Mega Battle pract

“Greninja, I choose you!”

With a flash of energy, Ash’s Greninja materialized and settled into a crouch, staring toward me. I pointed and Lucario jumped forward. Noivern had been disappointed that I’d decided to delay attempting to use our Burst Mode in a battle, but given that the Synergy Stones still heated up to dangerous temperatures while I was pumping Aura through them, we’d judged it not worth the risk.

I met Ash’s eyes, and nodded.

“Aura Sphere!”/”Water Shuriken, let’s go!”

Lucario swept her paws forth, an impressively sized ball of blue energy being formed and thrown in the blink of an eye. Greninja hadn’t been idle though, and the Aura Sphere met two star-shaped water constructs halfway across the field and promptly exploded.

Had I not been in a battle, I would have nodded appreciatively and complimented Lucario- the Aura Sphere was nearly spot-on the target I’d set her, and was better than the last time I’d worked on it with her. Clearly she’d been working on it in her own time. As we were in a battle though, I simply let the appreciation flow out through my Aura, knowing that Lucario would feel it. I’d compliment her properly later- right now, we had a battle.

“Extremespeed, Thunderpunch!” I snapped. *Rush him down!*

Lucario blasted forward in a blaze of blue energy with one hand swung back and crackling with lightning.

“Greninja, dodge with Quick Attack!” Ash yelled. Somehow, the Water-type heard him in time to step back and away from Lucario’s attack, her electrified fist passing within inches of Greninja’s body. “Now, counter with Aerial Ace!”

“Gren!” his Pokémon replied, and lashed out with a blindingly fast glowing kick that took Lucario right in the midsection- though not fast enough to stop her from driving her still-charged Thunderpunch into Greninja in retaliation.

The two Pokémon fell back away from each other, waiting for orders. I bit my lip as I frowned at the battlefield- I hadn’t known that Ash had finished teaching Greninja Quick Attack, especially after the difficulty he’d had with it as a Froakie, and if he decided to spam it with every dodge this battle could get very long.

“Aura Sphere!” I said, deciding to opt for pressuring tactics. Ranged wasn’t Lucario’s best field of combat, but Greninja had the same problems, and I was pretty sure that Lucario retained an edge.

The Pokémon in question threw another Aura Sphere forwards with the same smoothness that she had earlier, proving it to have not been a fluke. This one, though, Greninja took straight to the chest and was flung back.

“Greninja!” Ash shouted as the Water-type struggled to his feet. “Are you okay?”

“Gre, greninja!” Greninja replied, fist pumping. An action, I noticed, that Ash was mimicking.

“Okay, Greninja! Use Cut!”

“Ninja Gre!” Greninja shouted, his hand moving as if to draw a sword.

“Metal Claw,” I commanded. *Block, then force.*

*‘Sir’!’* Lucario acknowledged, and dashed forward, her paw-spikes glowing and extending into claws. Greninja met the charge, a white energy blade of Cut blazing into existence and clashing against Lucario’s swing.

Lucario spun back, her second Metal Claw swiping out to catch Greninja’s side. The Water-type dodged away, swinging the Cut blade down at my Pokémon’s head, only for Lucario to snake a claw up, and catch it, before pinning the blade to the ground. Greninja abandoned the blade and leaped back, but Lucario jumped after him and struck with her other arm- no longer shrouded in the Steel-type energy of a Metal Claw, but now glowing the blue-white of Brick Break.

Ash winced slightly as Greninja was thrown into the air. I didn’t know whether the sympathetic pain they experienced during Greninja’s transformation was already in effect, or if he was just empathizing, but either way I wasn’t letting up just yet. “Aura Sphere!”

“Greninja!” Ash yelled as Lucario flung a third Aura Sphere out. “Double Team, let’s go!”

“Nin!” Greninja replied, and suddenly there were dozens of him. Lucario’s Aura Sphere hit the Greninja that had been where the Water-type was originally, which dispersed into water immediately.

I closed my eyes and the world blazed with life as I looked through the eyes of Aura, Lucario’s Aura flickering as she did the same. Greninja was easy to pinpoint among its clones, his Aura flaring brightly amongst the clones. Even as I ordered another Aura Sphere, I noticed Greninja’s Aura reaching out towards Ash’s- and Ash’s was reciprocating.

It looked like we’d be seeing the transformation soon.

“Greninja, block that with Cut!” Ash shouted, his arm mimicking Greninja’s movements as it drew another Cut blade. The Water-type swung the blade at the incoming Aura Sphere and managed to clash with it for a few seconds, before the Fighting-type move exploded. “Greninja!”

Greninja landed in a heap and slowly picked itself up. “Are you okay?” Ash asked, clearly concerned.

“Ninja gre!” The Water-type replied, right fist clenched. A gesture that Ash was also making, I realized, as the two’s Auras began to pulse rapidly.

“Then let’s go! Stronger and stronger and stronger!”

Greninja was abruptly engulfed in a towering spout of water thick enough with Aura that I couldn’t directly see it through my Aura Sight. The connecting bands of Infinity Energy that reached between him and Ash though, gave me a pretty good idea, as did Ash’s aura merging almost seamlessly with that Aura of Greninja’s that I could see.

Moments later, the pillar of water receded, leaving only a relatively thin veil cloaking the transformed form of Greninja. Their Aura had blended almost completely, yet somehow remained separate- very nearly the exact same but in two visibly different locations. The connecting links of Infinity Energy had faded, but I was pretty sure that if I concentrated hard enough I’d be able to see them again, though I didn’t want to give myself a headache while in a fight.

Instead, I adjusted my glove before touching the Key Stone.

*Lucario,* I projected as the links of Infinity Energy stretched forward. *Let’s go! Mega Evolve!*

*‘Of course,’* her voice came back, and as the lines connected to her Mega Stone the orange light of Mega Evolution consumed her. ‘*How could I not?’*

The link between us snapped into existence as the Mega sigil shone. For a moment, it was almost like we were sharing a hug, before we stepped back to reality.

I opened my eyes to focus on the battle proper. Ash and Greninja were waiting for us, clearly eager to start. To be honest, I was too, and I could feel Lucario’s anticipation resonate with mine. It was so *rare* we got a proper chance to go full-pace with a Mega Evolution, and I occasionally envied Alain for his chosen lifestyle, Flare-backed or not.

But the opponent we were up against was one that we couldn’t just run in at- While Lucario was stronger than Greninja in their base forms, I’d watched the Water-type in this form completely *demolish* Diantha’s Mega Gardevoir in this form, something that I was pretty sure we couldn’t quite match up to yet.

Fortunately, I had some idea of what to do. Diantha had been unsure how to react when so effortlessly outsped and outgunned, clearly used to having the upper hand in such respects. We, on the other hand, were so used to the opposite that Lucario had learned and could completely control Extremespeed.

*Extremespeed forward, then block and counter with Brick Break,* I sent to Lucario. There was the slightest flicker of acknowledgement before she was gone in a blur, slight crackles of blue energy the only sign she’d ever been there.

“Greninja! Use Cut!” Ash yelled, already drawing nonexistent Cut blades. Greninja, who had *actually* drawn Cut blades, dashed forward and caught Lucario’s Brick Break perfectly. The *second* Cut Blade caught her second Brick Break as she swung it forward, resulting in a second’s tableu before Lucario kicked him away.

Brick Break and Cut clashed a third time as Greninja dashed back in, before springboarding into the air off the Cut blade. Lucario stepped back under the force of the jump, and glared up at the ascending form of the Water-type.

“Now, Water Shuriken!” Ash shouted, mimicking Greninja’s movements as both reached towards their waist.

*Afterimage Double Team, then plough him down with Thunderpunch.*

The two Water Shuriken that Greninja threw smashed into Lucario, only for her clone to shatter like glass. The expression on Ash’s face as Lucario dove in from above Greninja with a Thunderpunch pre-charged was hilarious, as was his mimicry of Greninja’s attempts to contort away from the Electric-type move.

Attempts that were in vain- as Lucario made contact with Greninja’s water veil, the Thunderpunch completely discharged, dousing the Ninja Pokémon with super-effective electricity. Ash winced as Greninja crashed back to earth, the pain echoing along their bond.

Picking himself up again, Greninja stared through the torrents of swirling water as Lucario landed, her forward knuckle-spikes digging into the ground.

*Aura Sphere, then Thunder Punch when it dodges in.*

Sweeping her hands forward, Lucario shot another, significantly larger Aura Sphere at Greninja. I noticed that while the motion and gathering were as smooth as they ahd been earlier, the containment was off- clearly we still needed to practice more with the Mega Evolution, as the attack was bleeding power dramatically. Maybe when Ash got the form working properly and on-demand we’d be able to do so properly. I had a fleeting impression of a raised eyebrow from Lucario at my surety that he’d manage it along with acknowledgement of the error, even as she called on the lightning to form another Thunderpunch.

It was barely in time to meet Greninja’s rush- he’d stepped past the Aura Sphere and dashed in, without Ash giving any input at all.

“Aerial Ace!” Ash shouted, one arm stretching back. In the back of my mind I realized that the two of them had been acting out the motions even before Ash had made any commands, and wondered if they had considered trying nonverbal communication. The rest of me was more concerned with keeping Lucario conscious.

Unfortunately, this was harder than it seemed. As Lucario blocked the first hit of Aerial Ace and lashed out with her Thunderpunch, the lightning discharged into Greninja’s water veil and her fist slammed almost uselessly into Greninja’s side. While the electricity elicited a slight wince from Ash, the lack of intensity meant that was their only reaction, and Greninja promptly slammed another three Aerial Ace kicks into Lucario.

*Blast him off, quick!*

Lucario growled, and released a flare of Aura just as Greninja tried to dart back in for another attack. It was enough to hurl him back into the air and give us some breathing room.