pulse vibrates through the liquid.

Ralph looks over his shoulder suddenly, but doesn't find anything amiss with the cylinder. He returns to his game.

Cracks shoot across the surface of the cylinder. It explodes, launching broken glass and liquid outward. An alarm sounds, and red lights flash.

Ralph nearly falls out of his chair as he swivels around. In the remains of the cylinder MEWTWO, the cloned psychic pokémon, crouches. Mewtwo rises and turns towards Ralph. Its eyes glow blue.

Ralph screams as he's telekinetically thrown from his chair and pinned against the wall. Nearby objects begin to float into the air, and Ralph weeps hysterically as he watches the donuts float by his face.

Still standing across the room, Mewtwo vanishes in a flash, only to instantly reappear directly in front of Ralph.

Mewtwo leans its face close to Ralph's, and the scientist's eyes glow with a fainter but similar blue light. Strange noises and voices from Ralph's memories can be faintly heard.

INT. HALLWAY, CINNABAR LABS - CONTINUOUS

Scientists 1 and 2 turn suddenly as a loud crash and scream can be heard from down the hall. The lights begin to shatter one after another down the hall towards them, obscuring the far end in darkness.

Scientist 2 steps forward to investigate, and he cries out as he's suddenly pulled into the darkness by invisible telekinesis. His screams echo for a moment and then are suddenly silenced.

Scientist 1 bolts flees down the hallway, and the lights continue to shatter behind her.

She shuts herself in a small closet and weeps. Aside from her whimpers, it is quiet for a few moments.

The door rumbles and is suddenly ripped away. Scientist 1 screams as she looks through the open door, and her eyes begin to glow blue.

EXT. CINNABAR LABORATORY - NIGHT

From a distance we see the laboratory, built into the rocky cliffs of a remote part of Cinnabar Island.

The building shakes and groans as parts of it collapse in on themselves while other parts blast outward in fiery explosions.

Mewtwo flies through the air from the wreckage and off into the distance.

INT. PROFESSOR OAK'S LAB - DAY

Oak exits his office into the main lab. He throws on his lab coat as he passes a desk where a young INTERN is typing.

INTERN

Professor, you've got a call-

OAK

Nope, no I don't. I've actually already left to go see my grandson off, and then I'll be off on an errand to Saffron City for a week.

(MORE)

OAK (CONT'D)

So sadly, it's too late for any calls to reach me.

INTERN

(confused)

But...you're here right now.

Oak retrieves a small box from a desk and puts it in his satchel, stopping by the intern's desk to explain.

OAK

Ah, no, you see it might appear that way, but I'm actually *not* here. In fact, I'm afraid I was never here at all, so it's impossible for me to be delayed by any projects, emails, or calls-

INTERN

But professor, you have a call on line one from-

Oak heads for the door, covering his ears.

OAK

Not here! Can't tell me about it!

INTERN

(reading off screen)

...a Dr. Fuji?

Oak stops in his tracks and turns back to the intern.

OAK

Oh, Fuji..?

(beat)

...Yeah, I should probably get that.

INT. OAK'S OFFICE - DAY

Oak sits in front of a large computer terminal. He pushes a button and the screen lights up to reveal the face of DR. FUJI. The scientist is even older than Oak, and his expression is haunted.

OAK

Fuji, old friend, it's been too long! How's that lovely Cinnabar weather treating you, you wily old-

FUJI

Samuel.

Oak stops and examines his colleague more closely. He's shaking slightly, and there's some ash on his lab coat.

FUJI (CONT'D)
Can we talk--in person? I'm not
sure who else to go to right now...

EXT. PALLET TOWN STREETS - DAY

Gary waves goodbye to his crowd of well wishers from his convertible. Squirtle rides shotgun.

He speeds off down the road, and Girl 1 from the party tries to chase after him in tears for a few paces before being held back by Friend 1. She sobs into his shoulder.

INT. ASH'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Ash watches the scene play out from his window. He sighs.

OAK (O.S.)
Ah, the beginning of an
adventure...

Ash whips around to see Oak smiling at him from the doorway.

OAK (CONT'D)
...there's nothing quite like it.

ASH
Professor? What are you doing here?

Ash notices the old Pokémon League poster still lying on his bed. He quickly stuffs it back over the side.

ASH (CONT'D)
Shouldn't you be down there, saying
bye to Gary?

Oak steps into the room and sits on the side of the bed.

OAK
I said goodbye to my grandson this
morning, now I'm here to talk to
you, Ash. I've got a job for you.

ASH
A job? Look, Professor, I already
told you last night...

Oak throws his head back in exasperation.

OAK

Oh, I know, you can't go off and become a pokémon trainer because you have to stay here and look after your mom...

Oak quickly digs his hand over the side of the bed and retrieves the hidden poster, displaying it smugly.

OAK (CONT'D)

...even if it's always been your dream.

Ash snatches the poster back and stuffs it in his pocket.

OAK (CONT'D)

Don't worry, that's not the job. I need you to make a delivery for me, Ash, to Saffron City.

ASH

Saffron City? Professor, it'd take me weeks to get there! I can't leave home for that long.

OAK

(feigning concern)

Oh trust me, I know. I'd make the delivery myself, you see, but I've just been called away on urgent business to Cinnabar Island, and I'm afraid you're my only hope now, my boy.

ASH

Are you serious right now?

OAK

'fraid so. And I suppose it wouldn't be safe to send a young kid out into the elements without at least one pokémon for protection...

ASH

I knew it! You're just trying to get me to train your pikachu for you!

OAK

Kid, that's not what this is at all. Oh, but that reminds me...

Oak pulls the poké ball from his satchel, handing it to Ash.

OAK (CONT'D)
 ...here's the pikachu, train it for me.

ASH
 Professor!

OAK
 (rolling his eyes)
 Alright, so it's a bit of a two-birds-one-stone situation!

ASH
 Professor...I can't. My mom-

OAK
 Won't miss you at all.

ASH
 What?

OAK
 You see, while you're off being a good little delivery boy, the lovely Delia will be accompanying moi...
 (gesturing to himself)
 ...on my expedition to scenic Cinnabar Island!

ASH
 You're taking my mom...on a trip?

OAK
 I know! I thought of everything, right??

Ash looks down at the poké ball and hesitates.

ASH
 Look, Professor, I really appreciate this, but...

Oak leaps to his feet and grips his head in frustration.

OAK
 Oh, come on! You are not going to tell me you have another excuse! No fair!

ASH
 It's not that simple! My dad..!
 (beat)
 (MORE)

ASH (CONT'D)

My dad...before I was even born, he left to become a pokémon trainer.

(beat)

He never came back. I don't know if something happened to him, or if he just didn't care, but he-

DELIA (O.S.)

He followed his dream.

Ash and Oak turn towards the doorway, where Delia stands.

ASH

Mom...

DELIA

You're right, Ash. I don't know what happened to your father, if he's even still alive...

(walking to the bed)

Maybe while he was out there, he did forget about us. But when he left, Ash, he wasn't abandoning me, or you.

(placing hand on Ash's)

He was following his dream, to become a great pokémon trainer.

ASH

Mom, I can't just...

DELIA

(nearing tears)

Yes you can! You can pretend you don't care about this, because you think you're protecting me..!

(regaining composure)

...but it's all you ever talked about, ever since you were a little boy! That's all I want for you, Ash. Can't you see you'd be hurting me even worse by giving up your dream?

Ash grabs his mom and hugs her tight.

ASH

Okay, mom...I'll do it.

Oak pumps his fist in victory.

OAK

...Yes!

EXT. EDGE OF PALLET TOWN - DAY

Ash stands at the foot of Route 1, a long dirt road out of Pallet Town. Oak and Delia are nearby, seeing him off.

DELIA

Ash, are you sure you have enough snacks? I can get some more from the house if-

ASH

Mom! It's fine, I'm fine.

DELIA

What about water--oh, and sun screen! Here, I'll run back now, you can always use more-

OAK

He'll be fine, Delia! Viridian City's only a few miles away, if he needs anything, he can pick it up there. I gave him enough cash to get by.

Oak hands Ash the small box from his lab.

OAK (CONT'D)

Now remember, Ash, you've got a job to do. Take this parcel to the Silph Company in Saffron City.

Ash begins to open the box.

ASH

What's in it..?

Oak slaps his hand away from the lid. Ash glares at him.

OAK

I'm afraid that's classified, big private contract I've been working on with the guys at Silph. I'll tell you all about it when it's ready to go public.

(patting the box's lid)

Remember, your job is just to deliver this to Saffron...

Oak leans in and winks at Ash.

OAK (CONT'D)

...though I suppose if you captured a few pokémon and got into the occasional battle along the way...well, I don't see how I'd ever find out.

Ash smiles and shakes Oak's hand.

ASH

Alright Professor, I won't let you down. Heh, Gary and his stupid wartortle better watch out, because I'm coming for them.

The pride drains from Oak's face.

OAK

Wartortle..? I mean you were closer that time, but...
(he sighs)
...here, that reminds me, you're going to need this....

Oak pulls out a small, red electronic device.

OAK (CONT'D)

This is a Pokédex, a little invention of my own design. It contains encyclopedic knowledge on every known species of pokémon. You just point it at a pokémon, and it'll tell you what it is.

Ash inspects the POKÉDEX. Oak gives him a cautionary look.

OAK (CONT'D)

Use it, kid. You might learn a thing or two.

Returning to his jolly nature, Oak claps his hands together.

OAK (CONT'D)

Welp! I suppose it's time we were off as well...Delia?
(turning to Delia)
Go and grab your things, our own adventure awaits!

DELIA

Okay, bye Ash!
(hugging Ash)
I love you so much, you know that?
Come back, okay?

They separate and Delia leaves. Oak pats Ash on the shoulder.

OAK

Well, good luck, kid. If you get done training that pikachu and decide the whole trainer thing's not for you, I'll take him off your hands. Little guy could probably save me a fortune on my electric bill at the lab...

Oak turns to go, but Ash stops him.

ASH

Professor, this trip with my mom...don't try anything weird.

OAK

(feigning confusion)

Why Ash, I'm afraid I don't know what you mean.

ASH

(dead serious)

Yes you do. And just don't.

Oak begins to wander off towards town, musing to himself.

OAK

If you're insinuating that I might use this trip as a means to woo sweet Delia, then you have nothing to fear...though I suppose we are two single adults with our own free will, and romance *does* have a way of budding on the high seas...

ASH

(distressed)

Dude, that's not cool!

Oak continues to head away, leaving Ash further distressed.

ASH (CONT'D)

Dude!

EXT. ROUTE 1 - DAY

The dirt road is surrounded by tall grass. Small bird pokémon, PIDGEY, chirp in the branches of a dead tree. Violet furred rat pokémon, RATTATA, dart across the path.

Ash marches ahead. There are no other humans in sight.

Fetching a water bottle out of his pack, Ash eyes the parcel.

He glances in both directions. He's still alone.

He crouches behind a nearby tree and opens the box...only to find another smaller box inside with a combination lock and a post-it note reading "Nice try kid. -Oak"

ASH
Dammit.

YOUNGSTER (O.S.)
Hey, what's that?

Ash looks up to see a kid a few years younger than himself standing nearby. He has no idea where he came from.

ASH
(hiding the parcel)
It's, uh...
(authoritatively)
...classified. Sorry junior.

YOUNGSTER
Psh, no way!

ASH
Yeah way, kid. Beat it.

YOUNGSTER
You beat it.

ASH
No, you beat it..!

Ash stops himself as he realizes he's arguing with a child.

ASH (CONT'D)
...what are you even doing out
here? Shouldn't you be learning to
read or something?

The youngster smiles smugly and pulls out a poké ball.

YOUNGSTER
I'm a pokémon trainer, I do
whatever I want.

ASH
(laughing)
You? A pokémon trainer??

The youngster frowns. Ash pulls out his own poké ball.

ASH (CONT'D)

Well I'm a trainer too. Maybe I should teach you some manners.

YOUNGSTER

Five bucks if I win.

ASH

I'm not going to make a bet with a little kid-

YOUNGSTER

Ten bucks.

ASH

Make it twenty!

YOUNGSTER

(shouting now)

Fifty!

Ash pulls out all the money Oak gave him.

ASH

I've got a hundred right here, kid!
You really wanna do this?

YOUNGSTER

Two hundred!

Ash almost ups the ante again but stops himself.

ASH

...wait, do you even have any money?

The youngster smirks, tossing the poké ball to himself and catching it.

YOUNGSTER

What, you scared?

ASH

Never. You're on, kid.

EXT. ROUTE 1 - DAY

Ash and the youngster square off dramatically at opposite ends of a clearing in the tall grass.

The youngster tosses his poké ball into the dirt. Light bursts forth and reveals RATICATE, a fearsome looking rat pokémon with enormous teeth.

Ash pulls out his pokédex and points it at the raticate. The screen lights up and displays statistics on the pokémon.

Ash pockets the dex and smiles down at his own poké ball.

ASH

Well, let the training begin.

Ash tosses the ball and Pikachu pops out. Pikachu tweaks its ears and looks around warily, taking in its surroundings.

The raticate growls menacingly, seizing Pikachu's attention.

Ash crouches down behind Pikachu.

ASH (CONT'D)

Don't let him scare you, Pikachu. I say we start this off with a thundershock-

Pikachu whirls around, noticing Ash. He glares at Ash and his cheeks spark menacingly.

Ash raises his hands in front of him.

ASH (CONT'D)

No! It's okay! I'm not your enemy here...that's your enemy.

Ash points towards the raticate. Both the raticate and the youngster look slightly confused.

YOUNGSTER

...is this a joke?

ASH

(leaning close to pikachu)
Now, I just need ou to knock out that big rat with a thundershock attack, and when we get to Viridian City? We can treat ourselves to some good food and a nice bed with the prize money, what do you say? Can you do a thundershock attack for me?

Pikachu leers at Ash then smirks mischievously. Electricity flies from the pokémon and strikes Ash, causing him to cry out and collapse to the ground.

Pikachu laughs at its trainer's misfortune.

PIKACHU

Pika-!

Pikachu's gloating is cut short as the raticate suddenly bursts into view and headbutts him in the side, sending him flying.

INT. POKÉMON CENTER, VIRIDIAN CITY - DUSK

Charred and exhausted, Ash lifts Pikachu's unconscious body onto the front counter of the pokémon center--an institution where trainers take injured pokémon to be healed.

ASH
You can fix him, right?

The NURSE at the counter lifts the limp pokémon and smiles.

NURSE
Oh my. Battle didn't go as planned?

Ash grimaces as he pulls out his wallet and looks inside. There's not much money left.

ASH
Yeah, you could say that...
(placing cash on the
counter)
Look, I don't really have a lot of
cash right now...

NURSE
Don't worry, it's free of charge.
Come back later for your Pikachu,
we'll have him healed back to
perfect health.

The nurse wheels Pikachu away on tray.

NURSE (CONT'D)
If you'd like, there are some cots
in the back room for traveling
trainers. Make yourself at home.

INT. POKÉMON CENTER BACK ROOM - NIGHT

Ash kicks off his shoes and removes his jacket. A few other trainers of various ages lay on cots around the room.

Plopping down on his own cot, Ash pulls out a bar from his pack and munches on it wearily.

EXT. ABOVE CERULEAN CITY - NIGHT

Mewtwo floats among the clouds above Cerulean City. It's a larger city than we've seen so far, and it's bustling with life and lights.

Mewtwo's eyes glow as he takes it all in. We hear the murmur of voices as he reads the thoughts of the city below. The voices steadily increase in number and volume, and Mewtwo winces as he's quickly overwhelmed.

Mewtwo flies away over a small bay to a rocky island. He descends into a cave and stops in a wide chamber.

The voices are quieter here, and Mewtwo stops to meditate. He sifts through the memories he pulled from the minds of the scientists on Cinnabar. We see glimpses of the terror at the lab, as well as previously unseen scenes of scientists performing tests on Mewtwo's sleeping body.

Mewtwo fixates on the man directing the scientists. Fuji.

Mewtwo's brow furrows in anger, and his eyes open.

EXT. VIRIDIAN CITY - DAY

The jingle of the pokémon center rings as Ash and Pikachu exit the automatic doors. Both look annoyed.

ASH

...you know you didn't have to shock the nice nurse in there, you better hope we don't have to come back.

Pikachu turns his nose up at Ash defiantly.

Ash frowns and pulls out a city brochure, opening it.

ASH (CONT'D)

It says there's a pokémon gym in this city, I don't suppose you have any interesting in challenging it?

Pikachu continues to snub him. Ash crouches down and softens.

ASH (CONT'D)

Look, if we beat the leader of the gym in a battle, we get a badge. Get eight badges and we qualify to compete in the League Tournament.

(MORE)

ASH (CONT'D)

C'mon, I saw what you did back in the woods to that fearow, if we work together we could knock one out right now, whaddya say?

Ash extends his hand towards Pikachu, offering a truce. Without moving, Pikachu releases a tiny electrical jolt, zapping Ash's hand. Ash curses and rubs his hand angrily.

ASH (CONT'D)

Well, I tried...ball time.

Ash points the poké ball at Pikachu and clicks the button. Pikachu yelps in protest as he's dematerialized again.

Ash can't help but smirk a bit as he pockets the ball.

ASH (CONT'D)

(scolding the poké ball)

You know there's plenty of other pokémon out there, don't think you're not replaceable. I can just catch a new pokémon with one of the poké balls Oak gave me...

Ash pulls out a different poké ball and inspects it. He tries to suppress his nerves.

ASH (CONT'D)

...yeah, I can do this.

EXT. OUTSIDE VIRIDIAN FOREST - DAY

A hawk-like pokémon the size of a small dog pecks about in the grass. Ash watches stealthily from behind some bushes. He points his pokédex at it, which identifies it as a PIDGEOTTO.

Putting the dex away, Ash clutches a poké ball tightly.

ASH

(nervously)

Alright, just like throwing a baseball...just gotta hit it with the ball and it's mine, easy...

He springs from the bush and pitches his classic curveball at the pidgeotto. The pidgeotto sees it coming and takes flight just in time to dodge.

The poké ball bounces off a rock and proceeds to ricochet off nearby trees like a pinball, finally bouncing back and smacking Ash in the face. He grips his face and curses.

GIRL'S VOICE (O.S.)

You know, you shouldn't put so much spin on your throw.

Ash turns to see a redheaded girl around his age walking her bike down the trail. It's MISTY, the prodigy gym leader from Cerulean City, but for now Ash has no idea who she is.

ASH

Wha..?

Misty picks up the poké ball off the ground.

MISTY

If you spin it like that you don't know what side of the ball is going to connect. Even if you'd hit that pidgeotto, if the button didn't make contact the poké ball would've just bounced off.

Misty demonstrates by clicking the button a few times.

ASH

(annoyed)

I know how a poké ball works...

Getting a bit cocky, Ash rolls up his sleeve a bit and flexes, trying to make it look casual (and failing.)

ASH (CONT'D)

...and besides, I don't expect you to know this, but this arm's something of a local legend in Pallet Town. I've thrown that curveball a thousand times, the button was going to connect. The spin's there so the pokémon doesn't see it coming.

MISTY

(raising an eyebrow)

And how'd that work out for you?

ASH

Maybe it got startled because it saw some girl wander up and ruin my surprise attack, did you think about that?

Misty frowns and tosses the ball back to Ash.

MISTY

(pointing past Ash)

Alright, how bout a redo: that should be no problem for you, right Mr. "local legend?"

Glancing in the direction Misty points, Ash spies a large caterpillar inching along a nearby tree branch. The CATERPIE munches on leaves, oblivious to the nearby humans.

ASH

I don't know, I don't really want to waste a poké ball on a weedle...

MISTY

(blinking in disbelief)

That's a caterpie...

Flustered, Ash pulls out his pokédex angrily and checks.

ASH

No way, I know for sure this one is-

He stops and frowns as the entry reads "Caterpie."

MISTY

So do they have a different standard for legends in Pallet Town, or..?

ASH

Alright! Watch this!

Twisting his hat backwards, Ash lets loose another throw. The ball spins rapidly and strikes the caterpie in the head. The button side doesn't make contact.

The caterpie squeaks in pain and falls from the tree.

MISTY

(condescendingly)

Ooh, nice try...

ASH

The sun was in my eyes!

He lets another one fly. The caterpie uprights itself just in time to dodge out of the way. It squeals in fright and begins inching madly towards the treeline.

MISTY

Strike two...

Ash growls and throws another curveball. He strikes the caterpie on the back of the head, again on the wrong side, sending the poor worm tumbling along the ground.

MISTY (CONT'D)

Less spin...

ASH

I can do it!

He tosses yet another ball, but just barely misses. The ball collides with a tree trunk and breaks in half on impact. The caterpie scurries to safety in the forest.

Ash grits his teeth as he strains to contain his rage. Misty shakes her head and begins to walk her bike away.

MISTY

Well it was nice meeting you,
Pallet Town. Next time you screw up
try to remember this instead of
blaming "some girl."

Ash stares towards the treeline. The caterpie is gone.

ASH

I can do it...

Ash runs over and grabs Misty's bike.

MISTY

Hey! What do you think you're
doing??

ASH

Sorry! I'll bring it right back!

He leaps on the bike and takes off towards the forest. Misty chases after him for a short distance before giving up

MISTY

No! Give me back my bike you jerk!
Oh, come on!!

EXT. VIRIDIAN FOREST - CONTINUOUS

Ash zips through the trees on Misty's bike. He stops in a small clearing, looking around frantically for the caterpie.

Hearing rustling, he whips around to see the caterpie sneaking away. It squeaks and resumes its rapid scurrying.

ASH

Gotcha!

Half-seated on the bike, he prepares to throw. As he releases the ball Misty screams and tackles him to the ground.

The caterpie cowers and the botched throws sails over its head deeper into the forest. The caterpie looks up curiously as no impact sound follows, instead hearing a wet squelch.

Inching forward curiously, the caterpie investigates. It uprights itself in shock as it discovers the source of the noise: the poké ball has collided with a huge beehive.

Buzzing from within grows louder as BEEDRILL, large wasp pokémon with spear-like stingers on their frontmost legs, emerge from the hive.

Caterpie squeaks in fear and scurries back the way it came.

Back in the clearing, Misty pulls herself off Ash and uprights her bike.

MISTY

(still panting heavily)

Ugh, I hate running, why does land have to be so exhausting? Why can't I ever run into jerks when I'm at the pool?

ASH

(pulling himself up)

What was that for?? You messed up my throw--I had 'em that time!

MISTY

You're lucky that's all I did! And based on your performance so far, I'm pretty sure I spared that poor bug another lump on the head...and I hate bugs! That's how annoying you are!

Ash grabs for Misty's bike, looking around for the caterpie.

ASH

He's gotta still be close, I just need-

MISTY

(tugging back angrily)

Seriously?? Do you see your name on this thing or something??

ASH
(straining as he tugs)
I just...need it for...one..!

Both teens turn to see the caterpie reenter the clearing. It freezes in its tracks, squeaking quietly in regret.

Ash smirks and lets go of the bike, causing Misty to yelp and fall backwards from her own efforts.

Time slows down as Ash pulls out a poké ball. The caterpie squeaks and begins to turn to flee. Ash winds up the throw and releases. The ball spins at high speed and collides with the side of the caterpie's head.

The button side connects. Light pours out of the ball and the bug is dematerialized and sucked inside. The poké ball seals shut and falls to the ground, twitching slightly. Ash watches anxiously.

Finally, there is a click. The ball is still.

Ash's eyes widen, and he leaps into the air and cries out in celebration. He runs over and scoops up the ball.

ASH (CONT'D)
I did it! I caught a pokémon!
(turning to Misty smugly)
...Local. Legend.

Misty pulls herself and her bike off the ground.

MISTY
(rolling her eyes)
And it only took you how many
tries? But hey, congrats...

ASH
C'mon, you're not gonna tell me
that wasn't a beautiful toss. It's
okay, you can admit it...

MISTY
I've...seen worse.

Ash resumes celebrating. Misty stares off, troubled.

MISTY (CONT'D)
But why did the caterpie come back
this way..?

A buzzing in the air begins to grow louder. Both Ash and Misty stare off in the direction of the noise.

MISTY (CONT'D)
...what was it running...from..?

Several beedrill erupt from the foliage. They surround the teens, buzzing angrily in the air.

MISTY (CONT'D)
Jump on!

Ash leaps onto the back of Misty's bike, and she takes off. It's a rough ride along the bumpy forest floor, and the bike isn't made for two riders.

Misty tries to head out of the forest, but a beedrill swoops down and cuts her off. She breaks hard and speeds off in the opposite direction.

MISTY (CONT'D)
We've gotta do something quick or we're done for!

Ash nods and pulls out his pokédex, pointing it back at the pursuing wasps.

ASH
(reading the entry)
It says they're beedrill! They're highly territorial...and venomous!

MISTY
Oh, you think?!

Misty swerves suddenly, barely dodging a beedrill ambushing from ahead.

MISTY (CONT'D)
When I said do something, I didn't mean read me their wikipedia page!

The beedrill begin to catch up. Ash tries to bat them away with his backpack, to little effect. The nearest wasp prepares to strike.

ASH
Duck!

Both teens lower their heads just in time to dodge the enormous stinger. The beedrill readies a second strike, this time too low to dodge.

Ash winces as he prepares to be impaled, when the bike's tire gets caught on a root, sending the teens tumbling off out of harm's way.

Ash and Misty roll down a small ledge into a ring of trees. The beedrill shoot past, not spotting them.

Ash looks just in time to dodge a massive beedrill stinger that crashes into the tree trunk where his head had just been. Apparently this one didn't miss them.

Ash scuttles away, and the beedrill buzzes angrily, trying to remove its stinger from the tree.

Misty snaps out of her daze and screams. She's trapped in the tree ring by the stuck beedrill. Noticing her, it begins to stab in her direction with its free stinger.

MISTY

Help me!

ASH

Don't worry! I've got this!

Ash tosses a poké ball at the ground, and Caterpie bursts out.

ASH (CONT'D)

Okay little guy, I know we just met, but I need you to do something for me, do you understand me?

Caterpie tilts its head before nodding hesitantly.

ASH (CONT'D)

Alright, I need you to fight...that thing.

Ash points towards the beedrill. Caterpie looks and yelps in fear, turning back towards Ash and shivering.

ASH (CONT'D)

No, no! You can do this! I believe in you, and I'll be right here with you, okay?

Still shivering, Caterpie nods. This one is loyal.

ASH (CONT'D)

Now, uh...what can you do?

Misty screams, the beedrill is starting to get loose.

MISTY

Hurry!!

Ash checks Caterpie's entry in the pokédex. Under "attacks" there are only two entries: "tackle" and "string shot."

ASH
Uh...string shot?

The beedrill breaks free, but just before it can skewer Misty, it's attack is held back by a sticky, silk web. The beedrill turns to see the web leads back to Caterpie's mouth.

ASH (CONT'D)
Yeah! String shot!

The beedrill rushes them angrily, only to be further entangled as Caterpie spews more strands of silk forward.

ASH (CONT'D)
Keep it up, aim for his wings!

Caterpie obeys, and the beedrill quickly collapses, totally restrained by the silk strands. Ash runs up and slams it over the head with a large stick, knocking it out.

ASH (CONT'D)
...buzz off.
(heading to Misty's side)
You okay?

MISTY
Yeah, pretty sure...

There is a beat as they lock eyes.

MISTY (CONT'D)
...thanks.

ASH
(scratching his head)
Hey, don't thank me, thank Cater-

Ash notices Caterpie going upright and glowing faintly.

Ash and Misty watch Caterpie glow brighter, blindingly so.

MISTY
It's evolving!

ASH
Wait, really??
(turning to the glow)
I've never seen it in person
before...

The squint their eyes against the bright light until it fades away, and in Caterpie's place there's a green cocoon-like creature with two buggy eyes.

Ash checks his pokédex. Caterpie is now a METAPOD.

ASH (CONT'D)
Wow, metapod...

MISTY
I've heard caterpie evolve faster than most pokémon, but still, it's actually pretty impressive that you got him to evolve already.

ASH
I'm not even really sure what I did...

MISTY
Well, pokémon evolve more quickly when they win battles against tough opponents. I'd say this qualifies.
(she smiles at Ash)
You should be proud. I'm Misty, by the way.

ASH
(blushing)
Uh, thanks. Ash. Hey, I'm sorry about-

Several more beedrill descend from the canopy.

ASH (CONT'D)
Oh, come on!

Ash and Misty huddle together, keeping their eyes on the circling wasps.

MISTY
If you feel like impressing me again, now might be a good time...

ASH
R-right...Cater--I mean, Metapod...string shot!

There is a beat. Metapod remains still.

ASH (CONT'D)
Uh, Metapod..!

MISTY
He can't string shot anymore--he doesn't even have a mouth!

ASH

Then what can Metapod do?

He checks the dex. The one entry under "attacks" is "HARDEN."

ASH (CONT'D)

Harden?

Metapod twitches slightly, and its carapace becomes visibly sharper and rougher in texture. Misty slaps her forehead and Ash stares blankly.

ASH (CONT'D)

...I don't know what I expected.

One of the beedrill swoops towards them. Panicking, Ash lifts up Metapod like a shield. The stingers deflect off Metapod's shell, leaving scratch marks but no serious damage.

MISTY

Look out!

Another beedrill swoops down.

ASH

Harden!

Metapod hardens further as Ash pulls him up in time to deflect the attack. This time the tips of the stingers shatter against Metapod's shell.

More of the beedrill swoop in. Ash continues to command Metapod to harden, blocking their attacks and occasionally batting them away using Metapod as a club.

MISTY

I don't think this is a long-term solution!

ASH

I might have one more trick,
but...aw man...

Ash bats away a beedrill and drops Metapod. He pulls out Pikachu's poké ball.

ASH (CONT'D)

C'mon, please...

He shuts his eyes and tosses it. Pikachu pops out and turns to Ash angrily.

PIKACHU

Pi...

ASH

Look out!

Pikachu turns just in time to dodge as a beedrill stabs down at it.

ASH (CONT'D)

Behind you!

Pikachu dodges the attack of a second beedrill. He tries to build up charge for an electric attack, but he's repeatedly interrupted as other beedrill take stabs at him.

Finally he's cornered. Just before the beedrill strikes, Ash leaps in the way and takes the sting to the back.

Pikachu watches as Ash crumples to the ground. Misty screams.

Overcome with guilt, Pikachu turns angrily towards the beedrill, cheeks sparking.

PIKACHU

...CHUUU!

Electricity rips from Pikachu, zapping away any beedrill that comes near Ash's body. The beedrill flee.

Misty runs to Ash's side.

MISTY

Hey...c'mon, get up...

Misty and Pikachu look down sadly, before Ash suddenly stirs.

ASH

Ow, my freakin' back...

MISTY

Wait, don't move! Let me get a look at it..!

Misty inspects and finds that Ash is fine. The stinger was blocked by something in his backpack: Oak's parcel.

MISTY (CONT'D)

Your lucky, looks like this took the hit for you...

They inspect the box. It's been badly damaged by the attack, and the lock on the interior box is broken.

MISTY (CONT'D)

What is this, anyway?

ASH

I actually have no idea. Some kinda big secret Silph Co. project. I'm just supposed to deliver it.

Ash opens the box. Inside is a fancy-looking purple poké ball with an "M" printed on it. The MASTER BALL.

ASH (CONT'D)

It was just a poké ball? Lame.

MISTY

I've never seen a poké ball that looks like that before...

Pikachu gets their attention, gesturing towards Metapod, who's glowing again. They watch as it glows bright and evolves into a purple butterfly pokémon. BUTTERFREE.

Ash walks over and points his dex at it.

ASH

Wow. You really grow up fast...
(checks dex)
...Butterfree. And hey, you did really good back there.

Ash looks down to Pikachu.

ASH (CONT'D)

Both of you. I think we make a good team, huh?

Pikachu smiles up at Ash.

EXT. CINNABAR COAST - DAY

Oak steps out of the cabin of his boat, dressed in shades, a straw hat and a Hawaiian shirt. He's holding two drinks.

OAK

...who wants piña coladas?

Out on the deck, Delia smiles and shakes her head.

DELIA

Oh no thank you, drinking on the open ocean doesn't really agree with me...

OAK

I see...

(throws one drink
overboard)

...so my dear Delia, how are you
enjoying our naval adventure?

DELIA

I have to admit, it's nice to get
away. It's been so long since I've
had a break from the restaurant...

(beat)

...but this was a scientific
expedition, correct?

OAK

Sure, sure. But everyone deserves a
chance to...

Oak stops as he sees the smoke coming from Cinnabar Labs.

OAK (CONT'D)

...relax...

INT. LOBBY, CINNABAR LABS - DAY

Oak and Delia wait in the lobby. Fuji enters.

OAK

Fuji! Glad to see you're alright...

Fuji shakes his hand. Delia offers hers.

DELIA

It's nice to meet you, Dr. Fuji.
I'm Delia Ketchum.

Fuji eyes her warily. Oak notices.

OAK

...perhaps it's better if we two
eggheads catch up in private, would
you mind waiting up my dear?

DELIA

Oh. No, it's fine.

Oak tries to give her a reassuring smile and exits with Fuji.

INT. HALLWAY, CINNABAR LABS - CONTINUOUS

They enter the ruined hallway. Scientists scurry madly about.

OAK
Did a tornado come through here..?

FUJI
No.
(continues walking)
A pokémon.

OAK
I didn't know a pokémon that could
do something like this existed.

FUJI
It didn't. Until we made one.

Oak stops by a window to another room. Inside, scientists are monitoring SCIENTIST 1. She looks manic and traumatized.

SCIENTIST 1
It's eyes...It was in my head...

Oak watches her break down sobbing, before following Fuji.

INT. FUJI'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Fuji sits behind his desk. Oak waits cautiously by the door.

OAK
So...you made a pokémon.

FUJI
Cloned one, technically.

OAK
From what?

Fuji pulls out an old book and opens it to a page with a hieroglyphic of an alien-looking cat pokémon. MEW.

FUJI
A legend.

Oak looks at him in disbelief.

OAK
Mew? Come now, Fuji. We're
scientists. Mew is a fairy tale...a
myth!

FUJI
I thought so, until someone came to
me with proof. Genetic material.
They wanted their own Mew.

OAK

So now there are two...Mews.

FUJI

Mewtwo. That's what we were calling it. Though our client requested we make certain alterations from the original. He wanted something fiercer, more powerful...

(stares off)

...I suppose he got what he wanted.

OAK

You're talking about genetic editing. It's illegal, isn't it?

FUJI

(standing up)

For the chance to work on a living legend--to make history! How could I have turned down that chance?

OAK

Where is Mewtwo now?

FUJI

(calming down)

Gone. Hopefully far from here.

Oak looks troubled.

OAK

Why did you call me here, Fuji?

FUJI

The Silph contract. The master ball. Do you have it with you?

OAK

No, I sent it off with Delia's boy...I've got him training that old Pikachu for me.

FUJI

...then I'm sorry to have wasted your time. Will you excuse me? I need to make a call, and then I need to get out of here incase that thing comes back.

OAK

You know, you never told me who your mysterious benefactor was.

Fuji looks at Oak seriously.

FUJI

The kind of man you're safer
knowing nothing about.

EXT. GAME CORNER, CELADON CITY - DAY

A crowd gathers for the grand opening of the GAME CORNER, a casino. Standing at the center of attention is GIOVANNI, the sophisticated gym leader of Viridian City.

GIOVANNI

Thank you all for joining me here
today, you honor me, truly. But
after all, this is Celadon City, a
welcoming place...

(smiles as a few cheer)

...even to a little, old gym leader
like me, from far off Viridian.
That's why I love coming here, and
that's why I'm opening my new Game
Corner casino in your beautiful
city.

Giovanni waits for the applause. He's a true politician.

A reporter holds out a microphone as the applause dies down.

REPORTER

Giovanni, what are your thoughts on
the recent Rocket attacks in
Vermilion, on the S.S. Anne?

GIOVANNI

Terrible, just terrible. We live in
frightening times, ladies and
gentlemen. My heart goes out to the
victims.

(tone picking up)

But that's why it's so important we
have places like the Game Corner to
get away from all that nastiness.
In fact, I invite anyone who's been
a victim of Team Rocket to come by
and play to win fabulous prizes.
Your first game's on me. So without
further ado...

Giovanni cuts the ceremonial ribbon. The crowd cheers.

GIOVANNI (CONT'D)

...I declare the Game Corner, open!

INT. GAMBLING FLOOR, GAME CORNER - NIGHT

People laugh, drink and gamble at slot machines and card tables. Some take their winnings to the prize table, where an employee shows off rare pokémon on display in cages.

In the back, Giovanni smiles and shakes hands before stepping into a private elevator.

INT. ROCKET HIDEOUT, GAME CORNER - CONTINUOUS

Giovanni exits the elevator into his secret hideout and heads down a hallway. All around him grunts clad in Team Rocket uniforms are busy at work.

He stops and nods towards a grunt pushing a large crate.

GIOVANNI

Looks like we finally got that S.S. Anne shipment in. Hurry up and get those prizes sorted away, will you?

GRUNT 1

On it, boss!

The grunt pushes the crate into another room and opens it. Inside are dozens of poké balls. He opens one, and EEVEE, a small, fox-like pokémon, pops out.

The stolen eevee looks around fearfully, before being roughly grabbed and forced into a display box. The box is carried out to the main floor and placed with the other prizes.

INT. GIOVANNI'S OFFICE, GAME CORNER - NIGHT

Giovanni sits in a dark room. A door opens: Jessie, James and MEOWTH, a small cat-like pokémon, enter.

MEOWTH

Greetings, boss! Congrats on the grand opening.

Jessie frowns, clearly resenting Meowth's informal tone.

GIOVANNI

Congratulations yourselves, I've just heard from our dear Dr. Fuji, apparently your little sabotage on Cinnabar was quite a success.

MEOWTH

Eh, we do what we can...

JESSIE
 (under her breath)
 You didn't do anything...

JAMES
 Is there anything else you wanted
 from us..?

GIOVANNI
 Why yes...
 (leans forward, smiles)
 ...I need you to intercept a parcel
 for me.

EXT. OUTSIDE PEWTER CITY - DAY

Ash, Misty, and Pikachu exit the forest. Misty wheels her bike down the trail. It's pretty busted up from the crash.

ASH
 Hey, uh, sorry again about your
 bike...

MISTY
 Oh trust me, you're paying for
 this. You do have a way to make
 money, right? You're like some kind
 of delivery boy..?

ASH
 (annoyed)
 I'm a pokémon trainer!
 (calming down)
 ...I'm just also delivering
 something. It's a long way until
 Saffron City though, so I'll have
 time to hit the gyms in Pewter,
 Cerulean...

Misty looks distracted suddenly.

MISTY
 Oh, you're going through Cerulean
 City, huh?

ASH
 Why? Where are you headed anyway?

MISTY
 Not Cerulean...

From a nearby ridge, Jessie, James, and Meowth watch the teens through binoculars.

JAMES

...well that's certainly a boy with a Pikachu.

JESSIE

Forget that, look who he's with.

MEOOTH

Wait, is that..?

JAMES

What's *she* doing out here?

JESSIE

Obviously delivering our parcel.

MEOOTH

Hold on, the boss said it was "the boy with the pikachu-"

JESSIE

Would they really send something that valuable with some kid, or would they entrust it to the Cerulean prodigy? Obviously we got bad intel.

(she smirks)

Change of plans.

EXT. PEWTER CITY - DAY

Walking through the city, Ash spots a pokémon trainer walking with an ape-like MANKEY. He checks his dex as he passes.

ASH

Huh. Mankey. Neat.

MISTY

You know for someone trying to be a pokémon trainer you sure don't know a lot about pokémon...

ASH

It's a long story, but I basically had to keep my mind on other things for a while...so I'm doing a bit of catch-up right now.

(turning towards her)

But hey, I'm learning fast. I mean I've already evolved a pokémon...twice!

(MORE)

ASH (CONT'D)

There's a gym in this town and when I win, I can use the prize money to pay you back for your bike.

MISTY

You're going to challenge Brock? You know what kind of gym it is, right? I think you're gonna have a tough time with this one...

ASH

Ye of little faith. Why don't you come with me and see for yourself?

MISTY

I think I'll spare myself the secondhand embarrassment; I need to rest anyway.

(she walks off)

Come find me at the pokémon center if you actually manage to win...

Ash glares after her, then turns to Pikachu.

ASH

Eh, who needs her. We've got this.

Pikachu nods confidently. They turn the corner and reach their destination. Pewter gym.

INT. PEWTER GYM - CONTINUOUS

Ash enters a large gymnasium. Paint marks a pokémon battle court on the floor, which is scuffed from many battles.

On the far end of the room, BROCK is lifting weights. He stops as he notices Ash.

ASH

Are you Brock?

BROCK

That's me. Here to put in a challenge?

Ash smirks and reaches for Butterfree's poké ball.

ASH

You know it.

INT. POKÉMON CENTER, PEWTER CITY - DAY

Misty sinks into one of the lobby couches and sighs.

GARY (O.S.)
Oh man, you're Misty.

Misty looks up to see Gary standing in front of her.

MISTY
Oh, hey...a fan?

GARY
Totally! Man, I can't believe I'm
just running into you like this, I
was just thinking about challenging
your gym in Cerulean after I-
(stops to think)
Wait, what are you doing here?

MISTY
Look if you want an autograph or
something-

They're interrupted as Jessie and James approach in disguise,
wearing business suits, wigs, and shades.

JESSIE
Pardon us for interrupting, but
could we have a minute with her?

JAMES
We're with the Silph Corporation.
It's rather urgent.

GARY
Oh, sorry. If this is like some
official thing...

JESSIE
Yes, we did *just* say it was quite
urgent. Please run along.

Gary and Misty look a little confused, but Gary shrugs and
exits the pokémon center.

MISTY
So, uh, how can I help you?

JESSIE
Again, we're from the Silph
Corporation. We're here about the
parcel you're delivering for
Professor Oak-

Misty is suspicious, but she plays along.

MISTY

Oh right, the *parcel*. The one going to Saffron City...

JAMES

Yes! That's the one!

JESSIE

We happened to have business in the area, so there's no longer any need to make such a long journey. We'll handle it from here.

MISTY

That makes sense. But there is one thing that's confusing me...

(beat)

...I've read a lot about him, but I've never actually met Professor Oak. I do know that Silph project is some kind of big deal though, I wonder what kind of low-lives could be trying to steal it...

Misty rips at Jessie's suit, exposing the "R" the Rocket uniform underneath.

MISTY (CONT'D)

...Wow, it's true. You creeps really do all wear these stupid uniforms.

Jessie grimaces and drops a poké ball. A huge violet cobra, ARBOK, pops out and lunges just short of Misty's face.

Other customers of the center scream and try to flee, but their escape is cut off by James's WEEZING, a horrific two-headed floating monstrosity.

MISTY (CONT'D)

(trying to be brave)

You know who I am, right?

James looks slightly nervous, but Jessie stays calm.

JESSIE

Oh I know, the young prodigy from Cerulean. I'm sure your pokémon would give Arbok and Weezing a run for their money...

(she grins)

(MORE)

JESSIE (CONT'D)

...so where are they? You don't have them with you, do you?

Misty winces as the Arbok hisses menacingly in her face.

JESSIE (CONT'D)

Now where. Is. The parcel?

INT. PEWTER GYM - DAY

Pikachu yelps as he barely avoids a massive, rocky tail as it crashes against the floor. He looks dirty and exhausted.

Above him the huge rock snake, ONIX, roars and attacks again.

Pikachu is struck and tumbles across the gym floor, landing unconscious at Ash's feet. Nearby, Butterfree lays similarly.

Across the gym, Brock returns Onix to his poké ball.

BROCK

Some advice, kid: this gym specializes in rock and ground type pokémon. Bug and electric types aren't very effective here.

ASH

Great, now he tells me...

EXT. PEWTER CITY - CONTINUOUS

Ash looks down at his feet bitterly as he heads for the pokémon center.

HONK. Ash looks up as he's nearly run down by Gary's car as it stops short out of the parking lot.

GARY

Hey! Watch it you-!
(recognizing him)
...Ash?

ASH

Oh great...

Gary parks and leaps out of the car, running over.

GARY

Well aren't you a sight? The heck are you doing so far from Pallet?
(noticing poké balls)
...Oh no, oh no-no-no!
(MORE)

GARY (CONT'D)

Don't tell me little Ashy-boy
missed getting trounced by me so
much he went and became a trainer
too!

ASH

Not everything is about you, Gary,
you know that?

GARY

I don't get it.
(thinking for a moment)
...Hey, lets battle--right now! I
wanna see how pathetic your pokémon
are.

ASH

I've gotta stop by the center, but
if you really want me to ruin you
day, then-

A scream rings out from the pokémon center. They both turn.

ASH (CONT'D)

...Misty.

GARY

(turning to Ash)
Dude, I *know* right? I can't believe
the Cerulean gym leader's just
hanging out here!

ASH

Wait, *what??*

INT. POKÉMON CENTER, PEWTER CITY - DAY

Team Rocket now has Misty and the other hostages huddled in
the corner, guarded by Arbok and Weezing.

JAMES

...you know maybe she really
doesn't have it.

JESSIE

Would you shut-

A radio on Jessie's hip squawks.

MEOWTH (RADIO)

What's taking you boobs so long?
Did ya get the parcel yet??

JESSIE
 (into radio)
 We're working on it!

EXT. POKÉMON CENTER, VIRIDIAN CITY - CONTINUOUS

On the roof outside, Meowth speaks into the radio.

MEOETH
 This was supposed to be an easy in-
 and-out! The boss doesn't need
 anymore real heat right now-
 (cellphone rings)
 Yeesh, the timing...
 (picks up, on speaker)
 Heyyy boss, was just thinking of
 you-

GIOVANNI (PHONE)
 You said you were going to make
 contact an hour ago. Have you
 acquired the parcel?

MEOETH
 We're real close, just a little
 snag, but-

GIOVANNI (PHONE)
 A "snag?"

MEOETH
 Boss, we're you're best men, I'll
 give you a call when it's all taken
 care of. We won't screw this up.

GIOVANNI (PHONE)
 For your sake, let's hope.

Meowth sighs as Giovanni hangs up.

Ash and Gary watch from below, hiding behind a car.

ASH
 Is that a talking pokémon?

GARY
 I've heard it's possible. Rare
 though.

ASH
 I wonder who he's talking to...

Ash and Gary move and look through the window.

ASH (CONT'D)

Oh man. Do you think it's Team Rocket, like from the news?

GARY

Gotta be.

(pulls out poké ball)

Don't worry, Ash. I'll handle this.

ASH

(grimacing)

Damn it. I want to help, but my pokémon are still knocked out from the gym battle...

GARY

(face lights up)

...Wait, did you seriously lose to Brock?? Oh that's good...

ASH

Come on! Focus!

INT. POKÉMON CENTER, PEWTER CITY - CONTINUOUS

The center jingle rings as Ash and Gary step through the door, Gary throws two poké balls. Out pops squirtle, now evolved into WARTORTLE, and Gary's pidgeotto.

Before Team Rocket can react, Pidgeotto descends on Arbok and Wartortle blasts Weezing across the room with a jet of water.

GARY

Never fear, Gary's here.

ASH

God I hate you.

JESSIE

Who the he-

Jessie is blasted with water by Wartortle. Pissed, she wipes the water from her face.

JESSIE (CONT'D)

(getting up)

Oh, you want to play? Arbok!

JAMES

Weezing!

Arbok dodges Pidgeotto's claws and lunges at the bird, barely missing. Weezing spits lumps of poison gunk from across the room at Wartortle.

Gary's pokémon fight and dodge, but it's clear they're out-matched. Wartortle is struck by one of the gunk shots, and Arbok bites its fangs into Pidgeotto. Both Pokémons collapse.

Jessie nods, and Arbok rushes towards Gary, knocking him to the ground and looming over him. Ash backs towards the door.

JESSIE

Game over.

MISTY

Ash! They want the package! You've gotta get out of here.

Ash flees out the door. The jingle rings.

JAMES

Wait, was that..?

JESSIE

...the boy with the Pikachu.

EXT. POKÉMON CENTER, PEWTER CITY - CONTINUOUS

Ash hops into Gary's car and ducks down. He pulls out the damaged parcel. He looks nearby on the seat. The baseball.

Meowth leaps into the vehicle, claws extended. Ash barely dodges as Meowth slashes at him, ripping the upholstery.

ASH

(holding up the parcel)
Wait, I give! I give!

MEOWTH

Smart move, kid.

Meowth takes the parcel as Jessie and James arrive with their pokémon.

MEOWTH (CONT'D)

Gotta do everything myself...

JESSIE

Oh, quiet, Meowth.

JAMES

Guys...

The sound of sirens. Police cars rush toward the center.

JESSIE

Time to go. James?

JAMES

On it. Weezing: smoke screen.

Weezing spews dark smoke from its twin maws. Within seconds the area surrounding the pokémon center is totally obscured.

The police cars try to break but are quickly blinded, and the crunch of crashing vehicles is heard.

Ash coughs as the smoke clears. Team Rocket is gone. He cringes as he looks at Gary's car, one of the police cars rammed into it. It's not looking good.

MISTY

(rushing over)

Ash!

ASH

C'mon, lets get out of here.

MISTY

Don't you want to wait for your friend?

ASH

Bad idea. He's gonna be real mad when he sees this...

Ash leads Misty away from the scene as hostages rush out.

Gary and his wounded pokémon stumble out behind the hostages. He freezes when he sees his car.

GARY

SON OF A-

EXT. OUTSIDE PEWTER CITY - DAY

Ash and Misty slow their escape slightly outside town.

ASH

Why didn't you tell me?

MISTY

Hey, I'm fine by the way, thanks for asking...

ASH

You're a gym leader!

MISTY

I don't really have to tell most people. Have you considered this is just yet another "you don't know anything" situation?

ASH

Why aren't you at your gym? Where are your pokémon?

Misty sighs.

MISTY

Look. I started training pokémon real young, and I was good at it. I won all the junior tournaments, some of the real ones.

(she looks off)

I was "the prodigy." Cerulean capitalized on the publicity and gave me my own gym. I was the youngest to ever do it.

(turns to Ash)

But that meant I was a League official. I couldn't compete anymore. There was nowhere left to climb. No more challenge.

ASH

So you ran away?

MISTY

Left my pokémon at the gym and didn't look back. Not even really sure why. I guess I was looking for that spark again, just anything different.

Ash studies her and smiles.

ASH

Y'know, I'm not saying I need the help, but if you're really looking for something to do, maybe you could, I don't know...

(beat)

...help coach me on some of this pokémon battling stuff?

Misty stops as she considers it.

MISTY
Teaching you to be a decent pokémon
trainer...
(she smirks)
...that *would* be a challenge.

ASH
Hey!

MISTY
It wouldn't be easy. I mean, you
have a long way to go. And I mean a
long, long, *long*...

ASH
I get it.

Misty smiles and extends her hand.

MISTY
Alright, Ash. Ready to go to
school?

ASH
(shaking her hand)
Let's do this.

Misty looks confused as she remembers something.

MISTY
Wait, but what about your delivery?
Are you going to get in trouble for
giving it to Team Rocket?

Ash smiles and pulls the master ball out of his pack.

ASH
I don't think so...I made a little
switch in Gary's car.

MISTY
Wait, so what do they have?

INT. GIOVANNI'S OFFICE, GAME CORNER - NIGHT

Giovanni holds up the signed baseball.

GIOVANNI
...Is this a joke?

The Team Rocket trio grovel for forgiveness across the room.

JAMES

Would it be better if it was..?

GIOVANNI

It would be better if I had one other competent mind in my employ!

MEOETH

It's not our fault boss, the kid must've swapped it out-

GIOVANNI

And you didn't think to check??

JESSIE

We'll handle it. Send us to track him down again, and we'll be back-

GIOVANNI

No. You've bungled this enough. I don't need more heat being brought down on my head right now...

(he ponders)

...we know where it's going. That's the play we'll make.

JESSIE

We won't let you down.

GIOVANNI

Oh, I really hope you don't...

In the shadows behind Giovanni's chair, something big stirs. Still mostly obscured by darkness, the spined form of Giovanni's monstrous NIDOKING lumbers forward and growls.

GIOVANNI (CONT'D)

...that would be...such a shame.

Giovanni studies the signature on the ball.

"Ash"

EXT. ASH AND MISTY'S CAMP, ROUTE 3 - DAY

Ash, Pikachu and Butterfree sit and watch as Misty writes on a portable chalkboard.

MISTY

...if you're going to beat Brock, you need a better understanding of the type of pokémon and their weaknesses.

(MORE)

MISTY (CONT'D)
 (sketches diagram)
 Brock specializes in rock type
 pokémon, and the two most common
 weakness to rock types are..?

ASH
 (shrugging/joking)
 Paper?

MISTY
 Very funny. No...

The board reads: "Rock weak against: ____" She fills it out as she speaks.

MISTY (CONT'D)
 Grass types...
 (writing)
 ...and water types.

MONTAGE - VARIOUS

A) EXT. A PIER - DAY - Ash fishes off the pier with Pikachu. Pikachu gets excited as Ash gets a bite. Ash pulls up a blue tadpole pokémon, POLIWAG.

B) INT. PEWTER GYM - DAY - Poliwhirl, now evolved into POLIWHIRL, leaps around the gym dodging attacks as it pelts Onyx with blasts of water.

Onyx groans and collapses. Brock looks stunned.

C) EXT. CERULEAN CITY - DAY - Ash admires his new BOULDER BADGE as he waits for Misty outside the Cerulean gym. She appears with two poké balls in her hands and grins.

D) EXT. ASH AND MISTY'S CAMP, ROUTE 4 - DAY - Ash battles Butterfree against Misty's STARMIE. The armored starfish pokémon eventually K.O.s Butterfree with a water pulse.

Ash looks disappointed, but Misty pats him on the back.

E) EXT. ASH AND MISTY'S CAMP, ROUTE 6 - DAY - Ash, Pikachu, Poliwhirl and Butterfree watch Misty write on the chalkboard.

"Electric is resisted by: Ground, Dragon, and..."

She taps the final weakness. "...Grass."

F) EXT. WILDERNESS, ROUTE 11 - DAY - A squat reptile pokémon with a large bulb on its back flees through the foliage. The BULBASAUR begins to tire and collapses.

Above, Butterfree continues to shake sleep powder down on the snoozing Bulbasaur. Ash tosses a poké ball and catches it.

G) INT. VERMILLION GYM - DAY - Bulbasaur, now evolved into IVYSAUR, growls as its struck by an electric shock from Lieutenant Surge's RAICHU, but it shakes it off.

Ivysaur proceeds whip out long vines from the growth on its back, restraining the raichu and slamming it onto the ground.

H) EXT. BUSY ROAD, ROUTE 12 - DAY - Ash admires his boulder badge and new THUNDER BADGE as he walks along the side of the road.

Misty gets his attention: there's a bad traffic jam going into a tunnel. They walk closer and see there's a massive sleeping SNORLAX blocking any cars from getting through.

Ash grins and pulls out a poké ball.

I) EXT. ROUTE 12 - DAY - The Snorlax roars as it lumbers with surprising speed. It's stopped as Poliwhirl, now evolved into the larger POLIWRATH, leaps out and punches Snorlax in the gut, knocking the wind out of it. Ash tosses a poké ball.

J) EXT. ASH AND MISTY'S CAMP, ROUTE 16 - DAY - Misty writes on the chalkboard. The usual audience is there, plus Snorlax.

She begins to write "Grass is weak to: Fire, Flying, Ice..."

Ash smiles and takes the chalk, filling in the blank. "Bug."

K) INT. CELADON GYM - DAY - Erika's VILEPLUME, a squat pokémon with a massive flower on its head, spins wildly, creating a tornado of razor-sharp leaves.

Above, Butterfree dodges and flaps gusts of wind with its wings to create an opening, diving in and pelting the vileplume with a sonic scream.

The vileplume is stunned, and butterfree uses the opportunity to tackle it at high speed, knocking it out.

END OF MONTAGE

EXT. ASH AND MISTY'S CAMP, ROUTE 7 - DAY

On their makeshift battle court, Pikachu dodges rapidly as Misty's Starmie tries to nail it with pulses of water.

Getting in close, Pikachu backflips over one last water pulse, just barely skimming the liquid, and blasts Starmie in the back with a bolt of electricity just before landing.

The armored starfish convulses for a moment, then collapses.

ASH
 (leaping for joy)
 Yes! Just like we practiced, nice
 job Pikachu!
 (turning to Misty)
 Wait, I finally beat you. Does that
 mean..?

MISTY
 Yup. You earned it.

Misty smiles and tosses him something. He catches it. The
 CASCADE BADGE. He pins it in his jacket with the other three.

MISTY (CONT'D)
 Congrats, you've really come a long
 way. And I do mean a long, long,
 long-

ASH
 (laughing)
 Yeah, yeah. I get it. That reminds
 me, I've got something for you
 too...

Ash signals to Snorlax nearby. The chubby mammal steps aside
 to reveal a fancy new bike behind it.

MISTY
 (gasping)
 You got me a bike!
 (she smirks at him)
 It's about time.

ASH
 I wanted to make sure it was a good
 one, and I finally had some decent
 money after the gym in Celadon.

Misty hops on the bike and rides circles around Ash.

MISTY
 Well, we're almost to Saffron.
 Besides your big delivery there's
 another gym there...
 (she smirks as she passes)
 ...maybe you can use that money to
 take a girl out to dinner or
 something...

ASH
 (flustered)
 Wait. A girl, you mean like you,
 or..?

A roar echoes out from a nearby canyon. Misty stops pedaling and both teens stare out in the noise's direction.

MISTY
 Was that a pokémon?

ASH
 Sounds like a big one...

They head to the canyon's edge and peer down. A large dragon with a flaming tail soars above the river below.

MISTY
 Wow, it's a-

ASH
 Charizard.

MISTY
 Well look at you, didn't even check
 your little pokédex.

ASH
 Don't need to. When I was a kid,
 charizard was my favorite pokémon.
 (grips a poké ball)
 ...I've gotta have it.

They hurry down into the canyon on a thin trail along the edge of the rocky wall. The CHARIZARD soars ahead.

MISTY
 Be careful, your pokémon are good,
 but that looks like a strong one...

ASH
 I know. That makes it the perfect
 sixth for my team.

EXT. CANYON'S BASIN, ROUTE 7 - DAY

The charizard lands on a rocky shore to drink from the river.

The teens peer out from behind a boulder on the other side.

ASH
 Here we go...

Charizard looks up as it hears the pop of a poké ball opening. Poliwrath now stands in the middle of the river.

ASH (CONT'D)
Water beats fire. Easy.

The muscular toad spits a high-powered jet of water at Charizard. Caught off-guard, Charizard is hit hard and slams into the rocky wall of the canyon.

Poliwrath fires another blast, but Charizard is ready this time, taking to the air. Poliwrath continues to spit at Charizard as it flies along the canyon wall, the impact of the blasts causing bits of rock to fly through the air.

Poliwrath is forced to shield its eyes from the latest explosion of rocky debris. When the dust clears, Charizard is already rushing towards it.

Poliwrath manages to catch Charizard's arm before its claws can reach it, but Charizard whips its body around and slams Poliwrath with its tail. Poliwrath crashes hard into the canyon wall and passes out.

ASH (CONT'D)
Poliwrath!

Charizard lumbers towards Poliwrath's body and begins to build up flames in its mouth. Poliwrath dematerializes into energy as its returned to Ash's poké ball.

Charizard turns and spots Ash and Misty. It growls.

ASH (CONT'D)
Oh crap.

MISTY
Ash..!

ASH
Don't worry...I'll, uh...lead it away!

Charizard roars and flies towards them. Ash pushes Misty back behind the boulder and runs off down the river bank.

ASH (CONT'D)
Over here! Yeah this way!

Ash ducks down and narrowly avoids a stream of fire spewing from the dragon's mouth.

ASH (CONT'D)
Hot, hot, hot, hot!

Charizard is just behind him now. Ash throws down a poké ball and Ivysaur pops out.

ASH (CONT'D)
Ivysaur! Vine whip! Vine whip!!

They both leap into the air over the river. Ash grabs onto Ivysaur as the pokémon extends its vines, grabbing a branch growing out from the canyon wall above. They swing across the river, barely avoiding another fiery death.

Ivysaur retracts its vines, pulling them up towards the branch. Ash runs along the canyon wall while clutching Ivysaur, and Charizard scrambles up the rock behind him.

ASH (CONT'D)
Ahh! Why is this my favorite pokémon??

Ash runs along the wall towards an outcropping ledge.

ASH (CONT'D)
Release!

Ivysaur obeys, and Ash kicks off the wall, barely carrying both of them onto the ledge.

ASH (CONT'D)
Alright, screw this!

Just as Charizard is nearly upon them, Ash hurls a poké ball back and strikes it in the face. Charizard is dematerialized and sucked inside. The ball falls to the canyon floor.

ASH (CONT'D)
C'mon...

The poké ball stays still for a moment. Then twitches. Then shakes violently.

ASH (CONT'D)
C'mon..!

The poké ball explodes, and Charizard bursts out. It glares up at Ash.

MISTY
Ash! It's still too strong! You've got to wear it down more!

ASH
I can see that! Oh shi-

Ash barely dodges as Charizard blasts the ledge with a high powered fireball. The rock beneath his feet explodes, and him and Ivysaur tumble down into the river shallows.

Ash opens his eyes to see Ivysaur laying limp nearby. He can hear Charizard slowly approaching. He crawls over to Ivysaur.

ASH (CONT'D)
Ivysaur...are you okay?

The pokémon groans, he's injured, but alive.

GROWL. Ash turns to see Charizard looming over him.

ASH (CONT'D)
Hey. Heads up.

Ash hurls a poké ball up into the air past Charizard's head. Charizard looks up in confusion, and Ash grabs Ivysaur and rolls out from under Charizard.

High in the air, the poké ball opens. Snorlax's massive form pops out, and crashes down the earth, body slamming Charizard into the river, creating a massive splash.

Ash pulls himself to his feet on the river bank. Charizard groans under the incredible weight of Snorlax.

Ash limps over to Charizard's face and taps it with the button of a poké ball.

ASH (CONT'D)
Gotcha.

Charizard is sucked inside, and the ball stays still in Ash's hand.

Looking very tired, Ash smiles down at the poké ball. Misty rushes out from hiding into the river with him.

MISTY
Wipe that smile off your face, you almost just got both of us killed! You're a moron, you know that, right?

ASH
(smiling at her)
A moron with a full team of six pokémon.

Misty rolls her eyes but can't help but smile.

MISTY
C'mon, lets get to Saffron City...

EXT. MOTEL, LAVENDER TOWN - NIGHT

From the parking lot, we see cheap motel. The lights in the rooms are off.

We focus in on a window where the blinds are drawn. They stir, and someone peers through for a moment.

INT. FUJI'S MOTEL ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Dr. Fuji pulls away from the window. He looks tired, like he hasn't slept in days.

He heads over to the stove and turns it on, placing a tea kettle over the flame.

There is a noise from outside. Fuji turns around and watches the door fearfully. Silence.

He inches across the dark room and opens the door. The parking lot is just as dark and empty as before.

Behind him in the room there is a quiet flash, and Mewtwo's silhouette appears.

Fuji screams as he's suddenly lifted off the ground and begins rocketing towards the night sky.

Hundreds of feet above the ground, Fuji weeps as Mewtwo teleports in front of him.

FUJI
Please! I'm sorry, I'm sorry! I'll
do whatever you want..!

Mewtwo floats nearer, and its eyes glow.

Fuji screams in pain as his eyes glow and Mewtwo psychically probes his memories.

We see flashes of Fuji's memories. Fuji conducts the scientists as a less-fearsome Mewtwo is experimented on to become more like the monster we see now.

We see one more memory flash. Fuji shaking Giovanni's hand.

Fuji's screams reach a crescendo as Mewtwo probes harder.

Down below in the motel room, the kettle whistles loudly.

EXT. SAFFRON CITY - DAY

Ash and Misty walk the streets of Saffron City, a bustling metropolis of tall skyscrapers.

They arrive at the tallest of the skyscrapers: Silph Co.

INT. LOBBY, SILPH CO. - DAY

Ash and Misty walk up to the main desk. Ash pulls out the master ball and places it in front of the receptionist.

ASH
I've got a delivery for, uh...I
guess the company.

OAK (O.S.)
Hey, didn't I tell you not to open
that?

Ash turns to see Oak and Delia entering from a side room. He runs over to greet them.

OAK (CONT'D)
Eh, at least you got it here in one
piece.

ASH
Mom! Professor!

DELIA
(hugging Ash)
Oh! My baby! I missed you!

ASH
(pulling away)
Mom...

OAK
How was the journey, kid? Anything
exciting happen along the way?

Ash slyly opens his jacket to reveal his four gym badges.

ASH
Oh, y'know, a few things. I think I
did alright for myself...

OAK
Hotdang, kid! And what about your
other assignment..?

Ash pops open a poké ball and Pikachu appears. He picks him up and lifts him towards Oak, who instinctively flinches.

Oak peeks open an eye to see Pikachu smiling harmlessly.

OAK (CONT'D)

Huh...

(eyeing Ash)

...you didn't just catch a new
Pikachu and replace mine, did you?

Pikachu frowns slightly and zaps Oak with a small shock.

OAK (CONT'D)

...okay, that's the real one.

Ash and Delia laugh. Misty timidly approaches.

DELIA

And who's this, Ash?

(gasps)

Did you get a girlfriend??

ASH

What! No she's-

Misty laughs and extends her hand.

MISTY

Misty. Nice to meet you.

OAK

Ah, the Cerulean prodigy herself.
It's a pleasure. How'd you get
stuck traveling with this one, you
lose a bet?

MISTY

(laughing)

Something like that.

ASH

Don't tell him that, he'll believe
you...

Oak walks over and takes the master ball from the front desk.

OAK

You're actually just in time, I'm
here for a big fundraiser dinner
and the company president would've
been on my ass if I didn't have the
master ball prototype with me.

ASH

The master ball? Is that what that is?

OAK

(zipping his lips)

I've already said too much!

(grinning)

But maybe I could tell you a *little* about it at dinner tonight, you wanna come? Your mom's gonna be there.

Ash turns to Misty.

ASH

I did kind of promise to take someone out to dinner...

Misty smiles and shrugs.

MISTY

I guess it counts.

OAK

Great! It'll be a great time, all kinds of people are gonna be there.

(to Misty)

You might even know some of them.

INT. DINNER PARTY, SILPH CO. - NIGHT

Sophisticated guests dine and chat around dozens of round tables. A large window overlooks the city skyline--we're on a very high floor.

At their own table, Ash, Misty, Oak and Delia eat and joke.

OAK

(mouth full of food)

...and I'm thinking, that sounds a little far-fetched!

(laughs at his anecdote)

...Speaking of which, can you pass the farfetch'd?

Ash passes Oak a platter with what looks like a roast duck with a large leek served beside it.

Two WAITERS approach, one male and one female.

FEMALE WAITER

(to Ash)
More water, sir?

ASH

Uh no, I'm good.

MALE WAITER

Very good sir.

The waiters leave.

ASH

So Professor, you still haven't
told me anything about your trip.

Oaks mood darkens a bit. He plays with his food, distracted.

OAK

Ah, well, in the end there wasn't
much I could do for my colleagues
at Cinnabar Labs. They had a bit
of...trouble over there. Not sure
it'd make for very pleasant dinner
conversation.

MISTY

Trouble? Like an accident?

OAK

Bit of an understatement, it was
more like a horror show...

ASH

Oh come on! You can't just say
something like that and not tell us
about it!

Oak looks around then leans forward, speaking hushed.

OAK

Alright, but this doesn't leave
this table, got it?

Ash, Misty, and Delia zip their lips and nod.

OAK (CONT'D)

Well, apparently they were trying
to Frankenstein together a new,
powerful breed of pokémon
and...well it went about as well as
it did for Dr. Frankenstein,
really. They made a monster.

Oak looks down at his plate as he speaks.

OAK (CONT'D)

It tore the place apart. It's not hard to understand why, genetically modifying a clone like that...they probably conducted the gene splicing treatments while it was at least semi-conscious. The pain it must've endured...

(he sighs)

...Pokémon are more intelligent than animals, but every living thing has its limits. How could anything go through something like that and not be born cruel?

DELIA

Maybe this really isn't good dinner conversation...

ASH

Wait, you said it was a clone? What the heck did they clone it from?

OAK

Now this part I'm still somewhat skeptical about, but I'll tell you what Dr. Fuji told me. There's an old myth about the origin of pokémon, a single pokémon that all others can trace their lineage to-

GIOVANNI (O.S.)

Mew.

The group looks up to see Giovanni standing nearby.

OAK

Giovanni! I didn't know you were here, old friend, I would've said hello.

GIOVANNI

(taking a seat)

I should be the one apologizing for eavesdropping so rudely. But I've always been something of a fan of this story.

(nodding to Misty)

Misty.

MISTY

Oh, hey.

Ash studies Giovanni. There's something familiar there.

ASH

You guys know each other..?

MISTY

Giovanni's the gym leader of Viridian City.

GIOVANNI

We run into each other at the occasional League event.

(extends his hand to Ash)

Again, apologies, it seems I've totally misplaced my manners this evening--and you are..?

ASH

(shaking his hand)

Ash...Ash Ketchum.

OAK

Heh, watch out, Gio. The boy's still pretty green, but he's finally shaping into a pretty decent pokémon trainer. Don't be surprised when he comes knocking at your gym door.

GIOVANNI

Ah, well I'll have to watch my back then. What kind of pokémon do you train, Ash?

ASH

Well I-

OAK

You remember that crazy Pikachu I could never train? Boom! A few weeks and the kid's got him tame as a kitten.

Giovanni studies Ash thoughtfully.

GIOVANNI

Is that so? That *is* impressive...

(refocusing)

...but please, continue with your story, I'm distracting again.

Oak looks hesitant to continue.

GIOVANNI (CONT'D)

If you're concerned about betraying Dr. Fuji's confidence, you can relax. I'm familiar with the Mewtwo project.

OAK

You are?

GIOVANNI

He actually came to me for funding at one point, but I turned him down. That kind of genetic experiment is illegal, after all.
(nodding to Oak)
Now please, continue.

Satisfied, Oak nods and resumes his story.

OAK

Anyway, whether or not Mew actually shared the DNA of all pokémon or even exists, the story goes that Mew was incredibly powerful, and capable of any kind of pokémon attack, regardless of type. Now if Mewtwo-
(nodding at Giovanni)
-is really cloned from the DNA of Mew as Fuji claimed, then one can only imagine the, well...

GIOVANNI

...Potential.

Oak chuckles and raises a glass to Giovanni.

OAK

I was going to say "danger," but way to keep a glass half-full, Giovanni.

(refocusing)

But either way, here's hoping the poor creature finds peace out there in the wild and doesn't bother anyone any further.

GIOVANNI

Yes, let's hope.

Ash shoots upright in his chair as it finally clicks.

ASH
 (pointing at Giovanni)
 You! You were talking to Team
 Rocket over the phone back in
 Pewter City! That's why I recognize
 your voice.

Delia, Misty and some of the nearby guests look shocked. Oak
 looks offended, but Giovanni remains calm.

OAK
 Ash! Giovanni is a trusted
 colleague, I've known him for
 years!

ASH
 I recognize his voice! He was
 talking to that Meowth thing when
 they were trying to steal the
 master ball!

GIOVANNI
 It's quite alright, maybe the boy
 saw me on TV at the opening of the
 Game Corner. That's probably why my
 voice sounds so familiar...

ASH
 But-

OAK
 (interrupting)
 Ooh! Say, do friends of the owner
 drink free at your fancy new
 casino?

GIOVANNI
 (laughing)
 I'm sure something like that could
 be arranged...

Ash looks around desperately but can tell no one else is
 going to take his side on this. He sinks back into his seat.

GIOVANNI (CONT'D)
 ...but what was it the boy said
 about a "master ball?" Oak, is this
 your big secret project I've been
 hearing so much buzz about?

Ash squirms in frustration as he watches Oak turn giddy with
 excitement.

OAK

I thought no one was ever going to ask! Technically it's still a few weeks out from the official announcement, but what the hey--I think we've got a working prototype!

DELIA

You never told us what it is.

Oak pulls out a poké ball for his demonstration.

OAK

Consider the poké ball. The old reliable tool of the pokémon trainer. You toss it at the pokémon you want to catch, and if it works, the pokémon becomes your loyal ally...

(trails off for effect)

...but that's only if it works. A strong pokémon can break free of the ball if it's not properly subdued. And stubborn pokémon, even if caught, might still disobey their master.

Oak tosses the poké ball over his shoulder, nearly hitting an annoyed waiter.

OAK (CONT'D)

But there's been many advances since the design of the poké ball, and sure, we've been sold minor upgrades over the years like great balls and ultra balls...but those were just stepping stones.

Oak begins sketching the master ball on a napkin.

OAK (CONT'D)

The master ball can capture any pokémon, even at full strength, and make them loyal. It's the ultimate poké ball.

GIOVANNI

Sounds like it's going to change the game.

OAK

I must admit part of me feels it takes some of the sport out of it, but if the end result is pokémon being caught without being harmed...

(shaking is head)

...and besides, even after it's announced, the tech is a long way out from widespread adoption. Just the prototype they've got upstairs in the lab cost millions to manufacture.

GIOVANNI

Well, impressive as always, Oak. I can't wait to see it for myself.

ASH

Yeah, I bet.

DELIA

Ash...

Giovanni smiles and stands up.

GIOVANNI

I think I've intruded on your evening long enough. Enjoy your dinner.

Ash glares at Giovanni as he goes.

OAK

C'mon, kid, I know Giovanni can be kind of a stuck-up prick, but he's not a bad guy...plus he's got connections! I bet he could get you free passes to the Safari Zone if you asked.

Fed up, Ash stands up to leave.

ASH

I have to go to the bathroom.

OAK

(skeptically)

Oh, is that where you're going? You sure you're not going to go harass that nice man?

Ash continues without looking back.

ASH
Pretty sure!

OAK
(rolling his eyes)
Oh whatever...
(to waiter)
...hey can we get some more
farfetch'd over here!

INT. HALLWAY, SILPH CO. - CONTINUOUS

Ash finds Giovanni by the elevators. He's talking to the male waiter from before. They're otherwise alone in the hall.

ASH
You might have them fooled, but I
know what I heard.

GIOVANNI
Ash. "The boy with the pikachu..."
(approaching)
So what, you think I'm some kind of
criminal mastermind involved with
Team Rocket, here to steal the
precious master ball project?

ASH
Pretty much.

GIOVANNI
Hm. Well if I was...and I *had* sent
those goons after you in Pewter,
that would mean I already knew
about the master ball and where you
were taking it, no?

Ash backs up as Giovanni approaches. He's losing his nerve.

ASH
I guess...

GIOVANNI
And well, if I knew *that*, and I
didn't come here prepared and with
the proper help...well then I'd be
a pretty lousy criminal mastermind,
wouldn't I?

Ash holds his ground and pulls out a poké ball.

ASH
Whatever you're planning, don't.

GIOVANNI

Tell me, during dinner, did any of the servers look familiar to you? The president of the company is a good friend of mine, and I spoke with him during the planning of this event...

Behind him, the male waiter removes his wig and glasses, revealing himself to be James.

GIOVANNI (CONT'D)

...let's just say the catering came highly recommended.

ASH

Wait, you mean all of them are..?

GIOVANNI

Check if you'd like.

Ash hurries back towards the party room.

INT. DINNER PARTY, SILPH CO. - CONTINUOUS

Back in the dinner room, the female waiter throws off her own wig, revealing herself to be Jessie. Around the room the other servers throw down their trays and produce weapons and poké balls.

Guests scream as shots are fired into the air and vicious pokémon are released into the room. Meowth pops out from underneath one of the bars and laughs.

Misty jumps to her feet and reaches for a poké ball, but she stops short as Jessie's Arbok lunges just short of her face.

Jessie strides over and plucks the poké ball from Misty.

JESSIE

I'll take that.

INT. HALLWAY, SILPH CO. - CONTINUOUS

Rounding the corner, Ash stops when he sees the scene unfold in the party room.

He turns around just in time to see James's Weezing rushing towards him from down the hall. Ash throws a poké ball down and Poliwrath pops out.

ASH
Bubble beam!

Poliwrath spews a high-powered barrage of bubbles at Weezing. The strange bubbles pop forcefully and loudly on contact, stunning Weezing. Ash and Poliwrath use the distraction to duck past and hurry towards the elevators.

Ash mashes the "up" button on the elevator, but the lights indicate it's several floors down. He turns, Weezing is recovering and heading for them.

ASH (CONT'D)
I don't think we have time to wait!
Poliwrath..!

Poliwrath grunts and forces the elevator doors open. Just behind them, Weezing spews smog at them. James rushes over.

JAMES
No, wait..!

By the time the smoke clears Ash is gone. James looks down into the elevator shaft.

Giovanni comes up behind him and points up.

GIOVANNI
There.

They look just in time to see Ash and Ivysaur using the pokémon's vines to climb into a ventilation shaft.

GIOVANNI (CONT'D)
Notify the acquisition team, we
need to get back to the party.

INT. DINNER PARTY, SILPH CO. - NIGHT

The guests have been huddled together in the center of the room, surrounded by the Rockets' pokémon. Arbok stays trained on Misty. The Rockets guard the perimeters of the room.

JESSIE
(circling the hostages)
Listen up, people! You stay put and
stay quiet, and we won't have any
problems. Try anything...

JESSIE (CONT'D)
(passing Misty, smirking)
...well, I almost hope some of you
do...

Misty glares at her.

DELIA
(whispering)
What's Team Rocket doing here? Oh!
And where's Ash??

OAK
I'm sure he's fine, Delia...

James and Weezing enter, escorting Giovanni like a hostage.

OAK (CONT'D)
Giovanni..!

GIOVANNI
(smiling sadly)
I'm afraid they got me too...

INT. OFFICE FLOOR, SILPH CO. - NIGHT

A team of rocket grunts creep through the dark of an upper office floor. Floating metallic pokémon, MAGNEMITES, use their singular, glowing eyes as flashlights to guide them.

A radio squawks, and one of the grunts answers it.

JAMES (RADIO)
Acquisition team, are you in
position?

GRUNT 1
Almost to the target, no hitches
yet.

JAMES
Be advised...there's a possible
hostile. He's just a kid, but he
has pokémon.

GRUNT 1
Roger that.
(turning to other grunts)
You hear that? We've got kids.
Anyone bring a coloring book?

The other grunts chuckle quietly. They fail to notice a shadow climb down from the ceiling elsewhere in the room.

ASH (O.S.)
I'd prefer a sucker, personally.

The grunts try to locate the location of the voice, but before they can act, two vines shoot down from one of the ceiling vents and grab one of them. He screams as he's forcefully yanked upwards and slammed into the ceiling.

A shadow moves through the room, dashing between cubicles.

The rockets open fire, and the magnemites blast bolts of electricity as well.

Sounds of poké balls opening. Butterfree flies into view and pelts the grunts with a super sonic scream.

While they cover their ears and flinch, Pikachu dashes between their legs, delivering each an electric shock as he goes.

The grunts that don't go down throw their own pokéballs. A screaming GOLBAT takes to the air after Butterfree, and two raticates take off after Pikachu.

Golbat and Butterfree's sonic screams trade and clash in the air as they duel. Pikachu turns to see the angry raticates on its tail and speeds off into the cubicle maze.

The raticates growl as they pursue, climbing over desks and cubicles recklessly. They lose sight of Pikachu and stop to sniff the air, one stopping on top of an open copy machine.

Pikachu slams the copy machine lid he was hiding behind down on the raticate and flees before the other can catch him.

The copy machine turns on and spits out several pictures of the squished raticate's pained expression.

Ash peers out from behind one of the cubicles, pulling back to narrowly avoid a stray zap from a magnemite. He spots Pikachu running from the raticate.

ASH (CONT'D)
Pikachu! Look ou-

Ash ducks just in time to avoid being beheaded by a mighty karate chop from a muscular MACHOKE. The attack sends the entire cubicle and desk flying.

ASH (CONT'D)
Whoah!

Pikachu scurries into a ventilation shaft, and the larger raticate struggles to follow. The raticate rounds corners and scurries upwards, but Pikachu is always just ahead.

Finally it rounds a corner and finds Pikachu waiting, facing it. Behind Pikachu is Ivysaur.

Both of Ash's pokémon grin. Raticate whimpers.

From outside, the ventilation shaft can be seen rattling and sparking with electricity as the raticate squeaks in pain.

Ash scrambles and dodges to avoid the angry machoke as it sends office furniture flying.

ASH (CONT'D)
You asked for it!

He throws a pokéball down. Snorlax springs out and roars, but is punched hard in the gut by the machoke. Snorlax whines and tumbles backwards towards Ash, who barely manages to avoid being crushed.

ASH (CONT'D)
Uh...Butterfree! A little help!

Butterfree abandons its aerial battle and swoops around Machoke, fluttering just fast enough to avoid its blows.

ASH (CONT'D)
Super sonic!

Butterfree screeches in Machoke's face. The machoke blinks its eyes in confusion and begins to swing its arms blindly around the room in a state of enraged stupor.

The golbat swoops towards Butterfree again, but is struck by a stray swing from the machoke, slamming it hard into a wall.

The confused machoke continues its aimless rampage until Snorlax pops back up and slams it into the ground.

Ash takes a deep breath. Was that all of them..?

Pikachu and Ivysaur climb out of the vent and Pikachu calls out just in time to warn Ash.

PIKACHU
Pika!!

Ash ducks as beams of fire, electricity and ice fly past him.

He looks up to see the final grunt, Grunt 1, standing by floating MAGNETON, a strange pokémon resembling three magnemites mashed together.

GRUNT 1
Damn. So close.

ASH

Man, how much do they pay you to be this evil? Seriously?

GRUNT 1

Less talking, more running, kid.

(to Magnetron)

Give him a another tri attack.

The magnetron's three eyes spark with different elements, and another set of icy, sparking and flaming beams shoot out.

This time Snorlax hops in the way as a shield. Its blubber resists most of the damage, but it still cries out in pain.

Ash runs as objects around the room combust and freeze around him as he dodges. His other pokémon try to assist but are constantly cut off by different beams.

Watching Ash duck into one of the last cubicles, Grunt 1 grins.

GRUNT 1 (CONT'D)

Nowhere left to run...

The magnetron charges up a final set of beams, but as it fires, the sound of a poké ball openings rings out.

A massive fireball explodes out from the cubicle, overpowering the beams and striking the magnetron. Grunt 1 is sent flying from the impact and strikes a wall, passing out.

Just as the Magnetron attempts to rise, Charizard bursts through the flames and slams it hard, sending it crashing out the window of the building.

EXT. OUTSIDE SILPH CO. - CONTINUOUS

On the street below, Gary walks towards his car with an ATTRACTIVE GIRL.

ATTRACTIVE GIRL

You were really great at the gym back there.

GARY

Eh, I'm always great-

CRUNCH. The magnetron lands on Gary's car, crushing it.

GARY (CONT'D)

YOU'VE GOTTA BE KIDDING ME!!

INT. OFFICE FLOOR, SILPH CO. - CONTINUOUS

Ash peers out the broken window and winces when he realizes what's happened.

ASH
Ooh...no, no, no, no...

Down below, Gary looks up at him.

EXT. OUTSIDE SILPH CO. - CONTINUOUS

Gary looks just in time to see Ash before he ducks his head back inside. Gary grits his teeth and begins to seethe.

GARY
Ash..!

INT. DINNER PARTY, SILPH CO. - NIGHT

Back in the party room, Team Rocket still has the hostages surrounded. James picks up his radio and pushes the button.

JAMES
Acquisition team? Do you copy?
Hellooooo..?

Giovanni sighs and stands up among the cowering hostages.

GIOVANNI
...This is going poorly.

OAK
Giovanni, what are you doing..?

Giovanni casually strides past the fierce looking pokémon surrounding them.

GIOVANNI
Retaking control of this situation.
(to the grunts surrounding
the room)
All of you, with me. Let's wrap
this up.

MISTY
Ash was right...you are with Team
Rocket, aren't you?

GIOVANNI
With them? I own them.

OAK

Oh, come on! Seriously?? I *just* vouched for you with the kid-- you're gonna make me look like an idiot!

GIOVANNI

Be confident in your genius, Oak. After all, it's the whole reason I'm here...

OAK

The master ball. You're going to steal it.

GIOVANNI

How else will I recapture my prize?
(grinning)
Mewtwo.

Oak slaps his forehead in annoyance.

OAK

And you're the mystery evil guy behind that too?? Augh!

GIOVANNI

I'm sorry to say that I'm also the architect of the creature's escape. It seems I've been very naughty lately.

MISTY

Why would you release your own experiment? All those people in the lab...

GIOVANNI

Think of it as...a field test. I had to be sure I was getting every bit the monster I was paying for.
(grinning)
It didn't disappoint.

DELIA

The only monster here is you...and now there's a whole room full of people who know your secret.

Giovanni reaches the door with his men and stops to stroke his chin thoughtfully.

GIOVANNI

You do have something of a point there...

(to Jessie & James)

...do something about that, will you?

Giovanni grins as him and his men exit the room.

INT. UPPER OFFICE FLOOR, SILPH CO. - NIGHT

Ash hurries through another office floor. He stops by an elevator to read a directory of the floors.

ASH

(scanning directory)

Lab, lab, lab...there it is!

A nearby window bursts open, Ash shields his eyes.

When he looks up, he sees Gary hopping off the back of his recently evolved PIDGEOT. Gary returns the giant hawk to its poké ball and marches towards Ash.

GARY

Ash..!

ASH

Whoah, hey Gary...hold on there...

GARY

You. Killed. My. Car! I just got it fixed!

ASH

It wasn't me, I mean technically-
(losing his patience)

...you know what? Who cares about your stupid car?? There's more important things going on here right now!

GARY

You're so dead.

ASH

Oh, get in line!

Gary pulls out a poké ball and begins pacing back and forth, he's itching for a fight. Too mad to think straight.

GARY

You and me. Battle. Right now...this is long overdue.

ASH

I told you, I'm kind of in the middle of something..!

GARY

I'd cream you. You know it.

ASH

That's what you think.

GARY

(grinning madly)
You wanna bet?

ASH

You know I do.

Gary hurls his poké ball. Out bursts BLASTOISE, Squirtle's fully evolved form. The turtle pokémon is now hulking in size, and two canons extend forward from its shell.

GARY

Blastoise..!
(pointing towards Ash)
...Attack!!

Blastoise roars and bounds towards Ash.

Ash grunts angrily and throws his own poké ball down.

Charizard erupts out just in time to intercept the bounding tortoise, and the two pokémon claw and bite at each other as they tumble across the office floor.

INT. DINNER PARTY, SILPH CO. - NIGHT

The hostages are now guarded only by Jessie, James, Meowth, Arbok and Weezing.

James shifts uneasily.

JAMES

...It's just all so ghastly, isn't it? I mean, they're unarmed and helpless...

MEOOTH

Maybe we should just get it over with quickly, I'm not too big on this kinda cold-blooded stuff either.

Jessie frowns and walks towards the hostages.

JESSIE

Do you idiots ever want to get back in the boss's good graces? It might not be fun, but we have our orders.

(she glares at Misty)

It's just part of the job.

Misty glares back. She's holding a pepper shaker behind her back, trying to subtly unscrew the top with one hand.

Jessie draws nearer. Misty fumbles with the pepper.

Jessie pets Arbok as it looms up in front of Misty.

JESSIE (CONT'D)

It might be easier if you close your eyes for this part, brat.

The lid pops off.

MISTY

Good advice..!

Just before Arbok can lunge, Misty hurls the contents of the shaker in Jessie and Arbok's eyes.

They cry out, and Arbok whips wildly in discomfort, knocking Jessie to the ground. Misty pounces on her and grabs her poké balls back.

Meowth extends his claws and prepares to pounce at Misty.

OAK (O.S.)

Oh no you don't!

Oak gets up and punts Meowth across the room.

Misty throws Starmie's poké ball down. Starmie spins like a huge throwing star across the room, striking Team Rocket and their pokémon and knocking them towards the window.

Team Rocket groans in a heap just short of the glass. Misty smirks as her and Starmie approach.

MISTY

Blast off.

A powerful torrent of water shoots out from Starmie and launches Team Rocket out the window.

Oak walks over and pats Misty on the back.

OAK

Nice work with the pepper. You certainly are a *well seasoned* trainer...

MISTY

(hurrying for the elevator)

Jokes later! Right now let's find Ash!

INT. UPPER OFFICE FLOOR, SILPH CO. - NIGHT

A cubicle explodes as Charizard and Blastoise tumble onto it.

Blastoise manages to get on top and pins Charizard down, barely being held back as it snaps its jaws at the dragon.

GARY

That's it! Finish him!

ASH

C'mon, Charizard! You've gotta get up! C'mon..!
(thinking)
...Fire spin!

Charizard uses its wings to push off the ground, rapidly twisting its body while spewing fire from its mouth. The twirling tornado of fire and lizard sends Blastoise flying.

Blastoise lands on all fours, and its claws tear into the carpet as it skids backwards from the force of the impact.

GARY

Hydro pump!

Finally coming to stop, Blastoise's canons point forward and fire a high-powered volley of water blasts towards Charizard.

Charizard struggles to dodge and fly in the cramped office space as cubicles and walls explodes around it as they're struck by the watery explosions.

Charizard flies towards Blastoise, dodging another hydro pump and prepares to slash at the tortoise-

BLAM. Blastoise pivots just in time and nails Charizard point blank with a blast, sending it tumbling across the floor.

ASH
Charizard!

Just as Charizard tries to right itself, it's slammed with another jet of water, sending it crashing through a wall.

GARY
There we go! Ha-ha!!

Blastoise begins advancing toward the debris cloud of the destroyed wall, but before even making it halfway, Charizard erupts from the floor beneath it and grabs Blastoise, carrying it up into the air and crashing through the ceiling.

In the above room, Charizard breathes fire over Blastoise as it grapples it in mid-air, then flies downward and pushes Blastoise through the floor, back into the previous room.

Blastoise withdraws into its shell and spins rapidly, finally knocking Charizard away.

GARY (CONT'D)
Give him another hydro pump! C'mon!

ASH
Fire blast!

Both pokémon spew their respective elements at each other, and the flames and water clash. Straining, neither lets up-

CRASH. Giovanni's Nidoking explodes out of a nearby wall, whipping Charizard hard with its tail before tackling Blastoise into a wall.

GARY
Wait, what?!

ASH
Oh no..!

Blastoise tries to recover and fight back, but Nidoking rams it hard with its horned head, chipping away bits of the turtle's shell. Blastoise cries out in pain.

Charizard roars and flies towards their common enemy, but Nidoking catches it by the neck, slamming it to the floor.

ASH (CONT'D)
No...

The defeated pokémon groan, and Nidoking slams its arms onto the floor and vibrates. The entire room quakes violently.

Parts of the ceiling and floor break away, and Charizard and Blastoise are buried in debris.

A bit of ceiling above Ash begins to crack. Gary notices.

GARY

Look out!

Ash looks up just as the ceiling gives way. Before he's crushed, Gary tackles him. CRASH.

Ash coughs as the dust clears. Gary lies next to him, partially buried and not moving.

ASH

Gary..?
(panicking)
Dude!

He shakes Gary. Gary groans but seems to be unconscious.

GIOVANNI (O.S.)

Seems like someone couldn't keep
their eye on the ball...

Ash looks up to see Giovanni and several grunts enter the room. Giovanni is holding the master ball in his hand.

ASH

(rising to his feet)
You..!

Ash gasps as Nidoking whacks him back down to his knees.

GIOVANNI

(wagging his finger)
Uh-uh-uh...know when you're
benched, boy. Oh, that reminds
me...
(fishing in his pocket)
I believe this belongs to you.

Giovanni tosses something to Ash's feet. The signed baseball.

Ash nods toward Gary tiredly as he works through the pain.

ASH

Well, technically it's his...

Ash yelps in pain as Nidoking lifts him up roughly.

GIOVANNI
Details, details...

Ash glares at Giovanni as he struggles to get free.

ASH
Y'know...I bet your gym in
Viridian's a real dump.

Giovanni leans in and smirks.

GIOVANNI
I guess you'll never know.

EXT. ROOF, SILPH CO. - NIGHT

Giovanni and his men walk onto the roof. Nidoking drags Ash behind them and towards the roof's edge.

Giovanni nods to a grunt, and they pull up their radio.

GRUNT 2
(into radio)
In position and ready for
extraction.

A helicopter in the distance begins flying towards the roof.

As the helicopter nears, Giovanni turns back towards Ash.

GIOVANNI
Sorry to leave you this way, Ash,
but you can really only blame
yourself. You should have stayed
out of my business.

ASH
I don't think terrorism really
qualifies as "business."

GIOVANNI
Think whatever you like...you'll
have plenty of time on the way
down.
(nodding to Nidoking)
Nidoking?

Ash struggles as Nidoking drags him closer to the roof's edge. Giovanni turns away as the helicopter hovers above.

The helicopter begins to sway strangely. Giovanni watches in confusion as the propeller blades slow to stop, but the helicopter remains distended in the air.

CRRREEAK...

The helicopter beings to violently crumple and implode on itself, and in seconds its a crumpled ball of metal.

Giovanni braces himself as the deformed copter explodes. He looks up to see a silhouette descend through the flames, stopping to hover just a few feet above the roof.

The Rocket grunts pull out pokéballs, but they're lifted into the air and slammed down hard. They lay still.

Giovanni strains his eyes to make out the figure as the flames die down. Blue eyes stare back at him.

GIOVANNI (CONT'D)

Mewtwo...
(grinning)
...finally.

ASH

No way...

Giovanni produces the master ball and cautiously approaches.

Raising it, he prepares to throw. Mewtwo's eyes narrow.

Giovanni grunts as he tries to toss the ball, but looks in confusion as his arm refuses to move, frozen in place.

GIOVANNI

Incredible...

Giovanni struggles as he begins to lift into the air-

He's stopped. Still holding onto Ash, Nidoking grabs hold of its master with its free arm and brings him back down.

GIOVANNI (CONT'D)

Well done, Nidoking...now go.

Nidoking tosses Ash behind and rushes at Mewtwo.

EXT. HIGH ABOVE SAFFRON CITY - CONTINUOUS

Ash screams as he goes flying over the edge of the building and begins plummeting through the air.

CRASH. A window shatters outward as Gary flies out on the back of his pidgeot. He catches Ash's arm as they fly by.

GARY
 (straining to lift him)
 Whoah! You're going the wrong way
 there, Ashy-boy!

ASH
 Gary?!

GARY
 (lifting him up)
 The one and only.

ASH
 (climbing aboard)
 When did you wake up?

GARY
 Just in time to save your bacon
 again, apparently.
 (nodding towards building)
 It's not just me, though.

Ash looks to see the glow of fire inside the building, and a moment later Charizard soars out after them, spewing flames into the air. He looks injured, but he's back.

ASH
 Charizard!

Charizard gives Ash an affirmative nod as he follows Pidgeot.

GARY
 Alright, catch me up. What'd I
 miss?

ASH
 Where to start...

EXT. ROOF, SILPH CO. - NIGHT

Nidoking roars as it lunges for Mewtwo. Just before it makes contact, it's frozen mid-attack.

Nidoking strains to push through the telekinesis but has little success. The glow of Mewtwo's eyes switches to pink, and blasts the frozen pokémon with beams of energy from its eyes, sending it toppling over the edge of the roof.

Mewtwo turns its attention back towards Giovanni. Giovanni yelps as his feet pull out from under him, and he's lifted upside down into the air. He drops the master ball.

GIOVANNI
 (trying to reach the ball)
 No..!
 (wincing in pain)
AUUUUGH!

Giovani continues to scream as Mewtwo attacks his mind.

EXT. HIGH ABOVE SAFFRON CITY - NIGHT

Still carrying the trainers, Pidgeot barely dodges out of the way in time as Nidoking's body tumbles past them.

GARY
 ...Whoah! And I thought that thing
 was tough.

ASH
 I don't think any pokémon's tougher
 than what we're about to go up
 against...

Gary grins at him.

GARY
 Sounds like a challenge.

Ash smirks back and nods.

EXT. ROOF, SILPH CO. - CONTINUOUS

Pidgeot and Charizard finally reach the roof and soar above. Below, Mewtwo is still focused on torturing Giovanni.

GARY
 Seems like it really doesn't like
 him...

ASH
 Can't say he doesn't deserve it,
 but we can't just let it kill
 him...
 (spotting the master ball)
 ...There!

GARY
 Is that the master ball you were
 telling me about?

ASH
 If we can get it, we can stop
 Mewtwo.

GARY

Got it.

Pidgeot swoops down toward the ball, but Mewtwo spots them.

The boys scream as Pidgeot is slammed with an invisible psychic blast, knocking them away from the master ball.

Gary manages to hold on, but Ash tumbles off onto the roof.

Getting up, Ash tries to scramble for the ball, but Mewtwo easily sends him tumbling away from it again.

Confident it's made its point, Mewtwo turns back to Giovanni.

Ash watches Giovanni scream. He doesn't have much time.

ASH

(calling up to Gary)

New plan! I'll distract him and get Giovanni, you get the ball!

(Gary nods)

Charizard!

Charizard swoops down and Ash leaps onto its back. Taking to the air, they turn around and swoop down towards Mewtwo.

ASH (CONT'D)

Get ready...wait for it..!

(beat)

...Fire blast!

Charizard rains fireballs down on Mewtwo. Mewtwo flinches and shields itself with a bubble of psychic energy.

While it's distracted, Charizard swoops down and grabs Giovanni and flies out over the side of the building.

Mewtwo glares and takes off into the air after him. Behind him, Gary swoops down on Pidgeot and grabs the master ball.

EXT. HIGH ABOVE SAFFRON CITY - CONTINUOUS

Ash and Charizard soar around the side of the tower, clutching Giovanni's unconscious body.

Ash turns to see Mewtwo flying close behind. Mewtwo's eyes glow, and pieces of the destroyed helicopter fly through the air with it.

Mewtwo nods its head, and the debris shoots forward towards Ash.

ASH

Look out!

Charizard sways wildly, barely dodging the flying debris. The blades of the helicopter spin through the air towards them, but Charizard manages to knock it away with a blast of fire.

ASH (CONT'D)

Any time now, Gary!

GARY (O.S.)

I'm working on it..!

Riding atop Pidgeot, Gary sits upright and tries to aim a throw...but they're flying through the air too fast, and Mewtwo's movements are erratic.

GARY (CONT'D)

...I can't get a clear shot! We're going too fast!

ASH

Oh, *great!*

Mewtwo's eyes glow pink, and it fires beams of energy from them towards Charizard. Ash struggles to stay aboard as the beams strike the tower, creating massive explosions.

ASH (CONT'D)

Oh man, I am way too young to be dealing with this!

Charizard manages to dodge the next few beams and the ensuing explosions. Mewtwo grunts angrily and vanishes in a flash.

GARY

Wha..? Where'd he go?

Mewtwo teleports just to Charizard's side, and its eyes glow as it begins to charge up another psybeam.

ASH

...Found him!!

Charizard pulls up hard and manages to dodge the attack, but the ensuing explosion sends them rocketing upwards wildly.

EXT. ROOF, SILPH CO. - CONTINUOUS

Charizard flies through the air and tumbles onto the roof, dropping Ash and Giovanni.

Ash hops to his feet as Mewtwo hovers back into view.

ASH
 Alright, you wanna dance..?

Ash wastes no time throwing his pokéballs to the ground. His other five pokémon pop out around him, ready to fight.

ASH (CONT'D)
 ...let's dance.

Mewtwo flies towards him. Pikachu, Poliwrath and Butterfree try to pelt him with their ranged attacks, but Mewtwo teleports rapidly as he moves, avoiding the brunt of it.

As Mewtwo draws nearer, Ivysaur whips its vines towards it and Snorlax rushes forward.

Mewtwo whips his head to the side, and Snorlax goes flying through the air, smacking into Ivysaur.

ASH (CONT'D)
 Keep it up!

Ash's pokémon keep attacking, but Mewtwo continues to dodge and blast them away. He's nearly on Ash and Giovanni now.

GARY (O.S.)
 Hydro pump!

Mewtwo turns suddenly and barely manages to throw up a psychic shield as Blastoise barrages it with jets of water from across the roof.

Blastoise turns and gives a cocky head nod to Charizard, who is still collapsed on the ground. Charizard growls bitterly and gets up, rejoining the fight and spewing fire at Mewtwo.

Growing angrier, Mewtwo prepares to attack when it's struck by a jet of water from the other side.

Ash looks over to see Starmie with Misty and Oak behind it.

OAK
 (winded)
 The elevator broke down...oh man,
 that's a lot of stairs...

GARY
 Gramps?

ASH
 You guys are alright! Thanks for
 finally making it.

MISTY

Looks like just in time, too.

Now fighting eight pokémon at once, Mewtwo begins to struggle. It dodges a jet of water, only to be entangled in vines. It teleports out, only to be slammed by Snorlax. It blasts Snorlax away, only to be doused in flames.

Pikachu leaps towards Mewtwo, sparking with electricity-

Mewtwo spots him and uses telekinesis to send the rodent soaring up into the sky.

ASH

Pikachu!

Flying through the clouds, Pikachu shakes off the attack and refocuses. Its body begins to spark, and it notices the clouds around it begin to spark in return.

Still careening upwards, Pikachu tests this further, increases its own charge while charging the clouds around it.

Pikachu smirks as its ascent slows and it begins to fall.

PIKACHU

Pi...ka...CHUUUUUUUU!

There is a flash of light, and a massive lightning bolt shoot down from the clouds and strikes Mewtwo.

OAK

I always knew that rat had potential...

As Pikachu falls back towards the roof, its caught by Butterfree. The two pokémon soar back towards the fight.

Shaking off the attack, Mewtwo growls. Flying into a rage, Mewtwo begins attacking and teleporting recklessly. The entire building quakes as it's struck with psychic attacks.

ASH

Whoah!

(to Gary)

Might be time to wrap this up, before the whole building goes down.

Gary nods and readies the master ball, but Mewtwo is moving and teleporting too quickly. Gary begins to sweat.

GARY

Dammit! Oh fine..!

Gary reluctantly hands the ball to Ash.

GARY (CONT'D)
 ...You do it. You were always a
 better pitcher than me.

Ash smirks and raises an eyebrow.

ASH
 You sure about this? That can't be
 easy for you to admit...

GARY
 Shut up before I change my mind!

Ash takes the ball.

MISTY
 Wait!

Mist walks up and kisses Ash. He stares back at her, stunned.

MISTY (CONT'D)
 ...for luck, or whatever the cliché
 is.

ASH
 (flustered)
 Yeah. Okay. Luck.

GARY
 Is now really the time?!

Ash focuses and prepares to throw. He sees Mewtwo reflect several ranged attacks from his pokémon.

ASH
 It's no good, if he sees it coming
 there's no way we can hit him...

Ash turns to Gary as an idea strikes him.

ASH (CONT'D)
 ...I've got an idea. We'll both
 throw.

GARY
 What?

Blastoise shoots a jet of water at Mewtwo. Mewtwo catches it with telekinesis and sends it flying toward Charizard.

ASH (O.S.)
 Hey Mewtwo!

Mewtwo turns just in time to see Ash and Gary, and a ball spinning towards him at high speed.

Mewtwo stops the ball midair just before it strikes its face.

It's the baseball. Mewtwo looks confused.

ASH (CONT'D)
Ooh, good catch, but you were
supposed to be watching for the
other one...

Mewtwo turns just in time to see the master ball curving in.

The ball smacks it in the side of the head. Mewtwo strains and cries out as the ball opens up and begins pulling it inside. It resists for a moment longer before finally dematerializing and getting sucked in.

The master ball falls to the ground. CLICK.

Ash walks up and picks up the ball.

ASH (CONT'D)
...it's called a curveball. My
specialty.

EXT. OUTSIDE SILPH CO. - DAY

Giovanni is led in cuffs by two police officers towards a squad car.

ASH (O.S.)
Hey! Giovanni..!

Giovanni turns to see Ash running up.

GIOVANNI
Ash. Come to gloat?

ASH
A little...I mean, I did
tremendously ruin your scheme.

Giovanni scoffs and begins to turn away.

GIOVANNI
Very mature.

ASH

Hold on, there's one more thing...I mean technically it was a sucker punch, but your Nidoking was still pretty impressive back there.

(grinning)

If they ever let you out for good behavior in forty to sixty years, maybe we can have a rematch.

Giovanni can't help but smirk. He signals to the police, and they push him into the squad car.

EXT. ON THE SIDEWALK NEARBY - CONTINUOUS

Jessie, James and Meowth watch in disguise as the squad car pulls away.

JAMES

Well, we're unemployed. I guess it's true what they say, crime doesn't pay...

MEOWTH

Time to dust off the old resume...

JESSIE

You buffoons, just because our boss got pinched doesn't mean we're retired. There's still plenty of pokémon out there to steal, and someone's got to corner the market.

MEOWTH

What, you mean work for ourselves?

JAMES

They do say small businesses are the backbone of the economy!

JESSIE

No, you idiots...

She throws her arms around both of them.

JESSIE (CONT'D)

...you'll work for me.

INT. LOBBY, SILPH CO. - DAY

Ash rejoins Misty and the others.

ASH

Well, that's one less criminal
mastermind on the streets.

MISTY

I still can't believe Giovanni was
behind Team Rocket. They're saying
even the Game Corner was just a
front to sell stolen pokémon...

ASH

At least now all of Team Rocket's
victims get to go home...

(turning to Oak)

...speaking of, what's going to
happen to Mewtwo?

Oak scratches his head.

OAK

That's a bit tricky. Officially,
the master ball you captured him in
is property of the Silph Company.
Unless we were to release him...

Everyone looks nervous.

ASH

I don't think that's a good idea.

OAK

Well, I'll talk to the guys at
Silph before I head back to Pallet
with your mom. See if we can get
Mewtwo rehabilitated.

DELIA

What about you, Ash? Are you coming
back with us?

ASH

I'll come visit mom, but right now
I've still got four more badges to
collect.

Ash turns to Misty.

ASH (CONT'D)

Wanna come with? After all, I might
need some more "luck" along the
way...

Ash raises his eyebrows suggestively. Misty rolls her eyes.

MISTY

Sure, but you've gotta earn the next one. That dinner was a disaster.

Gary exhales impatiently and looks away.

GARY

...Aaaand I think that's my cue to get going before I puke all over this lobby. Smell ya later, all!

Ash calls after Gary as he goes.

ASH

So long, Gary. Sorry our battle got interrupted. Maybe we can rematch during the League Tournament.

Gary chuckles without turning back.

GARY

Uh-huh...

ASH

And next time, I'll cream you for sure.

Gary turns around and laughs.

GARY

Oh, you will, huh? You wanna bet on that?

ASH

You know I do.

EXT. POKÉMON LEAGUE COLISEUM - DAY

SUPERIMPOSE: ONE YEAR LATER...

We see a grand coliseum with stands packed with screaming fans. An announcer's voice booms out over the arena.

ANNOUNCER

...Ladies and gentlemen! Pokémon battle fans of all ages! We're finally here at the grand finals of Pokémon League Tournament!

The crowd cheers wildly.

ANNOUNCER (CONT'D)

You know the challengers well by now, folks. They've won our hearts just as they've won each match up until now, but only one can walk away the tournament champion! Let's hear it for our final match: Gary Oak versus Ash Ketchum!

At the far end of the arena, Gary steps out onto a raised platform. At the opposite end, Ash does the same.

Gary smirks at his rival from across the field. Ash smirks back.

They both wind up and hurl their poké balls onto the field.

The poké balls open, and light erupts out.

END.