

His Miracle Cure

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Ash gets food poisoning while the group is traveling through Sootopolis. He doesn't feeling compelled to move for anything. Is there any remedy for his illness? Takes place during the Houenn arc. Pokeshippy.

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Disclaimer - I don't own Pokemon. Or Ash. Or Brock. Or May. Or Max. Or Jessie. Or James. Or Nurse Joy. I admit to all of that, but. . . can I *please* keep Misty?

Notes - God, this is the third AAML one-shot I've started in celebration of Valentine's Day. I don't know which one to use for the actual holiday gift to you all, but I think it'll be this one, because it seems simpler to write up than at least one of the others. And the other one is too mushy, even for this. Anyway, enjoy, and review splendidly! Lol.

OoO

Title - His Miracle Cure

Summary - Ash has got food poisoning while the group is traveling through Sootopolis, including the fever, nausea, and all other symptoms. He doesn't feel compelled in any way whatsoever to take place in any of his usual activities; eating, training, or watching his friends train. Is there any type of remedy for this illness? Pokeshippy. Happy Valentines Day!

OoO

"Ugh, god, I never wanna see another hamburger ever, ever again." Ash moaned for the fourth time that morning, tossing onto his side in the twin-sized bed of the Pokemon Center room he and his friends were renting. He felt another one of the continuous spasms of sharp pain jolt at him and cuddled his chest against his knees in misery.

"I'm real sorry, Ash." Max said, patting him on the arm, "I guess it was kind of my fault, since I'm the one who suggested the restaurant."

Ash glared at the boy, feeling almost strong enough to get up and chase after him in a fury, but two seconds later the feeling was gone, replaced, once again, by the urge to throw up. Max, realizing this, jumped away, hurriedly tossing a bucket into the Pokemon trainer's face and standing back against the wall as the business was done.

"Here, Ash. . ." May said kindly, handing him a glass of water to try and wash away the taste of vomit, "I know it's not something you want to do, but you should drink all of it, no matter what. We don't need you to get dehydrated, too. Oh, and maybe you should. . . eat something. . ."

"I don't want to have anything to do with food! I don't even want to hear anything to do with it, including any terms of digestion, or any mention of the things I might like to have!" Ash shouted as loudly as possible, but that wasn't very loud, seeing as for the past four hours, his throat had been used for

other means, "Don't say 'hamburgers', or 'pizza', or 'French fries'! I don't even want to hear you guys talk about what you're going to have today!" Then he coupled over the edge of the mattress and emptied another former meal into the bucket in his hands, "I don't feel good. . . Why doesn't someone just *Thunderbolt* me and get it over with. . . ? I'm miserable. . . pity me?" He pleaded with his friends.

"We're already there, believe me." Brock said, waving a thermometer in the younger boy's face. "Now slip this under your tongue, lay down, and stop making such a racket. It'll only make you feel worse." He explained, pushing the boy against his pillow and taking the bucket away from him to empty it.

Ash placed the thermometer to the right underside of his mouth, feeling somehow worse as he did.

"And you know we can't let Pikachu *Thunderbolt* you." May scolded, as though thinking he'd been serious about that.

"I know, I know. . . you'd rather see me suffer." Ash smiled grimly through the stick protruding between his lips.

"Not talking." Brock reprimanded, placing the freshly Pine-Soled bucket beside him, "We want as accurate a reading as possible." This was said just in time for the small thing to beep, and the breeder picked it up and read it, his brow creasing as he did so, "Damn, it's at 103.4 degrees. What did you eat?" He asked, only to have a pillow thrown at him.

"I said no mentioning it!" Ash moaned again, turning to face the wall so that they didn't catch sight of how truly horrible he felt. Unfortunately, the groans and shuddering that coursed through him every few seconds didn't leave them much choice but to embrace the obvious.

"Awe, c'mon, Ash. . . It's not that bad. . ." May said, though she really didn't know anything about it. "I mean, maybe if you watched a battle or something, you'd feel a bit better. . ." Ash only groaned again in response and buried his head deeper under his comforter, "You mean you actually *don't* want to?" She asked, mortified.

"Too much excitement. It'd probably. . . send me reeling, make me collapse or. . . something like that." Ash muttered, but it was most-likely the truth.

"Well, do you at least want Pikachu to stay with you?" Max asked, holding up the small, yellow mouse, who quirked its ear at its trainer.

"Don't you remember. . . ?" Ash asked, turning to glare daggers at the boy, "The last time you suggested something, I ended up here, incapacitated, like this." Then, as though hoping to make an even greater point, he stuck his tongue out at the younger of the two Beech siblings, "I just want. . . to be alone, I guess. There's nothing much you guys can do for me until it's out of my system, right? Besides, I'm sure you all have more important things to do. . ." He finished lamely, and, for some reason, he didn't feel the faintest bit upset when they all nodded their heads in agreement.

"I have supplies to buy." Brock sighed, turning away with a glint in his eyes that suggested he wouldn't mind the lovely Nurse Joy that stood just a while down the hall accompanying him on the trip.

"I have to study. I want to learn the map-way to the next town ahead of time so that we don't end up getting lost. *Again.*" Max concluded, holding up his PokeNav.

"I guess I should train for my next competition. I hear that there's a small Coordinators hut around here that offers lessons and practice rounds. Maybe I'd better go check that out." May nodded, saying this loudly and clearly although hoping to gain Ash's attention. He merely grunted carelessly and didn't turn to face them all. She allowed the slight frown on her face to deepen. She'd hoped that he wasn't so bad off that he was serious about not wanting anything to do with Pokemon that day. The fact that he wasn't the least bit excited for her, or upset that he couldn't attend the meet also, made it all the more apparent just how awful he was feeling.

He waved them all off, ignoring Pikachu's sad murmur of his name as it left in Max's arms, then gripped at his comforter and pulled it up on him higher. It was like a very bad case of the flu. The sharp pangs that ricocheted through his stomach seemed almost like knives trying to force their way through him from within, and because of all of the pain from his abdomen, he was gaining a massive headache. He was perspiring from the fever, but he still felt quite chilly, and no matter how much he cuddled against his sheets and his blankets, they didn't seem to help.

He didn't want to eat, or think of eating, ever again. As strange as it sounded, Ash Ketchum felt no hunger for any type of food whatsoever. He had no appetite, he hadn't for the entire morning so far, and he felt that, given the choice, he'd rather like to simply stay in his bed and feign sleep the rest of the day, because he also didn't want to be bothered by his friends trying to wheedle some food down his throat.

How could he have gotten sick, anyway? What was wrong with him all of a sudden? Food poisoning. Ash had spent the last fifteen years of his life eating every type of food he'd come across, and not once had he ever gotten sick from it. He was supposed to be the man with the stomach of steel. He was supposed to be impenetrable. He was supposed to be training today, and eating just like every other day of his life, but. . . at this point, he never wanted to touch any of his things ever again. He felt so sick, that he just wanted to lay in bed until he disappeared.

The worst part about it, was that food poisoning wasn't necessarily curable with an aspirin, or any antibiotic. He just had to wait until it passed through him. And, well, another thing about food poisoning was that it preferred to pass through *both* ends of the human body.

As though the thought of it had convinced him, Ash felt the urge to rush to the bathroom for the third time that day. He jumped from his bed, feeling dizzy enough to collapse again and, still managing to stay on his feet, he made a dash for the bathroom extension of their rented room at the Center.

Disgusting. That was the word that went through his head as he sat there and waited for the troublesome nausea to vanish. Food poisoning. He'd never thought that that would be how he went from this world. He expected something more cool, maybe even heroic. He at least expected to make it through a couple more leagues before he met his maker.

But, then, he supposed he deserved it. Ash hated to admit that, but really. . . He'd spent every day of his life sporting a love for anything edible, and now that love that had bothered so many people, friend, foe, or stranger, was finally getting the better of him. And the bite in the @\$\$ that ensued was killing him far too slowly.

Why hadn't he let Pikachu *Thunderbolt* him? Oh, right. Because his *friends* - or so they called themselves - thought that it would make his condition *worse*. Because they cared for him. They cared enough to let him lay there for hours on end without any type of consolation, in what felt like the worst pain imaginable. Pfft, friends. Yea.

He crawled uselessly back into bed again and groaned, agonized. He whimpered at the next thought that came to him. He couldn't even fall asleep. This morning, when he'd woken up from the horrible pangs emitting from his abdomen, it had been after getting just so much sleep so that he would still be exhausted, but not be able to fall back into a peaceful slumber just yet. So he had to wait, wait until the pain lessened enough so that he could get up again for more than to use the bathroom, so that he could make himself do something that he actually wanted, or needed, to do that day.

Unfortunately for him, the hours seemed to creep by even slower the faster he wanted them to go. A couple of times he felt like he'd dozed off for a few hours at a time, but it turned out to only be ten minutes or so. Aggravated, injured, and now feeling just a bit delirious, Ash almost kicked himself when Max came bursting into the room, clutching a tray with something that smelled positively repulsive and with Pikachu leaning over the youngest boy's shoulder.

"It's lunchtime, Ash. You need to eat something, no matter how useless you think it is to try," was the explanation. Ash heard the clatter of the tray of dishes hitting the bedside cabinet.

"N - noway. . . I'm not touching. . . anything." Ash whined, turning his nose up and away and stuffing his face into his pillow to avoid whiffing whatever his youngest traveling companion had brought him. Whereas, under normal circumstances, he'd be starving enough for anything, it seemed now that every kind of cuisine was accompanied with the worst of stench. "Leave me alone, Max. . . I'm resting. Isn't that. . . what I should be doing?"

"Like you would know. For your information, Brock made this especially for you before he got. . . caught up in something." Max finished in a mutter, and it was obvious that the something had been a pretty girl, "I brought it to you out of the kindness of my heart when I could still be studying, so hurry up and eat it so that I can--" Ash interrupted him.

"The only reason you're here is 'cause you're feeling rightfully guilty." He said, sticking his tongue out at him once again, "Eating is what got me here. . . to begin with. I'm not touching anything right now."

"Fine; I'll respect that. Still. . ." Max now turned to the tray and picked up a cool, soaking rag from a bowl of chilly water, "Here. Brock said this would help with the fever, even if aspirin won't." Although Ash already felt as cold as he could stand, he allowed the boy to place the damp cloth against his forehead, "And now I'll leave you alone so you can get your sleep."

Not that he *would* be getting any.

The next five hours were spent alone. Ash lay there, hissing every time his stomach gave a plunge, and listening for the sounds that took place beyond the closed door leading out into the main part of the Center. At some point, he heard May return as she called out a hello to Max and Brock, and then knocked on the door to let him know that she was back, but he didn't reply because he didn't want her to

come in and do a check-up on him, like her brother had done earlier. She assessed from his silence that he was finally sleeping and left him to it.

It was later in the afternoon that it happened. Ash, who was indeed finally taking a chance to doze off peacefully, was abruptly reawoken by the sound of distantly cracking glass. He heard loud voices, and a couple of booms from a large barrel, but he still felt too weak to get up and see what was going on for himself. Then, just when he'd thought things had started to cool down, Brock came bounding into the room, looking grim.

"Ash! It's Team Rocket! They've got Pikachu! Come out here and blast them off, like you always do!" The breeder shouted, picking up the quilt from Ash's body, but the younger trainer just shook his head, groaning again, "Remember, all of our Pokemon are still being healed!"

"Look. . . Tell 'em to come back tomorrow. I don't feel well enough to deal with 'em today. . ." He said exhaustedly, yawning and gripping as his stomach gave yet another jolt of pain.

"Excuse me!" Jessie shrieked furiously from beyond the widely open door, having heard his response, "Hey, Twerp, we don't put our escapades on hold for anyone! Now get out here and accept defeat properly before I do something drastic. . ." She came stomping into the bedroom and lifted him up roughly by the collar of his shirt.

This, however, was the wrong thing to do.

As Ash felt this world tilting upside down at the aggressive motion, something foul came creeping up his throat. . . And the next thing Jessie knew, she was covered in his vomit.

She screamed. She screamed loud. Ash, who felt another need to use the bathroom, ran off before she could hit him, and she stepped back, mortified at how her uniform was so completely ruined, and how she smelled. And so, feeling that sticking around would only give her a chance to make more mistakes, she took off back through the door.

Brock followed after her, and caught a glimpse of her tripping over Meowth, who'd been holding Pikachu in his arms inside of a large electric-proof cage, having been prevented from leaving by May and Max, who were standing protectively in front of the main entrance to the Center, where James had also just removed a Pokeball threateningly from his waist to force them away. Pikachu tumbled from Meowth's grip and the door to the cage broke open, allowing him to escape.

Meowth and James, scenting danger, took off after their partner (who, in her rush, had knocked May and Max to the floor), knowing that a *Thunderbolt* attack wasn't going to be too far off otherwise.

"Huh. . . I guess that's one way to earn a victory. . ." Brock murmured, then followed after the other two currently healthy kids as they went to inspect the mouse Pokemon and ensure that he wasn't hurt in any way.

Back in the bedroom, Ash seemed to have forgotten about the evil deed he'd committed against Jessie as he found his way into bed once again. He was growing inexplicably tired of everyone's butting in on him while he was trying to gain some rest. He felt that the next person to walk in without his permission

would surely face a dearly-departed wrath. . .

. . . And although he'd been channeling some type of mischievous spirit, he felt an awkward knock on the door and then May cracked it open, catching sight of his deadly glare and almost backing out immediately.

"Er, Ash. . . I know that you probably don't care, and. . . if you want, I'll tell her to call back later, but. . . Misty's on the phone. She said she really wants to talk to you. . ." The glare disappeared, but so did every other emotion on the Pokemon trainer's face. As though this was somehow worse, May quickly attempted to excuse herself, "But, I mean, I know you're sick, so I'll just tell her to get back to you tomorrow."

"Misty. . . on the phone?" He asked almost dazedly.

May had two seconds to wonder what the expression on his face - or lack thereof - meant, when she suddenly realized that something had bowled into her and sent her crashing to the floor. She blinked, confused and slightly pained, looking up and realizing that the bed Ash had been laying in resolutely all day was empty.

"What. . . ?" She asked herself, thoroughly confused and just a bit irritated, then got back to her feet, dusted herself off, and ran back down the hall, skidding to a halt just outside the threshold to the PokeCenter Lobby. She could see Ash from where she stood, standing in front of the public video-phone and chatting merrily with who she assumed was the same redhead she'd greeted only a few minutes ago.

She saw, also, that Ash didn't seem to be letting on at all just how sick he really was.

As she made her way towards Brock, shaking her head in wonder, she heard Misty in the background, her voice just slightly hazy over the connection as she asked if Ash was really feeling well enough to talk to her. Ash waved her off and grinned as he always did at her, and started a conversation relating to his latest gym battle before she ended up having to go. It seemed that he didn't mind the suffering he had to go through, so long as he could talk to her while he had the chance. . .

"What is going on with him. . . ?" She asked, taking a seat next to Brock, who was handing out some special Poke-Chow to Pikachu and half-staring in the direction of Nurse Joy. She was chatting merrily with Max, who was holding out his Navto her and seemed to be asking her to confirm something for him. At May's inquiry, however, he turned to glance at Ash, and grinned cheekily.

"He thinks he's got everyone duped about it, but really, we're all on to him. . . He's a fool." The breeder stated wisely.

"Er, and that means. . . ?" May questioned. All she was really curious of in the beginning was why Ash had bull rushed her so suddenly. Now she knew that she was in for a long revelation about something.

"Well, think about it, May. All through today, Ash has complained about all of his favorite things. He didn't want to eat, he didn't want to socialize with Pokemon or human, he didn't want to train, he didn't want to watch any of us train, he didn't want to save the day, and his own Pokemon or the Center, from

TeamRocket when they attacked. . . But then, Misty calls, and he suddenly acts like nothing's wrong with him." Brock took a moment to chuckle again, as though it was truly a humorous experience to watch, "And he acts like he doesn't miss her, but he really hates it when she's gone, and he can't seem to agree with managing to miss one of her phone calls, no matter how sick he may be at the time. . ." At this point, the breeder became more somber, "He thinks he's subtle about it, and when anyone tries to ask him why he acts a certain way towards her, he just blows it off. . . But, really, Ash cares for Misty more than anyone else he's ever met."

May blinked again, but she was finally beginning to understand. She let a small smile grace her features at the sweetness of it all and sighed blissfully before turning to face Ash's back, "Do you think he gets it, though.. . ?"

"Mmm, that's something about him, isn't it? Ash is so dense sometimes, that it wouldn't surprise me if he never caught on. But, somehow. . . I think that he's getting there." And then Brock allowed himself another laugh, "There's only so long you can go before you realize how many loops you're jumping through for that certain someone alone. Even Ash will be sensible enough to question himself tonight about why he could only gain the strength to make it out of bed just once today, and only to talk to her."

"Yea, you're right. . ." May responded, "I think that he'll get there soon enough. Misty's the only thing that could get him to move, like a miracle cure. How weird. . . but that's so cute, too. The one-of-a-kind remedy for any pain or ache he'll ever feel. It's strange how love does that for people."

"Too right."

Then the two turned to stare at their friend, reaching an understanding and making sure that he didn't end up upsetting his "remedy" by collapsing in the middle of the phone conversation. May could tell that it would be a long discussion, if not because Ash and Misty had a lot of catching up to do, then simply because he didn't ever want to let her go.

OoO

Notes - Gods, what is up with me? Really; it seems that every time I write a Pokeshippy Valentine's Day fic, I end up doing something awful to Ash. Last time it was laxatives, and now it's food poisoning! Still, at least Misty wasn't intentionally involved this time around. YAY! And it was fluffy. Man, I needed to write something like this, after working on "Illicit Saints" for so long. I can't wait until I'm done "Herbal Remedies" or "Blind". . . I have quite a few fics lined up after those, and two of which will be cute beyond belief.

Anyway, I have a question for you all. How many of you went into insulin shock after reading this?

Reply in your reviews, or just grace me with a few unrelated comments about what you thought! Whichever suites you!