

Farewell Drawing

A Desert in Hoenn, Two Years Ago

It is one of those boring days again. If I could, I'd wish they ended soon.

It is not the strong sunlight, that doesn't harm you much, or the soft sandstorm, that actually helps you find your food. It is not being in the very center of the desert, far from the protection the rocky walls to the east provide, far from the small ponds to the south, far from the grassy roads to the north, and as far as the lack of knowledge permits as we can be from that hidden, mythical place somewhere in the desert.

Because you were made, in form at least, to live through all of this. You are no going to bore yourself out from waiting near a sandtrap, clawing the Cacnea to death and dragging him to a safe place so that you can feed from it. Or at least you shouldn't, after all, if you are still trying to strike conversation with that thing.

<I thought you weren't going to poke it,> you repeat blatantly for the third time, as if the Cacnea was to answer to you.

There's not much he could answer to. Perhaps something like yes, well, he did poke the sandtrap. Not a smart move. It was one of the few times your clumsiness actually helped, little Sandshrew, naturally luring in a young, exploring prey.

<You poke it and I eat you. That was silly,> you explain to the Cacnea as you turn around.

Aren't you going to stop already? You've dragged that thing far enough already and you're not going to get anything else from it, you know. There, let it rest on the other side of that mound.

Can't really blame you. I mean, you try to strike conversation with *me* of all things sometimes, when you are too bored. You were always like this, the talkative one of the family, I guess.

See little Sandshrew, that's what makes me wish these days ended. They are all the same, except in the winter, and even then it is not much of a difference. Wake up, go outside, hunt something to eat if you are lucky and not too distracted, come back to sleep. I am a noncorporeal... *something* and I find it boring; I can only imagine how it feels to you.

Or can I? How am I supposed to interpret your heavy walking across the desert, living the same life most of your species live here, if you barely complain? Am I too close to you to read you correctly?

Perhaps I am. I know I have been here too long, at least.

What am I going to do with you, little Sandshrew? See, I can not exactly dig a den or hunt for food for you, you know. You *look* pretty happy like this... perhaps too happy if your growling is any indication; but if life is an adventure then it means one is doing things right, doesn't it? So it is me the one who is not helping here.

And yet, this routine makes you yearn for more. I don't know exactly what, as my knowledge is limited by yours, but don't you get bored from sitting in the sandstorm all day? Don't you daydream with incredible adventures in hazy, nondescript lands when you start swinging your tail and watching the stars at night?

Each time I watch you curl on a small hole to sleep as you do now, I can only think...

Perhaps what you need is precisely an adventure. Something different and novel to do, somewhere to explore; ideally not alone, so you can have someone to support you when hardship comes... and if things go well, someone who can count on you to cheer up their day.

Perhaps...

Some Days Later

Rise and shine, little Sandshrew. Stop drawing random figures in the sand and go out, it is a beautiful sandstormy day outside. Ideal for catching some prey by surprise, for exploring around. Perhaps you'll find a little brown gem stuck under a rock!

Uhm... who am I kidding, today is probably pretty much the same routine as yesterday.

<Can I has go hunt again?> you ask to nowhere.

Uhm... if you are asking me, yeah, sure thing. You are hungry after all, I know, little Sandshrew. It's been two days since the last meal, with the strong sandstorm that has been pushing the few bird and plant mons around to the south.

Be careful on the next mound though, the Baltoy there are some classist jerks. I'll be following shortly.

As soon as I figure out how things can improve...

Some Days Later

I really can't understand how you convinced a *Tailow* of all things to roost near the sandtrap and come check it. But you snipped it. Hurling those rocks was a nice trick, but you'll need more practice to aim them better.

So I was thinking that we need something interesting to happen. And that if we stay here we're not gonna make it happen. So, little, Sandshrew, what do you think?

You don't need to answer to me anytime soon, or next week... Well... I'd like an answer. I'd like to be able to help you. I'm sure it gets irritating for both of us when you spend your day simply

watching those Geodude trying to shape those rocks into... whatever they are trying to do.

Now, look at me, please? Yes, like that. All I want for the moment is for you to think about this, OK?

...Hey, did you wave a hi to me or to a random star in the sky?

A Week Later

See? Walking to the south is not that bad.

<This is not my home...>

I know I know... it's not like home. Nowhere is. This is not as sandy, the wind is not as strong, and there are more Pokémon, in particular some that aren't Ground-types. Boy they do chat a lot. But hey, here we should be able to find something for you Something that makes your life better, like...

...! A Trainer! What a coincidence! I would swear if I could, I didn't plan for this.

No, don't growl at him, he's not going to hear you at this distance. See, a human around here is more or less a rarity; still, if it is to help you I'm playing the hand I've been dealt. And that means getting you up out of your lazy butt and ideally go challenge him.

So first thing I need you to noti-

<Oh! A human!>

Well that solved itself pretty fast. Now, can you please stop swinging your head around and actually, you know, go explore at him? Like a Sandshrew would? ...No? Come on, he's going to get

away if he keeps walking... well... wherever he is walking to. He seems a bit lost.

<I wonder if he can has water.>

Anything so long as you get to interact with him. But I'm betting he is well equipped, yes. Just watch his clothes and his partner and imagine! He is tall and dressed in light, but urban clothes, so he must come from one of the nearby cities; apparently he is trying to locate something as he is examining a compass and a small sheet of paper, at least as much as the sandstorm is allowing him to. And that creature besides him?

<Weird pointy Pokémon thing. I don't like him, he growls a lot.>

Good for you to notice.

<Is it a purple Lairon?>

Well, without armor and... Hey! Where do you know a Lairon from? Uhm... no matter. Must be a dangerous Pokémon to touch if all those spikes are any indication. That if the sandstorm doesn't get inside his enormous ears... Why are they wandering aimlessly here anyway? Perhaps they are lost...

What? Did I say something fun? Whatever, if you are already up, just keep walking. Imagine what kind of stories will he tell you. What kind of cities beyond the sea, what different Pokémon must have he met, what varieties of food must he be carrying. All we need is a reason for you to battle him.

<Food?> You inquire, sniffing in his direction. <Human carries food!>

Sure thing, silly, how is he planning to survive here otherwise? Now come on, let's go. Faster faster, before they turn the way they came or something. Apparently they can't see us... well, they can't see you, with the sandstorm now growing stronger. Perhaps you can try and steal their food or something. Did I ever teach you to steal? No, I can't, because I don't know myself. Your parents didn't, nor your sister.

This might prove a bit complicated.

Or perhaps not much.

<Hey! Who the hr-> growls the pink Pokémon all of a sudden, his ears apparently having picked on your presence.

<Oh hai there! What are you?>

<I'm a Nidorino. Now, scram Sandshrew!>

You have done well so far as you are already moving before the hum-- wait what? What are yo doing trying to cling to the human's backpack? Be careful that the “Nidorino” is already leering at you!

<Get down! Come back here!> the “Nidorino” yells, pacing around the Trainer.

You are pretty silly, little Sandshrew, trying to convince the human to give you food just like that. For one, humans can't understand the language you speak. You are still catching his attention which is pretty good, as the human has placed you back in the ground. Why don't you try for something else now?

<Are you lost?> you ask to the “Nidorino”.

<We are not lost... we are just trying to get to some rocks, they look like this...>

Oh, looks like the other Pokémon knows well to draw things in the sand as well. At least that makes me feel safe that you are not the only one that silly. So he has just drawn six small spots on the sand... hey, six? Aren't they like the rocks to the south?

<Yes,> you answer (I don't know if to them or to me), <they are like the rocks to the south!>

<Oh, we would be glad if you could take us there...>

That's the trigger we expect, I think. You know what to do, right, little thing? Yes, that playful grin is what I think you want to do.

<Desert mons go to rocks!> you yell, standing before the “Nidorino”. <You are too silly to go there. I can has tell you if you are nice to me?>

<Silly?> the “Nidorino” thing snorts and drops his ears. Then he casts a Leer; be careful, little Sandshrew!

<Grrrrr.> That's the spirit, kid! <I can has no take you to desert rocks without food!>

<Fine then!> The Pokémon turns to his Trainer, signaling to him that the sacred words have been invoked. And that means that from now on I only get to watch, interpreting the command the human gives to his Pokémon that prompts him to lunge at you, an attack that you skillfully manage to avoid by leaping a short distance away and disappearing into the sand.

From here, little Sandshrew, I can only wish you luck. That this Trainer is good enough for you and can give you all the things that I couldn't and can. That with him by your side, your imagination will no longer be stunned by routine, which you shall no longer meet. And that you can make many friends on the road, that you can trust them and they can trust you, to help each other chase your goals in life.

<...Ooof! Where did you go, little thing? Come on, come out and play...>

<You can has my fists to play!>

And hey, perhaps you can pass on to them those silly habits of yours. After all, I have to say, greeting every mon you meet on the road, be predator or prey, even if strange, gives the ambience around a kind of warmth that the desert can not equate.

As the Pokéball flies towards your belly turned to the sun, I can feel relieved of having seen you reach this far. I'll miss you, little Sandshrew; I hope you somehow remember me.

**Do you want to give the
Sandshrew ♂ a nickname? ▼**

[Y] ▼

**Dintel the Sandshrew has been
added to your Pokédex!**