Chapter 22
The Water’s Great

The door that we exited the factory out of led us to a smelly dirt tunnel that looked as if it had been constructed in a hurry. A few Mr. Saturns were hanging around in various parts of the tunnel, too tired from their enslavement at Belch’s factory to walk the whole distance of the path. We strolled down the bleak passage for around a minute before we saw a hole that led back to the outside world. When we emerged from the dirt tunnel, we found ourselves at the highest point of Saturn Valley’s large cliff face. From where we were positioned, we were able to look down on the entirety of the quirky village and see many of the previously captured Mr. Saturns happily roaming around their home once more. The only issue that we had with our location at the time was the matter of getting down from our perch; thankfully, the Mr. Saturns had constructed a tall ladder in order to get down from the high point. Using this ladder, we climbed down to the middle section of the cliff face and were greeted by three anxious-looking Mr. Saturns.

“Humans guys! You returned and brought back all the Mr. Saturns too! I, Mr. Saturn, is thanking yous with all of Heart! Ding! I and friends have thought to gives yous an gifts for the Troubles! Here are Zoom!” the Mr. Saturn said as one of the other Saturns approached us carrying a shiny coin with a picture of a Mr. Saturn engraved on it. I gently took the coin from the Saturn’s soft head and looked at it more closely. The coin appeared to exude a mysterious energy that made me feel more powerful.

“Uhh, I thank you guys for your generosity, but what exactly is this?” I asked.
“What yous is holding now is famous Saturn relic, the Mr. Saturn coin! It are powerful object that protects yous if yous gets hurtings! boing! But wait! we has one more gift for yous!” the Mr. Saturn said as another Saturn came waddling over, this time carrying a shiny bat with a ribbon attached to it. I took the bat from the Saturn and examined it. It looked a bit odd, but I was sure that it would work just as well as my old bat did.

“Wow, this bat is really cool! How did you know that I needed a new one?... Oh well, it doesn’t matter. As for this coin, it’s also pretty neat, ‘cause it’s like a piece of armor, except it can fit in your pocket. Since Paula and I already have some armor in the form of these bracelets, I’ll let Jeff hold onto this. For safety purposes,” I said as I handed Jeff the gleaming trinket.

“Thank you my good chap. Although I’ve been decent at avoiding severe damage so far, I have a hunch that my recklessness will get me into trouble eventually. It will be nice to have this coin as a pseudo insurance policy,” Jeff said as he stuck the Mr. Saturn coin in one of his many pockets.

“Um, a shiny coin and a new bat are nice and all, but what I would really like right now is to wash all of this extremely sticky gunk off of me. Do you guys have any place where we can clean up?” Paula asked.

“Hmmmm... Am thinking... Ding! Is got it! We has an hot spring on top of valley! Just Climbs ladder over there. Can’t missing it. ZoOm!” the Mr. Saturn said as he pointed to a distant ladder with its nose.

“Did you say you guys have a hot spring here? I’ve always wanted to try one of those! I’m glad I packed my bathing suit! Uh, quick question. Do you have a spot where we can change in private?” I asked.

“Oh yes. We has changing tent next to spring. boing!”

“Sweet! Come on guys, a nice dip in a hot spring sounds like just the break we need right now! Plus, we can use it to wash the muck off of
our clothes when we’re done using it. Well, I guess I’m the only one holding us up now, so, uh, let’s go!” I said as we marched over to the ladder and scaled up to the upper cliff level.

On the plateau stood a few Mr. Saturns, a tall red and white tent, and a large body of water emitting a cloud of steam. The steaming pool before us looked heavenly, despite the water in the spring appearing an odd pinkish color. Eager to step into the sizzling sauna, I told my friends that I would be the first to change. I quickly stepped into the changing tent and threw on my yellow and blue swimming trunks, leaving my pack and worn clothing in a pile by one of the tent’s corners. When I was prepped to get wet, I exited the changing tent and slowly lowered myself into the pinkish spring. I instantly felt relaxed as the warm water engulfed me. “Hey guys! Come on in! The water feels so good!” I said as the tension melted away from my body. “I say Ness, are you sure that pool is safe to submerge in? I’ve never seen pink water before. It could be potentially hazardous!” Jeff shouted nervously.

“Nah, there’s nothing to worry about. The warm water will help you simmer down after all that fighting. Come on guys, it’s a hot spring! What’s there not to love?” I said as I leaned against the edge of the pool.

“Well, pink water or not, I just want to wash off. I’m gonna change real quick and then jump in. You can stay out if you really want to Jeff,” Paula said as she stepped into the changing tent. A minute later, she emerged, now wearing a pink one-piece bathing suit with a floral pattern. She then carefully hopped into the pool and dipped all except her face into the water. “Ahhh... This is so nice. I’m feeling better already. Jeff, you should really jump in. This is literally the greatest thing ever,” Paula said, mesmerized by the calming waters.

“Oh, but, but, what if, there could be, how about... *sigh* Alright, fine. I will join you in the hot spring. Just, give me a moment,” Jeff said as he stomped into the changing tent. A minute later, Jeff shakily
walked out of the tent, wearing nothing but a pair of swimming trunks with Albert Einstein’s face on them. This sight caught me off guard, and although I tried to contain my laughter, I just couldn’t help myself. Paula was a little less hesitant with her expression of amusement. “D—do not laugh! T—this is the only pair of swimwear that I possess! And, you do not have to tell me that I am pale! Where I come from, one does not simply get a tan! *sigh* Do you want me to join you in the hot spring or not? You were so very adamant about getting me to join you in the spring, so I hope this is what you desired,” Jeff said as he stuck one of his toes in the water before inching carefully inching the rest of his body in. Now that we were all in the hot spring together, we began to engage in some casual conversation, something we hadn’t done for a good while.

“So, before you learned that you were destined to save the world, what were your guys’ lives like?” I asked my relaxed companions. “Well, since my mom is a teacher, I have been homeschooled all my life. This has allowed me to indulge myself in a lot of other activities, such as working out and going for nice walks on sunny days. Yet, I think this adventure that we’re on right now is the best thing that’s ever happened to me. Aside from being kidnapped, I’ve had a ton of fun going around, discovering new places, meeting new friends, and beating up bad guys. If it weren’t for this quest, I would have never met you guys, and I’m sure my life would be a ton duller if that was the case,” Paula said gloomily.

“...If you must know, after my mother passed away around 10 years ago, I was sent to a terrible boarding school where I was bored, bullied, and simply miserable. I only had two friends while staying at that school, and even then, they still couldn’t fill the great yearning in my heart for excitement. I also believe this adventure to be the best thing to happen to me, as if I was not called by Paula on that one particular evening, I would have never reunited with my father, and I
also would have never met you excellent chaps,” Jeff said with a slight smile.

“Yeah, I’m on a similar boat. All that I used to do was play baseball, go to school and go to sleep. Until one fateful night, where a meteor fell from the sky and landed next to my home. This meteor contained Buzz Buzz, an insectoid warrior from the future who had come to inform me of my quest. Thanks to the quest that Buzz Buzz sent me on, I’ve grown stronger both physically and as a person, gone to incredible places, and have met amazing people, like you guys! Ah, this water just brings out your happiest memories…” I said calmly. Soon after I had finished speaking, one of the Mr. Saturns from before came over to the hot spring.

“HEROs guys! i, Mr. sAtuRn, haS sOmEtHinG to aSk yOUs! dO yOUs seE thAt cAvE oVer ThEre? boInG!” the Saturn said as it pointed to an ominous hole nearby the hot spring.

“Yeah, so?” I asked a bit rudely.

“cAyE lEads to miLky, wEll, sAcRed sAnCTuAry of vAlleY of sAtuRn. wHen BaD BeLCH mAn cAme And ToOk sAtuRns AWaY a fEW dAyS AGo, wEiRd mOnSTers sTArTed to cOme To miLky wEll. Ding! iF iS nOt tOo MUCH tROuBLes, COuLD yOUs pLeASe GeT tHE mOnSTers oUt oF sAnCTuAry? ZoOm!”

“Wait a minute, did you say, sanctuary? Monsters, sanctuary... AH HA!” I blurted out, startling my friends. “Jeff! Paula! This is huge! If this Mr. Saturn is telling the truth, then we’ve might have just accidentally stumbled across one of the eight sanctuary locations! After so much time and so many chapters, we’ve finally found another sanctuary! As much as it pains me, we have to get out of the hot spring and go check out this place immediately! I’ll go ahead and get redressed, but be ready to change once I get out of that tent!” I said as I leapt out of the hot spring and sped into the changing tent.

As fast as my soggy body would allow me, I changed back into a fresh pair of clothes and reequipped my trusty hat, Sound Stone still
firmly sitting in the secret pocket. When I was finished changing, I put my pack back on and stepped out of the tent, allowing my saddened companions to get dressed. After we were all fully clothed once again, we assumed our normal formation and prepared to enter the cave leading to Milky Well. Without wasting anymore time, we cautiously proceeded into the cave’s dark maw.
Chapter 23
Sanctuary at Last

The moment we stepped into the cave, we were engulfed by darkness. Luckily for us, Jeff was still carrying his flashlight, so we were not in the shadows for long. Using the light that came from the small utensil, I was able to make out the features of the cave; we had entered into some sort of tunnel; the walls were of dirt, and along them ran many slender vines, making them seem as if they were colored green. The farther we proceeded into the cave, the thicker the vegetation grew, until we could no longer see the dirt for all of the vines. While we were trekking through the vine-covered tunnel, a sudden feeling of uneasiness swept over my body inexplicably, as if I could sense something sinister awaiting us somewhere up ahead.

Eventually, after walking for a few ominous minutes, the overgrown tunnel came to an end, and we were led out to a quiet, grassy area surrounded by tall cliff faces. The entire area was infested by trees, bushes, and odd other-earthly green plants, of which I had never before seen anything similar to. We were only able to take a few steps forward before two of the odd plants began to vibrate. Shortly afterwards, small yellow appendages sprouted from the sides of the plants; using the appendages as makeshift arms and legs, the plants started to move towards us. When the plants were just a couple of feet away, two large yellow eyes materialized onto the plants’ “faces”, which glared at us with intense hostility.

“Humansssss... You are tressssspassssssing on the property of Lord Giygassssss... Leave now, or ssssuffer,” one of the plants somehow said in
a malicious tone. We all took our weapons as I took a step towards the two hostilities.

“Who are you, and why are you defying this sacred sanctuary with your vile presence? I don’t know if you got the memo, but my friends and I recently defeated Master Belch, one of Giygas’s most powerful minions! So if you creeps don’t hightail it out of here, you’re going to suffer the same fate as he did!” I taunted courageously.

“Hm hm hm… Foolisshh boy… You dare sssseoff at the power of nature? Masssster Belch wassss weak… We are far more powerful than him.”

“Yeah right! You and what army?”

“THISSSS one!” the plant shouted. In mere moments, what seemed like thousands of tiny grey plants burst up from the ground, completely surrounding us. The plants consisted of two leaves which stood on root-like structures that acted as legs. Although the plants looked like they could be taken out easily when alone, the sheer amount of them that I was able to see at once made clouds of worry form in my mind. “Well, what do you think of my army? Pretty impressssive, huh? I’ll give you one lasssst warning… Leave now, or feel the wrath of nature…” the head plant muttered. Now concerned for our lives, I looked back at my friends, who both gave me encouraging looks, before turning to face the lead plant once again.

“We will not leave until all of you horrible monsters are rid from this place!” I yelled bravely.

“Well then… That ssssettlesssss it…” the plant murmured as a leafy staff materialized in the hands of it and its cohort. “Army of Milky Well, guardianssss of thissss ssssarered sssspot… Arisssse, and asssssisssst me in desssstroying thessssse interloppersssss, for they apossse the rule of Lord Giygassss… On my mark… 3, 2, 1, ATTACK!!”

On the head plant’s command, the armada of mobile sprouts charged at us, flailing their large leaves violently. At first I was fearful of the mob of little sprouts, but my worry soon faded away as I realized that the plants were unable to do any major damage to us
thanks to their small size. With this knowledge in mind, I picked up my foot and began vigorously stomping on the miniature weeds, able to take one out in only a single blow. Jeff and Paula quickly caught on to my plan and also started smashing the vicious weeds. Within 3 mere minutes, the massive horde of sprouts the head plant had bragged about was reduced to nothing but flattened grey mush. Upon seeing how easily we had defeated its armada, the head plants began to wrathfully jump in place.

“What issss the meaning of thisssss?! I thought I had trained thosssssse guyssss well enough that they would be able to desssstroy anything in their path! And yet they were ssssqlly ssstomped on like lowly weedssss! Lord Giygassss will kill me if he findssss out that we let you bratssss reclaim Milky Well ssso easssssiy! Don’t look sssso ssstumug you losssssersssss! You ssstill have to deal with usssss, the Ranboobsssss! The Ranboobsssss… Ranboobsssss… Gah, curssssse thisssss infernal ssstspeech impediment! You get the picture. Let’sssss jussst fight already!” one of the Ranboobs said as they both pointed their staffs towards us. Without hesitation, both of the Ranboobs rushed at us, ready to impale us with their leafy spears; however, their assault was cut short by one PK Fire α from Paula, turning both of them into pathetic piles of ash.

“…Well that was anticlimactic. I thought for sure that we would have been met with opposition at least on par with what had faced in Belch’s factory, but I guess not. Oh well, that’s A-OK with me. At least I can keep my dress clean this time… Ness, you know you can go on, right? You don’t have to wait for me to push you ahead every time… But, if you insist…” Paula said before violently shoving me forwards. Although mildly annoyed as Paula’s impatience, I decided not to keep my friends waiting any longer and simply continued onwards.

We walked through the lush environment for around 5 minutes, until we came to another dark hole in the side of one of the tall cliff faces. Cautiously, we entered the hole, weapons out in case of
trouble. The hole led us to another cave, one almost completely covered by plant life of all kinds. On the roof of the cavern stood a wide crater, allowing sunlight from the outside to seep into the room, which was probably the reason why there was so much vegetation growing all over. While I was busy admiring the magnificence of the fertile cave, I saw Jeff walk over to an alcove obscured by huge bushes.

“Woah… Um, Ness, Paula, you chaps might want to take a peek at this,” Jeff said as he waved for us to come over. Curious as to what my spectacled friend had stumbled upon, I speedily strolled over to him. “Ness, peer through this bush. There is something peculiar on the other side,” Jeff said as he adjusted his glasses. Carefully, I stuck my face into the large bush and struggled to see anything through the thick green leaves. Just as I was about to give up and tell Jeff that I had not seen what he was talking about, a sudden flash of light coming from somewhere on the other side of the bush caught my attention. Now intrigued, I waited for a few more seconds to see if the flash would appear again, but was unable to see anything else.

“You’re right Jeff, there was some sort of weird light coming from the other side of this bush. I want to go see what it is, but these bushes are so thick that it seems like it’s impossible to get through them,” I said as I tugged on one of the bushes branches.

“Ha! Nothing is impossible with a little PSI power! Stand back you guys!” Instantly, a stream of flames burst from Paula’s fingertips, connecting with the two bushes and setting them ablaze. In mere moments, the thick bushes were no more, revealing a shadowy hole similar to the one we had entered the cave through. “Man, I love doing that! Just the feeling of setting things on fire and watching them slowly crumble into dust fills me with indescribable joy!”

“…”

“…”

“Why are you guys giving me those weird looks? I assure you that I am 100% mentally stable… I just like burning things. Is it wrong to
have abnormal pleasures? *sigh* Whatever, just, ignore what I say. Just don’t mind me,” Paula mumbled. Despite being slightly disturbed, I decided to forget about what I had just heard and continue down the path previously blocked by the large bushes.

When we stepped through the hole, we were led into a room smaller than the one we had been in prior. The first thing that I noticed about the room was the jarring lack of any plant life, in contrast to the seemingly endless vegetation we had seen before. The room was illuminated by several lanterns that were placed on the walls, and the floor of the room was entirely comprised of dead grass. Other than the lanterns on the walls, the room was completely empty, aside from a mysterious light shining at the back of the room. This light was similar in appearance to the light’s I had witnessed at the previous two sanctuary locations.

“Well, it seems as though the elusive light shining from this room was just the sun shining in from another hole in the wall. Thankfully, it doesn’t seem like there are any more hostilities in the area, so I suppose we should just keep moving on,” Jeff said as he started moving toward the light.

“Wait Jeff! That light isn’t what you think it is! Don’t go near it!” I shouted. Before Jeff could even turn around, a dark root shot up from the ground and coiled around his body, hoisting him into the air. Moments later, the light shining from the other end of the room dissipated, revealing a massive mound of dirt with a withered yellow sprout sticking up from the top of the pile.

“Ah ha ha ha… Such recklessness… You finally arrive… The heroes of the prophecy…” the mound whispered as two bulbous eyeballs popped onto the dirt pile, followed by a wrinkled pair of lips.

“I knew it! Another minion of Giygas! Who are you, you monster!” I shouted at the heaving mound.
“I am the guardian of the third ‘Your Sanctuary’ location, Milky Well... My name is Trillionage Sprout... I used to be an ordinary sprout, growing here peacefully at this fertile place... That was, until Master Giygas gifted me with sentience, and assigned me to guard this sanctuary from all intruders... By absorbing the power of this spot, I gained tremendous strength and abilities... However, it was not without a cost... This spot had been enchanted to protect it from those who were not the chosen ones of the prophecy, and as such, I was cursed when I absorbed the sanctuary’s power... Cursed to bear the age of a trillion years time... I am miserable, doomed to lived as an impossibly old plant until the end of time... Truthfully, I do not want to harm anyone, but my Master has commanded me to protect this place, so I am afraid I must fight you... Do not take this personally...”

**Trillionage Sprout**

**Foredoomed Guardian of Milky Well**

Paula and I ripped out our weapons as the Trillionage Sprout pulled up several more roots from the ground. I rushed forward in an attempt to strike the Sprout with my bat, but was swatted away effortlessly by one of the massive roots. I was just barely able to roll out of the way of another root as it crashed onto the ground, causing the earth to rattle. Unable to reach the Sprout’s main body, I located a nearby root and struck it fiercely. The Trillionage Sprout shrieked in pain, signifying that I had chosen the right move. Without hesitation, I began rapidly whacking the any of the Sprout’s roots I could reach; Paula quickly caught onto my strategy and also started smacking the roots. The combined force of both of our blows caused the Sprout to howl in agony and drop Jeff from its grasp. The Sprout then hastily pulled its roots back under the earth, shielding them from our attacks.
“You three are mighty indeed, far too strong for an old plant such as myself to defeat with raw force... Instead, I must think tactically... With that in mind, have a taste of this...”

The Trillionage Sprout casted.

Instantly, a brilliant flash of light emitted from the Sprout’s unblinking eyes, causing my eyes to burn and tear up. As I struggled to see through the river of tears in my eyes, I was suddenly struck in the back by something large, knocking me onto the ground. Wiping away my tears, I turned and saw that the object that had hit me was one of the Sprout’s roots, which was now preparing to whack Jeff, who had also been blinded. Before this could happen however, I speedily casted PK Rockin’ α at the root, which collided with it head-on and made it zip back underground. I then picked myself up off of the ground and rushed to Jeff’s side, casting Healing α on him to rid him of his uncontrollable crying. As Jeff was regained his sight and gave me a quick nod, I searched around the room and spotted Paula, who was holding her head and stumbling about. I ran over to her and tapped her shoulder, causing her to turn over to me; for some reason, her eyes looked glazed and lifeless. Before I could ask her what was wrong, she abruptly casted PK Fire α at me, to which I narrowly ducked out of the way.

“P-P-Paula? What’s gotten into you?” I asked, baffled at her sudden actions.

“Ah ha ha ha... Your friend has been disoriented, and is no longer in control of her actions... This is a side-effect of PK Flash... She will be like this until she is knocked back into her senses... Here, allow me to assist you...” the Trillionage Sprout mumbled. A second later, another root emerged from the ground and struck Paula in the face violently, knocking her unconscious. At the sight of this, rage immediately filled my body. No longer able to think rationally, I quickly casted PK Rockin’ α at the Sprout.

the Sprout shouted. Before my PK Rockin’ could connect with the Sprout, a wall of purple energy materialized in front of it, nullifying the blast. “Tsk tsk... Such recklessness... You should have
known that I would have caught onto your tricks eventually... But I'll deal with you in a moment... Hey, boy in the green jacket... Look this way...” the Trillionage Sprout ushered. Obediently, Jeff turned to face the old sprout. “That’s it... Perfect... Now, stare into my eyes, and see diamonds...” Suddenly, the Sprout’s eyes began to glow an assortment of colors. I was able to turn away from the Sprout’s mesmerizing eyes before anything happened, but Jeff was not so lucky. Using my arms to block the Sprout’s gaze, I saw Jeff abruptly start to stiffen up. Moments later, Jeff’s body began to change shape; I quickly came to the horrifying realization that Jeff was beginning to crystallize into a diamond statue. Unable to bear the sight of the transformation, I looked away for a minute, and when I looked back, a massive chunk of diamond was standing where Jeff once was.

“Ah ha ha ha... Excellent... Oh, I am sorry, I suppose I should explain myself... Your spectacled friend here has been diamondized by my magnificent eyes... Although he looks solid, only the outside of his body has been crystallized... for now. However, once the diamondization process reaches his internal organs, he will be as good as dead... Now, all that’s left is you, the chosen boy of the prophecy... After I end your life, it will be easy to kill that unconscious girl... And then I will have won. Where the others have failed, I will have triumphed... Prepare yourself boy... You will soon breathe your last...” the Trillionage Sprout threatened. I took a moment to consider my situation. Paula was unconscious and would be killed if I was incapacitated. Jeff was turned into a diamond and would die if not given proper treatment soon. These thoughts flooded my mind and filled me with a feeling of determination greater than any I had ever felt. I refused to give up. I refused to let my friends die at the hands of an old weed. These persevering thoughts caused a familiar feeling to well up within me once again. Knowing this feeling by heart, I waited until it subsided, which caused a phrase to come to my mouth.

I shouted with all of my might. Instantly, two arrows of colorful psychic energy shot from forehead, shortly
followed a massive burst of the same energy. Both the energy arrows and energy blast connected with the Trillionage Sprout, destroying its shield and hitting it with unrivaled force. The force of the blast caused almost all of the Sprout's body to disintegrate into nothingness; the only part of the Sprout left after the blast was the tiny withered plant that had previously stood atop the Sprout’s head.

“Ah... ha... ha... very good... indeed...” the Sprout whispered as the rest of its body faded into the air.

After the Sprout had vanished from my sight, I looked over to my two friends. Seeing as Paula was only knocked out and not in any immediate danger, I turned my attention to Jeff, who was slowly perishing due to the Sprout's diamondization. I knew that my Lifeup would have no effect on him, seeing as it couldn’t even heal burns on his cheeks, and I figured that Healing wouldn’t do any good either. At that point, my only remaining hope was to find the sanctuary spot and let it heal him, or else he would die. With this knowledge in mind, I rushed over to Paula’s unconscious body and began to drag her to the opening previously blocked by the Trillionage Sprout, stopping to grab the diamondized Jeff before continuing as fast as my exhausted body would allow me.

The path that the Trillionage Sprout had guarded led me out to a small area surrounded by tall cliff faces. Unlike the room I had just been in, this place was fertile and full of life. The most notable feature of the area was a moderately large rock that spewed fresh water sitting in the middle of the secluded grounds. I immediately recognized this rock as the same one I had seen in a vision displayed to me by the Sound Stone. We had finally arrived at Milky Well. Or at least, I did, as the other two members of the team were in a bit of trouble at the time. Remembering that Jeff’s life could be on the line, I used the last remaining bit of my strength to haul his and Paula’s bodies over to gushing geyser. Once I had heaved my friends over to the edge of watery monument, I suddenly became light-headed, and my vision
began to blur. I then heard another small piece of music, accompanied by the sound of someone’s voice in the distance. Although I couldn’t make out the owner of the voice at first, I soon realized that it was my mother’s voice. She said, “Be a thoughtful, strong boy…” before I regained my senses and my vision returned to normal. As I attempted to figure out why I had heard my Mom’s voice out of nowhere, I looked over to my friends and saw something that relieved me greatly; Paula was beginning to stir and awake from her unwilling slumber, and the diamond exterior around Jeff’s body was starting to crack and break away from him. After only 2 minutes, they both looked completely healthy and were sitting up, looking dazedly at their surroundings.

“Oooo... Where am I? All I remember is a bright flash of light, and I now I’m on the ground in some kind of grassy area... And, oh, hey Ness. Care to explain to me what happened while I was out?” Paula said, rubbing her temples.

“I... say... What in the name of Einstein’s hair happened? First there was a flash of light, then I was crying, and after that I got really stiff for some reason... Gah, I am so very confused...” Jeff said as he peered about the area.

“Y-y-you guys are alright! You guys are fine! Yeah! Woopie! I’m so happy!” I said as I danced around like an idiot.

“Uhhh, Ness? Is there something wrong in your head? You didn’t drink any of that hot spring water, did you?”

“What? No! It’s just... *sigh* I was really worried about you guys. That Sprout that we were fighting meant serious business. It was going to kill you Paula, if I wasn’t there, and it almost succeeded in killing Jeff... Err, I’m sorry if that doesn’t make much sense to you. The most important thing to understand is that you guys are A-OK now, and that I was able to record another Sanctuary Melody while you both were unconscious. Come on, I’ll explain the whole thing to you as we walk back to Saturn Valley. We can take a breather there before we head back to Threed. I’ll wait for you guys to fully regain control of yourselves before we start walking. Tell me when you’re ready to
leave,” I said as I leaned on the side of one of the surrounding cliff faces.

As I was waiting for my companions to recover, I took the Sound Stone out of my hat and touched it to my forehead; I once again heard all of the melodies I had collected play, creating a more complete tune. I also saw an image of a large puddle being rained on endlessly in a snow-covered area.

“Ness chap, I do believe that we are adequately rested now. If you do not mind, lead us back to Saturn Valley my good man. I am eager to hear about what occurred during the time while I was unconscious,” Jeff said as he and Paula got back in line behind me. Now that we were all set, we exited the peaceful alcove and started back towards Saturn Valley.