

MIRROR TO THE SOUL
Super Smash Bros. Brawl

I wrote this at the height of my fan-obsession with Super Smash Bros. Brawl. I main Pit, and my better half mains Kirby, and I wanted a story that featured the both of them. This was the result.

I also used this story as a writing exercise of sorts. I abuse adverbs like they're in style. I actually managed to edit a lot of them out, but I couldn't do it at the end due to the urgency of the scenes. It's better than what I usually churn out, however.

Anyways, I don't claim to be the world's biggest fan, so please don't come yelling at me saying that I've completely ruined the characters from the game. This is my interpretation. If you don't like it, you're quite welcome to write your own fic!

~ Cas

The fountain mirror shone with clarity as Pit watched over Skyworld. As Palutena's bodyguard and the captain of her army, it was the young angel's responsibility to ensure that no harm came to the Goddess. There were times, of course, where Skyworld was threatened by outside forces, even in this time of relative peace, but those threats were dispatched with efficiency thanks to him and those under his command.

Of course, there were times when Pit wasn't quite as diligent as he should -- he once used the mirror to watch the Games on the surface, after all -- but in the long run, his slacking off did prove valuable in the end as he was able to help those below fight off the Subspace invasion.

Even the most disciplined defender had to admit that monitoring Skyworld was tedious at best, and although he was tempted to slack off, he wasn't doing so at the moment. Pit's eyes were fixed on the image reflected in the mirror, looking for anything out of the ordinary, and once he was satisfied that everything was well, he willed the image to change to a different area.

The whole process was mind-numbing and dull, but if it kept Palutena safe, then it was worth it.

Pit turned when he heard footsteps come behind him, and he returned the centurion's salute when it was given.

"Sorry to interrupt, captain, but we have an unknown visitor..."

"Oh?" Pit blinked -- visitors didn't come here often, and those who came were either invited or announced themselves prior to entering.

"Yes, sir." The centurion nodded. "We don't know how he got past the gates. We found him in the orchard, and he had already emptied out one of the apple trees. He doesn't seem to be a threat, but we didn't want to take any chances."

"Appl-... round? Pink?"

"Why, yes..." The centurion nodded again, though he seemed confused. "Do you know him, sir?"

"I do." Pit shook his head and smiled, sighing with a resigned expression on his face. "Where is he now?"

"Right this way, sir..." Pit followed the centurion out; after the two were gone, the mirror dimmed, the image reflected in it becoming clouded.

"So..." Pit looked at Kirby with uncertainty. Once the centurions figured out that Kirby wasn't a threat, they released him over to their captain. Now the two were sitting on a grassy knoll near the same orchard that Kirby had nearly decimated; Kirby was contentedly eating a bushel full of apples and pears that Pit had gotten for him, eating them one by one, whole.

"I meant to ask... how *did* you get here?" What Pit really wanted to ask was, "Why did you come here?", but he figured it wasn't polite.

Kirby blinked, and he patted his stomach with his stubby arms. "Hungry." He mimicked flying on his Warp Star and crash-landing on the ground.

Pit blinked in shock, his mind trying to process the simplicity of Kirby's intentions. "You... came here because you were hungry?"

"Un-hunh." Kirby lifted an apple out of the basket and giggled before swallowing it whole.

"But this place is protected by wards... how did you get through?"

Kirby blinked in confusion, and Pit just shook his head. "Nevermind..."

Kirby blinked again then shook off the odd question. He looked at the basket of fruit and pointed at one of the apples.

"Red."

"Uh..." Pit smiled in confusion before remembering who he was talking to – it really was like he was dealing with a kid. "Yeah, that's red."

"Green." Kirby pointed at a pear, nodding sagely.

"Un-hunh." Pit nodded again... What is he getting at?

Kirby looked up at Pit. "Purple?"

"What? There's nothing purple here, and grapes aren't in season yet..."

"Not grape. Bigger." Kirby nodded with enthusiasm. "There." The pink puffball pointed further away, towards a rockier region of Skyworld.

Pit looked in the direction that Kirby was pointing in and frowned, looking thoughtful; that place was barren, so what in the world could he be talking about?

Pit smiled, but his expression betrayed a hint of panic as his mind raced. He got up and helped Kirby to his feet. "Can you show me where?"

"Yeah!" Kirby whipped out a cell phone – from where, Pit didn't really want to know – and pushed a button on it. After a second, there was a rushing, twinkling sound, and Kirby's Warp Star landed right in front of the two. Kirby climbed on, and was about to take off when Pit stopped him.

"Wait... er... is it okay if I hitch a ride?"

Kirby blinked. "Wings?"

Pit reddened and looked down, embarrassed. "I can't normally fly that far... only when I have the Three Treasures..."

"Oh." Kirby looked down with a guilty expression crossing his round face, and he shuffled his foot against the ground while he tried to think of something to say. "Sorry." His expression abruptly changed as he patted his Warp Star, and he looked up at Pit, his eyes shining with happiness. "Up!"

Pit climbed aboard the Warp Star, and before he could ask what he was supposed to hold on to, the star sped away in the direction of the crags...

Due to their dangerous nature, the crags weren't a place where people ventured on a casual whim. The centurions did a very good job of making sure no one got into trouble, and that included keeping people away whenever they could. However, they, as well as Pit, had completely failed to notice the cave entrance in one of the more secluded parts of the area.

The cave wasn't deep, the two travelling about twenty feet before they reached a large chamber, but what was inside was both surprising and disturbing at the same time.

"Crates?" Pit circled around them, his eyes peeled for anything suspicious. There were about fifty crates here, about half his height.

"Yeah. In." Kirby hopped onto one of the sealed crates and pointed at one of the opened ones. "Purple here."

Pit looked inside, and he frowned as he pulled an eggplant out of the opened crate.

"Not good..." He looked at it closely; it was fresh, which meant that it couldn't have been leftovers from twenty years ago. He dropped the eggplant back in the crate and looked askance at Kirby. "How did you know these were here?"

Kirby shrugged as best he could, looking sheepish. "Food. Hungry. "

"Okay..." Pit shook his head – whatever drove Kirby's food magnet, it might have actually prevented a crisis.

"Purple bad?" Kirby held up one of the eggplants and popped it in his mouth, making Pit wince.

"I wouldn't eat those... you don't know where they came from."

"Oh." Kirby pondered Pit's warning. "But still good?"

Pit groaned; it wasn't worth arguing about right now. He moved aside one of the crates and pried it open with a small knife he carried. He lifted up the lid, and widened his eyes when he saw the hundreds of bombs inside.

"Bombs?!"

Kirby looked inside, and he and Pit widened their eyes as the small charges suddenly lit up. Pit grabbed Kirby by the arm and dashed out of the cave, and they managed to reach the entrance before the whole place exploded.

“... and that’s what happened, your Holiness.”

Pit knelt with his head down before the Goddess Palutena. After he and Kirby had been blown forward from the blast, the centurions came flying to investigate the explosion. After assuring them they were alright (but singed), Pit had requested an emergency audience with the Goddess at the Palace in the Sky.

Kirby, for his part, had never seen a deity before, and it was clear when Pit realized that Kirby had no idea how to act before Palutena. He tried to get him to kneel, but Palutena shrugged off the apparent breach of etiquette with a tolerant smile, seeming unfazed by the round, pink being from another world that was gaping at her.

“This is indeed troubling, Pit. If these eggplants were created by eggplant wizards, then we might have been wrong that Medusa’s influence had been suppressed.”

Palutena seemed thoughtful for a moment before looking down at Pit, sadness and worry reflected in her expression. “I worry that despite our efforts, something may be starting in the Underworld. I realize that returning there will trouble you...”

Pit shook his head, looking up at Palutena with determination. “If it is the will of my Goddess, then I will go.”

Palutena smiled and held out her hand. Soft, blue light washed over Pit, and his wings glowed blue for a moment before the light faded away. “You will not be helpless. Once more, I bestow upon you my treasures. Use them well.”

“Thank you, your Holiness.” Pit nodded, looking up at Palutena, then glanced at Kirby.

“As for you, Kirby...” Palutena smiled at the pink puffball. “Thank you for helping discover this threat. You are welcome to stay here as long as you like, though I cannot ask you to join Pit in his quest.”

“Oh?” Kirby blinked, and when he realized what the nice, glowy lady was telling him, he shook his head and tapped himself over his heart. “I help!”

“Well, then...” Palutena chuckled under her breath and nodded. “Skyworld is in your debt, Kirby. Please go with Pit and report what you find.”

“Okay.” Kirby nodded, and he started to walk away when he realized he didn’t know how to get to where they were supposed to go.

Pit just blinked at Kirby and rose, nodding to Palutena. "I'm off, then..." He saluted Palutena and went off in the direction of the portal to the Underworld. Palutena watched the two leave, an expression of worry etched on her face.

"I wonder what is happening..."

Pit stared at the portal to the Underworld. The portal was off-limits to everyone in Skyworld, and after hearing of Pit and Kirby's permission to use it, the centurions had unsealed the doors and allowed them to access it.

This particular portal happened to be set in the floor, and while Skyworld was beautiful and had a holy atmosphere to it, this portal was exactly the opposite. A purple and black vortex, surrounded by glowing blue runes, swirled before Pit and Kirby, threatening to draw them in if they got too close.

Pit looked down grimly at the floor. "That's what we need to take. It's a direct way down... I've never taken it before, so I don't really know what to expect." Pit looked at Kirby. "I think there's going to be a lot of falling, though... I know you can float, but do you think you're going to be okay?"

"Yeah." Kirby nodded. He looked at the floor and picked up a moulted feather from Pit's wings, and he swallowed it. There was a flash of yellow, starry light, and when it faded, Kirby had small, stubby little white wings.

"I'll never understand how you can do that." Pit grinned, and he looked down at the portal. He concentrated, and large, blue wings of light superimposed themselves over his own.

"Let's go, then..."

The descent was harrowing at best. Apart from the light emanating from Pit's wings, the trip so far was in complete darkness. As they fell, Pit and Kirby could see greyish, disjointed columns and stone around them, as if the world around them couldn't decide how to present itself to them.

Pit lost track of how long they had been falling. Minutes? Hours? There was no way to tell. He was looking down below, trying to get an idea on if they'd ever reach the bottom, when he suddenly heard the sound of metal being drawn and felt hot, searing pain as something cut through his back. The Wings of Icarus flickered out of existence as he was struck, and he screamed as he dropped like a stone.

"Pit!" Kirby turned and was struck as well, though he was able to avoid the brunt of the blow because of the attack on Pit. The star power escaped Kirby as he was hit, and from the light of the star that was quickly fading away, the last thing he saw was a flurry of black feathers before he, too, fell into the abyss below.

Kirby wasn't sure where he was when he reached the bottom of the pit. The descent was long and scary, but with a little effort, he managed to slow his fall enough that he landed without incident.

Pit, however, did not fare so well. The blow, along with the crash-landing, had reverted him back into a Trophy which was half-buried into the sooty, black ground. Kirby half-ran to the Trophy and pulled it out of the ground. After checking it for damage, he gave the base a sharp tap, and the area around him filled with a golden light as the inanimate object reverted into Palutena's bodyguard.

"... what the..." Pit manifested lying down on the ground, and he looked up and first blinked in confusion, then widened his eyes when he realized what had just happened. He reached back and touched where he knew he got sliced open and, finding no wounds, he looked up at Kirby with uncertainty.

"Did I...?"

"Un-hunh." Kirby looked at Pit with a worrisome expression and helped him up as best he could. "I sorry that I couldn't help..."

"No, you helped a lot..." Pit smiled, dusting himself off. "If you hadn't been there, who knows how long I'd have been sitting at the bottom of this hole... thank you..."

"Welcome!" Kirby pinged, showing obvious relief at Pit's safety, and he looked up at the shaft they'd descended through. "How we get back up?"

"It shouldn't be a problem... I..." Pit blinked in horror. "... They're gone."

Kirby looked up at Pit, not understanding what he meant. "Nn?"

"Palutena's treasures..." Pit held out his right hand and stared at it, as if he were expecting something to appear. "They're gone..."

"Uh-oh." Kirby blinked. "I go back up and ask for new ones?"

"It doesn't work that way, Kirby..." Pit sighed; as it were, he couldn't face Palutena having lost her treasures. "We're going to have to find them and get them back... and make whoever made me lose them pay..."

The Underworld was not one of the most charming places in the world. While Pit had been there before, this was the first time that Kirby came face to face with a place that was downright "evil". The whole place was open but disjointed, as if whoever created the place had started making buildings but stopped halfway. There seemed to be ruins all over the place, all made out of the same sickly green-grey stone, some even suspended mid-air with no rhyme or reason.

Pit's first instinct was to head up and out of this forsaken place, but he resisted the urge and instead stayed on the main level they were on, trying in vain to find any sign of Palutena's treasures. A knot formed in his chest as he hoped that he wouldn't have to go through what he did the last time they found their way here...

"I don't even know how we're going to find them. It was pretty obvious the last time..."

Kirby blinked, looking thoughtful, and he made a small happy sound as he whipped out the same cell phone he used to summon his Warp Star. Pit looked at it for a moment and shook his head. "I don't think it'd be a good idea to use the Warp Star down here... we'd stick out like a sore thumb."

Kirby looked at his stubby little arms, as if wondering if his non-existent thumbs were sore, and he shook his head and held out the cell phone again. "GPS!"

"GP-..." Pit had no idea what Kirby was talking about, but he took the phone anyways. After a few moments, an outline of what looked like the Underworld appeared on the screen, as well as three white flashing dots.

"Is that where they are?" Kirby nodded, and Pit grinned. "Great, this is going to make things a lot easier."

Kirby's cell phone was accurate enough that it wasn't difficult to quickly find the location of one of the treasures – which one, he didn't know, but it was moot since he needed to recover all three of them.

The bad news, however, was that there was a massive three-headed canine guarding the blue sphere of light that was hovering in the centre of the room.

"This wasn't here the last time I was here," muttered Pit under his breath as he stared at the black Cerberus from his hiding place behind a nearby pillar. Kirby wondered what the beast would taste like, but after seeing that it was at least ten feet tall, he decided to pass on the culinary experiment for now.

Pit looked around, trying to figure out what he could use against the monster. Kirby had offered the use of his hammer, but the angel had declined the offer since he wasn't used to using big, heavy weapons.

Pit stared at the beast for a while before whispering under his breath. "I think I have an idea..."

"Oh?" Kirby looked at the Cerberus, then looked at Pit with curiosity.

Pit sighed – he didn't like what he was about to suggest, but he couldn't think of anything else. "You go distract it... while its back is turned, I'll grab the treasure. Then I'll be able to help you..."

Pit looked at Kirby, looking like he was holding back words for a moment before continuing. "I don't like making you the bait, though..."

"Is okay," Kirby smiled happily. "I not DeDeDe."

Pit had no idea what Kirby meant by that, but before he could ask, Kirby went out into the open and started walking towards the Cerberus.

All three heads turned when they saw the pink puffball marching towards them. Kirby stopped, blinking with childlike innocence at the beast. He didn't seem at all fazed by the fact that the drool dripping from the monster's maws was boring holes into the stone floor.

One set of eyes stared at three for a long, tense moment. Pit didn't even dare breathing, a million scenarios of what could happen next going through his mind. But nothing could have prepared him for the moment when Kirby suddenly held out his arms, waving and smiling happily.

"Hiiii~!"

The beast howled in rage as Kirby dashed off in the opposite direction of Pit's hiding place. The young angel blinked and gaped at the scene before snapping out of his stupor and dashing towards the treasure. As soon as his hands cupped the light, it exploded in a million motes, hanging in the air for a moment before collecting into Pit's outstretched hands, forming into the Sacred Bow of Palutena.

"All right!" Pit separated the bow in half, turning it into two sharp blades, and he rushed towards the monster. He launched himself off some nearby rubble and with a few, powerful beats of his wings, he propelled himself onto the Cerberus' back and started slashing violently at the heads.

Kirby stopped his mad dash when he heard the howls of pain coming from the beast and he cheered happily when he saw Pit attacking it. He looked at the Cerberus' trashing for a moment and jumped in the air, and on his landing, a blade of air went straight for its legs.

The Cerberus howled and thrashed about, sending Pit flying off its back. He narrowly missed getting crushed by one of its paws by rolling away, and he watched in horror as it threw its heads back and shot several fireballs at Kirby, who managed to avoid all but one that hit him squarely, sending him flying.

"Owie..." Kirby got up and shook himself, and he ran towards the monster, launching himself in a spin jump off the beast's centre head and bouncing off it on impact. He floated a little above the centre head before turning himself into a pink rock and plummeting into its head as several shots of light flew into its flank as Pit shot arrow after arrow at it, barely taking the time to aim.

The Cerberus had no chance against Pit and Kirby's combined attacks, and it dissipated in a wisp of black, foul-smelling smoke.

"Guess he not good to eat." Kirby looked at the empty space where the beast had gone down, and he looked up at Pit, cheering with excitement. "We won!"

“Yeah, we did...” Pit looked at his bow with an expression of relief, and he nodded at Kirby. “Let’s go find the next treasure...”

The first sign of trouble was the complete lack of monsters the closer they got to the location of the second treasure. While the Underworld wasn’t swarming with the number of monsters Pit had encountered the last time he was there, he and Kirby encountered the odd creature that was quickly dispatched by the two. But as they approached, their ranks thinned to nothing, though they saw a great number of broken monster statues all over the place.

Pit worried for a moment that Medusa herself was down here, though if she were, she would have attacked a lot sooner, while Pit was almost defenceless. It made him wonder what he and Kirby were about to face...

The answer came to Pit when he and Kirby saw an enormous, greenish lizard in the chamber ahead. Its back was turned to the two, and Pit’s stomach sank when he realized that it was eating a stone monster statue similar to the ones they’d passed.

“Rock no good to eat.” Kirby said quietly, shaking his head. “Heavy in stomach.”

Pit stared at Kirby’s phone, then back up at the creature. “Well, according to your phone, that thing has one of the treasures...” Pit frowned at the scene as he tucked the phone away. “I hope it didn’t eat it...”

“Nunh-uhn.” Kirby shook his head. “Can’t eat glowy thing...”

“Oh. Right.” Pit shuddered – he’d had the misfortune of getting swallowed by Kirby in one of the tournament matches. He didn’t remember anything from the moment he got sucked in to the moment he got spat out, and he was somewhat grateful about that. Instead, he hurriedly changed the subject, staring at the monster.

“I think that’s a basilisk... that would explain all the stone around us. It has an ability that can turn us to stone if we’re not careful...”

“Like this?” Kirby squeezed his eyes shut, and he turned into a pink rock.

“No, not like that... I mean permanently, so be careful...”

“Okay.” Kirby reverted back to his normal form, and he looked at the basilisk. “Now?”

Pit hesitated – he hated rushing in without some sort of plan, but he couldn’t see the treasure, and that left them with little choice...

“... yeah, now. CHARGE!” Pit nodded then rushed towards the basilisk with a battle cry, Kirby following behind with a determined expression on his face.

The basilisk turned and looked at the two with the mindless, ravenous hunger of a beast that hadn't eaten in weeks, expecting a more substantial meal than shemums and monoeyes. It was disturbingly quick for its size, and as the two rushed in, it abruptly turned, swinging its long tail at them in the hopes of knocking them down.

Pit didn't get caught by the trick, however, and neither did Kirby – the angel leaped off to the side, his wings keeping him aloft long enough to pelt the basilisk with several light arrows, their trajectories curving towards the monster's vital points.

"Ita..." Kirby bounced off a chunk of rock, raising his stubby arms before crashing down towards the basilisk's head with his Cutter. "... ee!" The monster flinched but countered by trying to take a chunk out of Kirby, who was surprised by the sudden attack and cried out at the hit.

"Aaah!" Kirby pulled back, wincing, leaving the basilisk with a window of opportunity. It opened its huge, toothy maw, and a beam of slate-coloured light shot towards Kirby, going right through him.

"KIRBY!" The light cleared, and Pit was horrified to see that he's reverted back to a Trophy. The basilisk grunted in satisfaction and ran towards his new meal.

Pit just about snapped at this point, and he raced towards the monster, separating his bow in half as he approached it and the Trophy. "Oh no, you don't!" The rings of light on Pit's left arm encircled his weapons as he attacked the basilisk's side, their energy lending power to his blows. The lizard cried out in pain, and a familiar blue sphere of light escaped its mouth floating haphazardly in the air.

"There!" Pit launched himself in the air, grabbing at the sphere, but he couldn't quite reach it before he tired out and was forced to land. The basilisk let out a hiss of rage at the loss of its snack and spun around, knocking Pit away from the sphere with its tail.

Pit winced at the blow, but he didn't give the basilisk a chance to do what it'd done to Kirby; he joined the halves of the bow together and drew an arrow, concentrating on the energy within it. After a few moments, the arrow grew brighter, and Pit released it, aiming for the basilisk's eyes.

The creature cried out in pain as the shot hit home. This gave Pit the chance he needed to chase after the blue mote, and once he took it and the light cleared, he found himself holding the Mirror Shield.

The creature let out a terrible sound, a combination of a loud hiss and spit, and it began to shoot its petrifying beam in random directions in the hopes of striking Pit. In a panic, Pit landed and planted the shield in front of him into the ground, bracing himself behind it. He could feel the beams strike and bounce off the shield, making him slide back from the impact, but he was protected by Palutena's treasure.

The rage-filled attacks went on for quite a while until Pit heard the monster cry out in pain. There was a resounding crack as Pit heard the sound of metal striking stone, and soon, the chamber was quiet once more...

Pit peered out cautiously from behind the shield once the dust settled, and he was extremely disturbed at what he saw; the basilisk was dead, broken in stone pieces, and the rock looked like it had been hacked apart with a sharp blade.

Even more troubling was the fact that Kirby's Trophy was gone.

Pit searched through the rubble, hoping that whatever destroyed the basilisk didn't destroy Kirby's Trophy as well, but there was no sign of it at all. Instead, tucked between two chunks of stone, Pit found a folded piece of paper. He was troubled at the sign of the familiar, hurried scrawl, and even more at what was written.

"Both the faithful and the unbelievers gather in the Dark Goddess' temple. Worship her and all will be answered. Deny her and you will die."

Pit frowned and crumpled the note. "Dark Goddess' temple..." He tossed the note on the ground, and after concentrating, he took a chance and headed towards where he felt the evil influence was the strongest...

Pit made his way into the ruined temple, his senses all but bursting from the tension in the air. Words couldn't describe how disturbing it was to him that his surroundings looked like a twisted, dilapidated version of Palutena's palace, right down to the dried-out and cracked fountain mirror. If evil had taken hold of Skyworld and the Palace in the Sky, then this is what it would look like.

A glint in the distance caught Pit's eye and he quickened his pace towards the back of the temple. Sitting on top of an altar made of notched, black granite was Kirby's Trophy.

"Kirby!" Pit moved towards the Trophy, holding out his hand to tap the base. "How in the Goddess' name did you end up here?"

"It's quite simple, Pit. I brought him here."

The source of the voice slipped off a crumbling archway off to the side, slowing his fall with a quick beat of his wings. To Pit, it was like he was staring in a mirror; the hair and skin colour were the same, but this Pit's eyes were red, and his clothing was the opposite of his own – black with purple trim. Even the laurels adorning his head were solid black, a disturbing contrast to those worn by Pit.

"I am you..." The doppelganger started walking towards Pit, who was backing away, his Trophied companion pushed to the back of his mind in light of the situation before him. "... and you are me." The double smiled cruelly, holding out his hand towards Pit as he continued to move towards him. "I'm everything you were when you were last here... you remember, don't you? The fear, the resentment..."

"Shut up..." Pit frowned, his hands clenched tightly around his blades as he kept backing away, his expression making it clear that he *did* remember.

“You were all alone down here, split off from everyone you knew in Skyworld, shunted down to the depths of despair...” The figure continued moving forward, and Pit didn’t realize that he was being backed into a wall. “You didn’t know why you were down here... you were lost, confused, and scared...” The lookalike said with a knowing grin, adding quietly, “You didn’t even *want* to be chosen by Palutena.”

“Shut up!” Pit swiped angrily at his doppelganger, who fluidly stepped back to evade the blow.

“Don’t deny it... my existence proves that those feelings did exist. When you returned to Skyworld, you thought you left it all behind... but you didn’t.” The lookalike smirked, continuing. “It all stayed here, and made me who I am. I’m your dark side, Pit... and the only one of us who is worthy of being alive.”

Dark Pit slashed fiercely at Pit; the latter, realizing he had been backed into a wall, narrowly avoided getting sliced open by stepping off to the side. Pit ducked under the blade and tried to throw his lookalike off-balance by kicking at his opponent’s feet, but he quickly evaded and surprised Pit by grabbing his arm and throwing him off to the side in a surprising display of strength.

Pit spread his wings, using the drag to slow himself and to stop himself from being thrown too far; he then narrowed his eyes and joined his bow together, jets of blue light streaking from it as he shot arrow after arrow at his doppelganger in an effort to bring him down. Dark Pit seemed to expect this, however, and he didn’t seem at all surprised as they curved to home in on him after he dodged. There was a brief flash of light as he deflected the projectiles with an obsidian-rimmed mirror shield that he brought out of nowhere, and he smiled cruelly at Pit’s surprised expression as the shield vanished.

“Are you really all that surprised?” Dark Pit held out his right hand, and three spheres of black light appeared over his upturned palm, their energies swirling around frantically like a caged animal. “You forget that Medusa is Palutena’s counterpart... did you really think that you were the only one blessed with power?”

With a wave of his right hand, the three black spheres absorbed back into Dark Pit’s hand, and larger wings of the same black light became an extension of his own. With an effortless beat of his wings, he launched himself into the air, and a black and gold bow appeared in his right hand as he hovered several feet over the confused-looking Skyworlder.

“I may not be able to destroy the Wings of Icarus...” He held out his left hand, and a familiar blue sphere appeared; before Pit could reach out for it, Dark Pit smirked and clenched his fist around the light, quashing it like it was nothing. “... but I can stop you from ever using them again.”

Something snapped in Pit’s mind as he saw Palutena’s light suppressed by Dark Pit, and he drew his bow, blinding shooting arrows at his dark self in a fit of rage. Dark Pit laughed and dove towards Pit, knocking him off his feet, and before Pit could recover, Dark Pit landed close behind him and started ripping through his with his twin blades, chaining into a fierce, skyward strike that sent Pit flying, then crashing back down onto the ground.

"Maybe I was wrong in saying that we were the same..." Dark Pit landed, kicking Pit in the ribs and making him cry out in pain. "You're pathetically weak. Are you sure you're Palutena's champion?"

"I'm..." Pit rose to his feet; he looked badly battered, but the defiant glare he was shooting at Dark Pit made it clear he wasn't done for. "I'm more of a champion than you'll ever be!"

Dark Pit didn't even have a chance to react in surprised as Pit counter-attacked, strong slashes from his blades following quick, precise strikes that were barely visible to the naked eye. He followed through with a quick throw, and, not wanting to give Dark Pit a chance to recover, he drew upon the energy from the rings around his right arm, and they formed an extension of his blades that ripped through Dark Pit with holy energy.

By some miracle, Dark Pit managed to block the brunt of Pit's Angel Ring with his Mirror Shield, and he tried to counter with a similar attack; however, Pit managed to read into his counterpart's actions and he quickly dodged, his speed allowing him to get behind his enemy and striking from behind, sending black feathers flying as his attacks connected.

"Damn you..." Dark Pit surrounded his wings with dark light and he shot in the air, out of reach of Pit's melee attacks. He laughed despite himself as he saw Pit glaring up at him, his hand clenched around his bow.

"What's wrong? Come on, come get me..." He grinned. "Oh, right. You *can't fly*."

Pit glared as he joined his blades and drew his bow once more. There was a flash of blue light, and a volley of arrows came at the dark angel at an incredible speed. Dark Pit frowned and dodged each one effortlessly, and sneered with derision as he shook his head in obvious disappointment. "You tried that before, and that didn't even come close to hitting me. What makes you think that it'd work this time?"

"That's because you weren't really paying attention." Pit grinned as three of the arrows he'd shot curved back and streaked straight towards Dark Pit, who didn't realize what was happening until the arrows struck him. The attack dispelled the wings of dark light, and he screamed in rage and pain as he dropped towards the ground...

... and past it..

"What the...?!" Pit ran towards the spot where Dark Pit dropped, and realized that he'd fallen through a ten foot-wide crease in the ground that he hadn't noticed during the fight, and he dove into the crack without thinking of what could be waiting for him.

However, once Pit reached the bottom, he saw that Dark Pit was nowhere to be found.

The blue sphere that Dark Pit had been carrying shone with a faint pulse. Pit took it with both hands, and his wings glowed with the same light as the sphere dissipated. Having recovered the treasure, Pit took a closer look at the area he was in, looking for a sign of his foe... but all he found was a single, small black feather on the ground.

Pit picked up the feather and frowned; it looked almost exactly like one of his own, with soft tufts of down near the quill, though it was jet black. He moved to throw it on the ground but stopped himself at the last minute; instead, he gestured, and a small bubble-like shield formed around the plume, letting him tuck it away without damaging it so he could show it to Palutena once he returned to Skyworld.

Seeing nothing else in the crease, Pit closed his eyes and concentrated, manifesting the Wings of Icarus over his own wings, and, after a moment of hesitation, he flew out of the crease and landed lightly by the altar where Kirby's Trophy was still standing, unharmed. After making sure that the Trophy was whole, he tapped the gold base sharply, and a yellow-white light flooded the room as silver-grey metal turned into soft, pink Kirbyness.

"... Oh?" Kirby blinked in obvious confusion. He looked around, and when he didn't see anyone but Pit, he looked up at him with worry. "Bad guys all gone?"

"Yeah, he's gone..." Pit looked back at the crevasse, looking unsure of his own words. When he saw Kirby's confused look, he added quickly, "They're gone."

"All gone? Pit has glowy things, too?"

"Yeah..." Pit held out his hand, showing the spheres containing Palutena's treasures, and Kirby cheered, waving his little arms.

"Yaaay! But..." Kirby looked leaned forward, looking up at Pit from his perch on the altar. "Pit okay? Pit look worried."

"Yeah, I'm fine..." Pit shook his head – there wasn't a point in chasing down Dark Pit, not after recovering the treasures. He's done what Palutena asked – investigate the Underworld and report what he found. If he went further, he risked endangering Kirby and himself even more. "Let's get out of here..."

Kirby nodded, and Pit headed for the temple's entrance. Kirby paused, looking in the direction that Pit had been looking in, and then he hopped off the altar and ran after the angel.

~ EPILOGUE ~

With the three treasures, Pit and Kirby had no problem making their way back up the passage to the Palace in the Sky. Upon arrival, Pit and Kirby were both rushed to a concerned Palutena, who gravely listened to Pit's account of what had happened.

Palutena shook her head at Pit, who was kneeling before her and looking at the floor. "I worry that pursuing the matter may lead you into a trap, Pit, so I will have to deny your request for now." She placed her hand on the angel's head, a sigh tinged with regret escaping her lips before she continued, lowering her voice so that only Pit could hear. "Recover your strength... no matter what he said, you are still my champion."

After their audience, Kirby bid farewell to Pit, at least for now, and continued his quest for more food, with an invitation for Pit to visit Dreamland. After saying his goodbyes, Pit made his way back to the chamber where the fountain mirror was kept.

The waters still shone with clarity, and after a cursory glance at Skyworld, Pit took out the black feather which was still in its protective bubble. He let go of it, and it hovered a few inches over the water; the water shimmered, and after a long, tense moment, the water returned to normal, signalling that it hadn't found what Pit had been looking for.

Pit sighed and put away the feather. He couldn't find him now, but that didn't mean he'd stop looking... and when he did find him, he'd make sure that he'd finish the fight for good...

~ FIN ~