

Digimon Chronicle X

デジモンクロニクルエックス





Digimon World View Novel

Novel of X

Chronicle-X: The Last Episode

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Chapter3>>>

NOVEL OF X

X抗体デジモンたちの群像劇「デジモンクロニクル」と「デジモンクロニクルX」。

公式サイトで掲載された物語のあらすじと、

最終章となる「THE LAST EPISODE」を掲載。





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[Compiler's Note]

Although easily confused, this short novel is a different and separate release from its better-known counterpart, the Digimon Chronicle X web novel.

Unlike the web novel, the Novel of X was not published online, and was instead released only within pages of the Digital Monster Art Book Ver. X.

The Novel of X contains an expanded recounting of the events that occurred in the finale (Chapters 26 and 27) of the main novel, in addition to a synopsis for both Digimon Chronicle and Digimon Chronicle X.



Digimon Chronicle: Synopsis

While it had already been a concern for some time, the number of Digimon in the Digital World eventually became so large that its memory capacity began to reach its limit.

At this rate, there was a risk of the world itself disappearing, let alone the Digimon in it. In response to such an unprecedented crisis, the Digital World's management program, Yggdrasil, activated Project Ark.

— Project Ark.

It was a plan to create a “New Digital World” under Yggdrasil’s guidance, and to dispose of the old Digital World for having run over capacity. Only a limited number of Digimon would be transferred over to the New Digital World, and all of the ones left behind in the old world would be euthanized... Although many Digimon resisted such a plan of slaughter, Yggdrasil continued to enforce it.

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Yggdrasil used the “X Program”, a virus that would efficiently extinguish Digimon, to carry out its euthanization.

The X Program was dispersed all around the old Digital World, and it became a world of death in the blink of an eye. All of the Digimon left behind in the old world should have easily vanished.

But Yggdrasil had not anticipated the emergence of the “X-Antibody” Digimon — Digimon who had produced immunity data within their bodies and achieved a new X-Antibody evolution.

In order to escape further control from the X Program, the X-Antibody Digimon migrated into the new world as uninvited guests.

Yggdrasil, who found the X-Antibody Digimon’s presence to be distasteful, issued a command to his highest-ranking security subordinates, the “Royal Knights”.

Eliminate all X-Antibody Digimon from the new world. Upon receiving the order, the Royal Knights began to purge the X-Antibody Digimon.

But a different entity from the X-Antibody Digimon, “Death-X”, began to act behind the scenes of the genocide.

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Death-X, which was believed to have been born from data extracted from a certain Digimon, was a monster that indefinitely devoured the DigiCores within Digimon, and was feared by all who encountered it as “death itself”.

Omegamon X and Dukemon X, who had achieved X-Evolution, came forward to deal with the situation. In addition, a Digimon that had once been in conflict with Omegamon X evolved into the thirteenth Royal Knight, Alphamon, and they formed a temporary alliance.

Alphamon’s human partner, Kouta, alongside Ouryuumon and his friend Yuuji, engaged Death-X in a fierce battle.

Through the power of their magnificent bonds, they managed to defeat Death-X.

After that, those who had fought against Death-X quietly went off somewhere into the world and disappeared.

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Digimon Chronicle X: Synopsis

Fifteen years had passed since the activation of Project Ark. During that long period of time, something began to re-emerge in the old Digital World, which had been ravaged by the X Program and reduced to a world of death.

The management program, Yggdrasil, observed that the concentration of the X Program dispersed around the world was beginning to diminish. Wanting to re-establish a connection to the old world again, as if wanting to make up for its mistakes in the past, it gave a command that was the exact opposite of the one from fifteen years prior.

Investigate the old Digital World. Sleipmon and Craniummon responded to the order. As designated pioneers, they were granted the X-Antibody by Yggdrasil and entered the old world. Although the X Program had diminished below a normal level, it was meant as a precautionary measure just in case the unlikely event occurred that the X Program had an effect on their bodies.

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After a successful investigation, Sleipmon X and Craniummon X reported that a power struggle dispute had broken out all over the old world, and that it had been thrown into chaos.

They were given a mission to return to the old world and contain the turmoil, and JESmon was also tasked with accompanying them.

And so, they headed into their mission. JESmon X had been entrusted with the X-Antibody by his mentor, Gankuumon, and evolved into an X-Antibody form. He conceived of a clever idea that would allow them to contain the conflicts spread out all over the world. They would hold a battle royale, with the right to determine the old Digital World's future on the line. Since the power struggle now had clear rules, the chaos was successfully dispelled.

However, a new evil began to stir in the shadows.

Taking advantage of the chaos in the battle royale, Lucemon X opened a large number of gates leading into the underworld, also known as the Dark Area. A swarm of Digimon that had been sealed in the underworld began to invade the old Digital World.

In response, Yggdrasil dispatched all of the Royal Knights as an emergency measure. They clashed against the Seven Great Demon Lords in various places, sending the world into even further chaos. And then, the

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worst possible situation occurred, with the Seven Great Demon Lords X-Evolving. The Royal Knights, having also evolved into their own X-Evolved forms, engaged them in an all-out battle.

More reinforcements arrived to help contain the turmoil: Alphamon and Ouryumon, with Kouta and Yuuji riding on them. Omegamon X and Dukemon X brought in an army of Digimon to assist in the battle.

The battle between light and darkness moved towards its final phase. Ogidomon X, the monster born from the fusion of all Seven Great Demon Lords, descended upon the old Digital World. The old world began to collapse under Ogidomon X.

In order to halt the collapse, Omegamon X and Alphamon decided to use their own data to reinforce the old world, and headed to the Kernel, the “realm of God”, with the boys. And so, the remaining Digimon faced their final battle in order to stop Ogidomon X...

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Chapter 1

The moment Ojudomon X appeared, the sky was blotted out completely into black.

It wasn't the black of nighttime, but a black that came from the sky texture peeling off to reveal the emptiness on the other side, with Ojudomon X right at the center.

And now, the earth was about to overflow with a swarm of Diabloomon X.

Looking closely, one could see Diabloomon X appearing one after another from Ojudomon X's body.

It was all about to consume the Digital World, and at this rate, the entirety of it would collapse.

“...We're done for.”

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Someone muttered those words, and everyone there was probably thinking the same thing. Everything we were seeing around us looked completely hopeless, and all of us were at a complete loss for words.

That was just the sheer nature of how overwhelming Ojudomon X was, but there was even more. With a purple body so huge it pierced through all of the surrounding clouds and six arms as big as its entire body, all wielding a number of red blades with no difficulty at all, it struck fear in us just by the sight of it.

And only moments after appearing, Ojudomon X had already incapacitated most — to be more exact, eight — of the Royal Knights.

There were only three Royal Knights remaining on the battlefield: Gankuumon X, Dukemon X, and JESmon X, who were cornered by the swarm of Diabolomon X in the back. And now, all three Knights were about to be separated by the swarm.

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Chapter 2

As the Royal Knights started launching their attacks on Ogudomon X in succession, JESmon X was also able to get a good look at it.

But it took only a moment to completely decimate them.

Swinging its blades with its six arms, sending all of the Holy Knights plummeting down.

After all of the exchanging blows, locking blades, and slashing at Ogudomon X, they'd ended up having the tables completely turned on them so easily.

And they still hadn't been able to inflict a single wound on Ogudomon X —
“No way!?”

— By the time JESmon X had made sense of what had just happened, he could see the other Digimon all around him, exhausted. They were supposed to be the Holy Knights, said to be the strongest of all, but they were on the verge of being deleted.

They're completely helpless and totally knocked down...

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What would've happened if I'd jumped in and joined the other Knights in the attack? Maybe we'd at least have a few more Knights standing here?

No, the result would've probably been the same. It'd have just been one more Digimon knocked down with the rest of them. There's no way I'd have been strong enough for that; I know that best of all.

But I don't have time to be fussing over my fellow Knights right now, and I definitely don't have time to be crying over how powerless I am.

All of the giant Diabomon X lunged at JESmon X in unison, attempting to cut off his head with abnormal speed.

“Oh, no you don’t!”

He tried keeping them at bay one by one, but there were far too many of them. As if using his attack as his response, JESmon X put all of his strength into launching an energy-filled Tactical Arms punch.

— The Judgment Fist.

His attack went forward in a spiral. With his body at the center of a circle, it knocked back all of the Diabomon X that had crowded on him from every direction, blowing them back.

But one of them had survived the attack from above.

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Emitting a strange cry that couldn't be described with normal sounds, the Diabomon X brandished its long tail at him.

...Are you mocking me?!

Of course, JESmon X had spotted it. The swords all over his body unraveled above him. He had a whole twenty-one blades, all equipped with an automated self-defense function and the ability to fly through the air. All of them flew at the Diabomon X above him.

JESmon X himself accompanied the blades, flying high into the air. Wielding his swords in both arms in a cross, he yelled the name of his special attack.

” — *Schwertflügel!*“

His giant swords and flying swords erupted into a tornado of blades. They minced right through the Diabomon X, who seemed to have been thrown off by the flurry of attacks. At the exact moment JESmon X and Diabomon X's attacks had crossed, Diabomon X had already been reduced to data.

Damn it, cursed JESmon. Even more Diabomon X had started to advance on him where he stood, filling the area around him into a crowd.

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The Diabomon X, having all been born from Ojudomon X, were all much less powerful than an average Ultimate-level Digimon. They were like cheap, mass-produced copies, but there were too many of them. If they wanted to reach Ojudomon X, they still had to do something about the swarms of demons emerging from the ground like maggots.

Even the other Royal Knights were in disbelief. Instead of facing the big boss together in a group, they were being held back by a group of small fry.

...But we don't really have another choice, do we?

The Diabomon X kept coming with no end in sight, but if they didn't find a way to break into the front line, they could at least prevent more from coming. Steeling his resolve, JESmon X headed towards the crowd of demons underneath him to start an attack, but just then —

“What's with the sour face there, huh?!”

JESmon could hear a huge voice booming from above where he was floating in the air, loud enough to shake the earth. JESmon looked up to see a bundle of lights piercing through, accompanied by a loud boom.

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The Diabomon X rising from the ground were burnt through by the light, and JESmon X could hear the sound of them fizzling out. His eyes were glued to the figure coming down from the sky above him.

“I’m here to show you how it’s done, you imbecile of a student!”

Gankuumon X was beaming at him with a toothy grin. On top of that, he was clinging to Dukemon X’s left leg. JESmon X was sure he’d just seen his master launch a special attack while holding onto someone else’s leg. As if trying to confirm if he’d meant to do that, Dukemon X looked at the eccentric fighter on his leg and started scolding him, with an annoyed expression.

“Can you please not fire off an attack without letting me know or getting my consent, Gankuumon? And if you’re planning to let my leg get blown off in the crossfire, I’ll have to kick you off right here and now.”

“Hah hah hah! Sorry, sorry! I saw my student there lookin’ pouty like some kinda kid, so I had to show off a bit!”

He kept on clinging tightly to Dukemon X’s leg.

“Hey, JESmon! Dukemon got all pissed at me ‘cause of you, so do somethin’ about this!”

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“Haha...what a mess.”

Seeing Gankuumon X be so inappropriately excited, JESmon X found himself smiling awkwardly.

JESmon's master had mowed down all of the Diabloomon X, leaving a crater in the ground. Dukemon X, accompanied by Gankuumon X and JESmon X, landed right in the center of it. There were still lingering demons around them, but they did nothing, as if waiting to see what would happen. After seeing the sheer power of Gankuumon X's attack, it seemed they'd taken on another level of caution.

They were converging on him again, but JESmon X now had two seasoned warrior Knights by his side. That was the greatest comfort he could have right now.

But on the flip side, that sense of comfort was accompanied by a sense of anxiety in his heart.

...If I were only as strong as them...

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If I'd had enough power to overwhelm the Diabloomon X, I wouldn't have to feel this way. If I could only have the kind of flawless, amazing power to save people, like my master does...

“Hey!”

“Ow!?”

The sudden pain in his head sent his whole upper body backwards. It didn't take long for him to realize Gankuumon X had flicked him on the forehead.

“Is that really the time for that, Master?!”

“You're making another stupid face. You're thinkin' some nonsense like ‘if I only had more power...’ or ‘I can't save people like this...’ or somethin', aren't you?”

He'd seen right through him. JESmon X could say nothing in response.

“You imbecile. Don't get caught up in pointless things like that. Did you think you were gonna be fightin' this by yourself?”

“But Master...you really did blow them all up in one attack — “

“Students shouldn't be interruptin' their masters!”

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Gankuumon X had interrupted JESmon X back, and he really had nothing to say back this time.

“Listen up, JESmon. We came this far because I had faith you’d become a proper Holy Knight.”

“...Although I’m the one who actually carried you here,” muttered Dukemon X.

Hearing this, Gankuumon broke out into hearty laughter.

“Well, yeah! See, you get it!”

“I was being sarcastic...”

“Nah, you’ve touched on somethin’. I can’t fly, y’know. If I hadn’t gotten Dukemon to gimme a hand here, those Diabloomon X copies would’ve probably still been acting as a thorn in your side right now.”

JESmon X couldn’t help but poke in a small remark.

“...Um, but Master, you can fly...”

“Hm? Can I? Gahaha! Well, don’t worry about the little things. Riding on him goes a lot faster anyway! See, you helped us out a real bunch!”

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Gankuumon X smacked Dukemon X warmly on the shoulder, and Dukemon X was at a loss for words, unable to look at him in the eye. He was too much of the stoic type to take Gankuumon X's straightforward good nature without getting thrown off.

Gankuumon X leaned right over to face his student.

"So I left the flyin' to my friend here. You can always leave the stuff you're not good at to the people who can do it better. And when you gotta do somethin' yourself, you put your all into it. We're the Royal Knights with a reputation for bein' all self-centered, but here we are fightin' together."

"..."

"You wanted to join all the other Digimon in takin' Ogdumon down, but — "

Gankuumon X was exactly on the mark. They still had to keep an eye on the clump of Diabolomon, and even if they turned their back on them and headed for Ogdumon, they'd likely get singlehandedly thrown down like the other Royal Knights.

"That's why you're worryin' so much, right? You're thinkin' you should've had more power."

"You saw right through me."

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If I'd only had more power, taking care of this would have been piece of cake.

“Well, I can't say you're wrong for worryin'. But your logic's wrong. You remember what I said earlier, right?”

“Did you think you were gonna be fightin' this by yourself?” he said.

“Right, Dukemon?”

Before JESmon could answer, Dukemon X nodded back at Gankuumon X.

“That's exactly right, JESmon,” he said, agreeing and continuing the conversation. “I...no, we need your power. That's why I accompanied your master here.”

“My power?”

“Yep. We're in a total disaster, and all our friends are down. We're the only Holy Knights left on this battle field. So, why did things turn out this way?...What do you think, JESmon?”

JESmon X was deep in thought. Now that he thought about it, it was strange. Ogudomon X was definitely strong, but the Royal Knights should have been more than enough to match it. In Digimon terms, a group of them should have been just about the strongest ever.

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...And yet, despite them all being together, eight of them couldn't win against it?

It was the first time he'd actually considered the question, and the "why" of it was making him feel strange, but JESmon X couldn't figure out just what felt so strange about it.

Seeing that JESmon X had been pondering it for long enough, Dukemon X continued.

"To put it simply, we're not made up of the right kind of data to stand a chance against that thing. Ogudomon X, which spawns infinite numbers of Diabloomon X and brings the world closer to destruction by its very existence, is no longer a Digimon but a part of the system — an existence that can almost be said to be God."

Of course, that would make Yggdrasil and Ogudomon into opposing kinds of gods.

"It's only natural for your abilities to be so insufficient against it. You can't match up against a god. You won't even manage to get near it."

But the other Royal Knights had tried to act too much on their own, and they'd all burnt themselves out in the process of even realizing how

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outclassed they were. Dukemon shrugged his shoulders and sighed a little bitterly.

“But if we cooperate with each other instead of fighting one by one, we might even be able to pierce our blades through a god. You heard your master earlier. Right now, in this moment, we’re in optimal formation as a working team, JESmon.”

“Yup. If we all play to our own strengths, we’ll be sure to make an openin’.”

“Does that mean...there’s something even I can do?”

I couldn’t even take care of the Diabloomon X quickly enough. Can I still be useful at a time like this?

“Oh, absolutely.”

Dukemon X nodded with a satisfied manner, while a grin spread across Gankuumon X’s face.

“Not just that. There’s something super huge that only you can pull off.”

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Chapter 3

Ogudomon X was obstructing JESmon X's entire view. It shouldn't have even been possible at that distance, but everywhere around him was drenched in the monster's purple colors. Backup troops, led by Justimon X and Wizarmon X, were swarming around left and right, trying to launch counterattacks on Ogudomon X while the Diabomon X blocked their way.

As per Dukemon X's plan, JESmon X was floating in the air in a one-on-one with Ogudomon X. Now that he was firmly decided on ignoring the Diabomon X that had previously hounded him, it wasn't hard to shake them off. They simply didn't have enough flying power to keep up with him.

“But I'm not sure if I can really pull this off...”

His master and Dukemon had agreed to fight alongside him as a team, but now that the young Holy Knight was at the part where he had to fight on his own, he couldn't quite hold back his nervousness.

As his master had said, his job was indeed a “super huge” one.

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Chapter 4

“Ogudomon X is composed of data that’s much like Yggdrasil’s. To put it in simpler, more abstract terms, you could say that ‘it can’t take any damage from Digimon attacks’, and as far as the Digital World laws of physics go, no Digimon can stand a chance against it. You could call it an ‘Immortal Program’,” said Dukemon X.

There was no way they could win against that kind of enemy. JESmon X was about to protest when his master cut him off.

“And that’s where you come in. You’ve got the OS Generics.”

The “OS Generics” referred to the special ability JESmon had obtained before he’d undergone X-Evolution. It was JESmon’s unique ability that allowed him to temporarily rewrite his own data and surpass his usual limits.

“It’s not about just raisin’ your specs and all that. If you use that, you can break the laws of Digital World physics.”

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In other words, he could break the fundamental laws of the Digital World that allowed Ogudomon X have the Immortal Program. That was what it meant for JESmon's blade to pierce through a god.

"Once it takes damage from you, since you're a Digimon, it'll make a contradiction and probably send its DigiCore into an error. Then it'll be our turn."

All they had to do was trigger a single exception and the DigiCore would be forced to acknowledge it, thus destroying the Immortal Program. It was simply a program, and nothing more; once it encountered a contradiction, it wouldn't be able to do anything about it.

"And then we'll finally get to beat the thing to a pulp."

In the meantime, Gankuumon X and Dukemon X would make an opening by rallying up a bunch of other Digimon and keep the Diabloomon X at bay for as long as they could. JESmon X didn't have very many ways to attack, so other Digimon like Dukemon X and Gankuumon X were more suited for the job of destroying all of the Diabloomon X. That much was clear from JESmon's last attempt at fighting them.

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— JESmon X's duty was to inflict damage and “disrupt the Immortal Program”.

He'd be the one to get the plan going, or at least that was what he was told. But in actuality, even the idea of getting OS Generics to do anything to Ogudomon X was a gamble, and even if he did manage to land damage, they couldn't be certain it would actually remove the Immortal Program to begin with.

“But we don't have any other options.”

There was someone there who had taught him about everything he could do. He was the one who'd taught him that he could do something to help others. So the only way he could repay that was to give it all he had — or else he wouldn't be worthy of being the disciple of the Royal Knight Gankuumon.

JESmon was determined to see it through.

“OS — “

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He started up his special ability, yelling out the name, fully intending to get it to work. All he had to do was this, and the tides of battle would be turned. He just had to do this, and they'd be able to stop Ogudomon X.

" — Wha...!?"

But his attack was stopped by someone else. It didn't make sense; said "someone else" shouldn't have been able to be there at all.

Diabomon X shouldn't have been able to fly up there, but he could definitely see a single one floating right there before his eyes.

JESmon X was thrown off by the sudden intruder who'd blocked his attack. The demon before him cackled evilly and began to speak.

"Trying to pull out a group effort after all this time? You Holy Knights are so good at being a laughingstock. Even you. I didn't expect you to be so hilarious."

The voice immediately exposed the intruder's true identity to JESmon X. He had the appearance of a Diabomon, but was something else entirely.

"Lucemon!"

The Diabomon X — no, Lucemon X — was the Demon of Pride, who should have been absorbed by Ogudomon X earlier, but was now there

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with a serene expression on his face. He nodded in an exaggerated fashion.

“Why are you here?!”

“You have to ask that? What a killjoy. Well, whatever. I have the patience of a god right now, after all.”

“A god...Are you seriously trying to say...”

“Yes, this Diabomon X is simply no more than a single part of my body. This Ogudomon X above your heads is in fact my true form — a ‘god’ with the power to destroy and recreate this accursed Digital World!”

JESmon wanted to protest, but the words wouldn’t come out. This whole time, he’d been fighting this huge Digimon as if it were some kind of natural calamity. He’d thought Lucemon to be just another entity caught up and swallowed in it.

But the little he’d just heard had proven him to be very, very wrong.

Now he knew: the world’s destruction was all from the conscious, calculated will of a single Digital Monster.

“So you’re saying this was all part of your plan to create the world you wanted? A world free of conflict?”

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“Why, yes. This is nothing like your pitiful idea of ‘saving others’. It’s the only way to achieve a greater purpose of true justice.”

Lucemon X, still wearing the appearance of a Diabloomon X, continued gazing down upon the sight of JESmon X’s master and companions fighting off the other Diabloomon.

“You were saying ‘OS Generics’, right?”

“You heard...!”

“Of course I did. I hope you’re not underestimating me like I’m just a normal Diabloomon. Right now, all of them are a part of me. There’s no reason I shouldn’t be able to fly, and no reason I shouldn’t be able to hear you calling your little attack.”

JESmon X had thought his ability to fly had given him an advantage, but the Diabloomon gave a hideous laugh with its demonic face.

“And on top of that, that troublesome ability of yours is the one annoying loose end I still need to clean up.”

Lucemon pointed downwards, and JESmon looked to see where he was pointing.

“So I’ve decided to induce a bit of failure in your plan.”

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“What did you do...?!”

“I said it earlier, didn’t I? Your idea of ‘justice’ revolves around ‘saving others’. So I’ll let you do that as much as you like — “

Lucemon was pointing at Gankuumon X, who was brandishing his fist at the crowd of Diabloomon. JESmon X’s master was having no trouble mowing them all down in crowds.

” — with your beloved master!”

And thus, the tables were turned with only a single proclamation from Lucemon. Instead of falling in defeat, all of the Diabloomon X got up and started to merge together.

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Chapter 6

Gankuumon saw the Diabloomon X gathering together in droves, like a network of streams.

In a single moment, the demons joined together, changed shape, and formed a giant blade.

It was the same kind of blade that Ojudomon X carried in its arms. It was a strange sight, as if one of Ojudomon X's arms itself had sprouted from the earth.

It was so strange that it threw off Gankuumon X's thought process.

The blade had no hesitation in taking advantage of the opening. The arm coming out of the ground "bent" and swung the blade sideways in an attempt to cleave him through. The attack was sure to hit Gankuumon X at that trajectory.

...So that's it? What a stupid way to die.

His body felt as if everything was going in slow motion. His enemies clumping into a huge sword — and the incredible speed they were slashing

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at him with — was not something even a master like him could predict. Gankuumon X could sense too well that he was about to meet his death, right when, in his mind, the fight hadn't even gotten started.

...Looks like I was still a bit too rusty.

Lamenting his own insufficient training to deal with this, facing his imminent doom, he closed his eyes behind his visor.

“...?”

But the pain never came. He awaited his death in a moment that felt like an eternity, but any sound had suddenly shut off. Gankuumon X opened his eyes, trying to figure out what had just happened.

“That was close, wasn't it...Master?”

Right in front of him was his own dear student, who'd taken the blade for him with his own body.

JESmon X's body was doubled over in half, with the blade piercing him through from his left shoulder to the center of his chest.

His student collapsed with a thud.

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He screamed something in response, but he couldn't remember what it was. The only thing burned into his vision was the sight of Dukemon X rushing in and breaking through the blade of enemies.

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Chapter 7

Wow, my life really is flashing before my eyes.

◇

A long time ago.

JESmon was still a Hackmon when Gankuumon had saved his life. After that, he'd decided to take Hackmon in as his student, and the two had most certainly formed a bond. He was a little forceful about his decision, but since Hackmon had lived his life alone up until then, he was genuinely happy to have Gankuumon as his "family".

Since then, Hackmon had gone through some harsh training. It took everything he had to keep up with Gankuumon's journey, but sometimes the Sistermon would help support him as he grew. He evolved to Adult, then Perfect, then into his current form. Perhaps it was a bit unusual for a

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Digimon to have made it to Ultimate without any particularly amazing special evolution.

When he thought about it, he mused that even though everyone took it for granted, Digimon themselves were strange beings of existence. Whenever a Digimon evolved, their entire body composition would be rewritten from scratch, they'd even discard their old name, and they'd effectively be reborn into something completely different.

But that just meant his master had trained him well. With that thought, it was only natural that JESmon would look up to Gankuumon's way of life and come to embrace it.

"I want to be someone who can journey around and help anyone who's in trouble. That's what justice means to me."

Having reached his Ultimate level and become a Holy Knight, JESmon continued using Gankuumon as his reference, following his will, and joined him as one of the Royal Knights.

"Hey, don't be an imbecile. That's not how you do it. You don't get 'justice' by imitatin' someone else, you gotta find something for yourself. Until you do, I can't consider you to be fully grown yet."

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For JESmon, it was a huge shock to be pushed away by Gankuumon like this. He'd thought he'd wanted him to become a Royal Knight himself.

Seeing how dejected JESmon was, Dukemon secretly came up to him later and told him: "When you were chosen to be a Royal Knight, he was the happiest out of all of us." Coming from him, it was unexpected encouragement.

"In short, all he's saying is that he wants you to find your own way of using your abilities, JESmon."

"So...I shouldn't use it to help others?"

"No, not that, that's definitely not it. He — Gankuumon believes you have an even greater destiny in store for you. There's power lurking within you, power that outclasses his own, power within you that only you have."

"...?"

"It's fine if you don't understand it fully right now. Just keep working on what you can do at this moment."

Someday, the day would come when he would truly understand his own destiny.

That was Dukemon's conclusion.

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Afterwards, when the old Digital World had fallen into chaos, JESmon X started up the battle royale, and he'd thought everything had generally worked out. By enforcing proper rules on the fight instead of allowing Digimon to haphazardly inflict violence on each other, the meaningless conflict had come to an end, and the old world was calm once more.

But JESmon knew that his line of thought was too naïve. In all honesty, he knew very well that there were forces of evil planning something behind the scenes.

The moment Barbamon X was summoned to the old world from the Dark Area, the fight escalated to a whole new level. The Demon Lords were releasing Digimon in droves from the Dark Area, and the Royal Knights emerged to stop them.

At this rate, battle between the Seven Great Demon Lords and the Holy Knights was inevitable. No one could predict what kind of ending was in store for the old world.

Except for one person: Lucemon X, who had appeared directly before him.

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That was when JESmon truly felt he was about to encounter the “destiny” Dukemon had once told him about.

◇

It was only inevitable that JESmon X and I, Lucemon X, would eventually cross paths. I exchanged some proper words with him while Beelzebumon X and Gankuumon X were fighting and taunting each other.

“Gwahahaha! Not bad, old man!”

“Gahaha! You’re pretty fit yourself! Wanna quit the Demon Lords and join the Holy Knights?”

“I’ll pass! Don’t think I’d be able to handle goody-two-shoes like you folks!”

Gankuumon’s rowdiness had provoked his opponent into bantering, but he himself was even further up the scale of obnoxious. It was as if both of their lives depended on how loud they were screaming at each other. Their shrillness was annoying enough to split one’s ears.

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While both of them were going at each other with all pretense of dignity thrown out the window, I reflected on how we as a race of Digital Monsters were cursed by such violent fighting instincts.

“But you don’t seem to be of their kind, JESmon.”

I no longer had any interest in their vulgar little quarrel. My focus shifted purely to JESmon X in front of me, and he started trembling somewhat, clearly on edge.

“...And what do you mean by that?”

“I’m giving you praise. You’re someone who seems to actually understand words when you hear them.”

In truth, it was quite impressive for a mere Holy Knight to come up with something like a battle royale. “Laying out concrete rules” was probably one of the most ideal solutions for straightening out the chaos in the overworld. And because the plan had been executed by JESmon, with his Royal Knight title and power, it was easy to actually put it into practice. He was probably able to come up with such an idea because he had such a different line of thinking from other Digimon in regards to conflict.

In other words, he was someone who wished to end conflict.

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Yes. He was someone who thought very much like me. If I had been in his position, I probably would have come up with something similar.

— Is this what you would call “envy”? Very unusual for me.

Even though I wanted to commend JESmon X, I could also feel something tight in my chest. Like me, he’d been surrounded by high expectations ever since he was young. But unlike me, he was accepted as one of Yggdrasil’s Royal Knights and allowed to continue following his own path. My jealousy of him was clear.

Back when I was still allowed in “God’s territory”, the Kernel, I’d once provided some advice for Yggdrasil, who was concerned for the future of the Digital World. In order to stop the fighting, I suggested erasing every Digimon’s fighting instincts from their DigiCore. It would be simple for Yggdrasil, the god who managed the world’s systems, to do such a thing — but it would not accept my proposal.

That was why I proclaimed Digimon fighting instincts to be a “curse” and, in the hopes of liberating us all from it, raised up a rebellion against Yggdrasil. Of course, this only ended up in my disgraceful defeat.

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Afterwards, since deletion alone would be too weak of a punishment for my sins, they banished me from the Kernel. I fell all the way down into the lowest layer, the Cocytus, of the Dark Area, and became a Demon Lord.

But no matter how much I wished to escape being a Demon Lord, my way of thinking never changed.

“The fighting will never end — it is truly pitiful. Wouldn’t you prefer that everyone live with peace and equality?”

“I...well, of course I would!”

“Then why have you made yourself into the Royal Knights’ lapdog?”

“...What do you mean by that?”

“The Royal Knights represent conflict itself. I saw this play out so many times before I was cast down. Even now, they claim to be acting for the sake of the world, to be on the side of justice, but how many lives have they slaughtered in their purge they labeled Project Ark? They’re still nothing but a bunch of chaotic fools who can’t live without fighting. What do you intend to fight for by becoming a Holy Knight?”

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“S-Shut up! I’m fighting to save others! And maybe conflict will come out of it as a result, but the same goes for you, doesn’t it!? I thought you wanted peace! Why would you cause all of this fighting...?!”

Oh, I’ve really gotten him on edge.

It was the proof I needed. JESmon X had his own doubts about whether this was the right way for a Holy Knight to be. That will of his — to save others — couldn’t possibly be weak. Otherwise, he wouldn’t be standing there in the first place. He wouldn’t be facing up against me. And that was exactly how I knew he was harboring doubts.

And perhaps I might be the only one who could answer those doubts.

“You see, JESmon, I, too, am cursed with these fighting instincts, and so I want to bring salvation to this world that could not put an end to conflict.”

It would be salvation for the entire race of Digital Monsters. I would remake this world. To release us from the root of this curse, the curse of our fighting instincts, I would first need to reset this world.

“I shall accomplish this task with these cursed hands. You may consider me to be too proud, but this is my one and only wish...! And the Royal Knights, who live and breathe this worthless conflict, stand as my only obstacle!”

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But he was different from them. When we first met, I realized I was standing before the one who might truly understand me, and the sheer realization of it aroused me.

“JESmon. You have the same desire as me, do you not!? Young Holy Knight, if you wish to end this fighting and bring this world to peace, then you must leave your soldier’s path!”

◇

I, JESmon X, watched as Lucemon X fired balls of flame at me from his fists. They moved very steadily and were easy to avoid.

The attack was almost a letdown, but I couldn’t bring myself to launch a counterattack.

...He wants me to hear what he has to say.

As I was dodging his half-hearted attack, that thought floated through my mind. I didn’t know why, but the hunch alone made me want to hear him out.

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Lucemon X spoke, his words speaking of a dreamlike fantasy, completely drawing me in.

I'm a Holy Knight. If there's a way we could actually create a peaceful world without conflict, I want to go through with it. I feel that from the bottom of my heart.

...But this isn't it.

Even before I became one of the Royal Knights, I followed my master on his journey and formed bonds with many different Digimon. I can't accept what Lucemon X wants to do. I'm a Royal Knight. I was chosen to be one because I want peace in my own way, with justice in my heart.

I can't go along with Lucemon X's way of doing things when it'll hurt so many Digimon. Even if it really would create a paradise in the end, it would still require spilling the blood of my friends, so

I quietly released the Tactical Arms from my back. He wasn't the kind of enemy I could slash down with a simple sword swing.

" — I'm going to stop you, Lucemon."

"What did you say?"

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“You really do use some pretty words...You really made me think you had the same dream as me.”

I was going to follow our shared dream of justice — in my own way.

“I won’t be leaving my path. It’s got nothing to do with being a Royal Knight or a Holy Knight. Even as just another Digimon, I can’t accept your way of doing things...!”

◇

That’s right. I figured it out...I found my own kind of “justice”.

But it’s too late. It had to be right when I was about to die.

But I’m dying to save my master. I don’t have any regrets.

I’m sure my master will find a way to defeat him in my place.

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Chapter 8

Back in the present.

His whole body was throbbing with pain. The pain was so thick he was about to lose consciousness. When he managed to regain his bearings, JESmon X realized that Gankuumon X was propping him up and supporting his body. Dukemon X and the other Digimon were fending off the other Diabomon X from around them.

...I thought I was protecting my master.

He'd taken an attack that was intended for his master. He'd thought he'd been putting up a defense, but now this situation was unfolding around him. Just as Lucemon X had planned, all it had resulted in was removing him from the frontlines. His body hurt all over, and he was frozen completely still.

“...Sorry, Master.”

He was squeezing out the words desperately like an old Jijimon.

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“You imbecile...if you’re gonna apologize, you shouldn’t have jumped in like that in the first place.”

Gankuumon responded in a trembling voice that sounded like he was on the verge of crying.

“Master, earlier, you were telling me...”

To not imitate him and to find his own kind of “justice”. His words cut off, but Gankuumon X seemed to immediately understand what he wanted to say and nodded.

“I figured it out...I’ve figured it out.”

“Yeah, I know. Ever since you met that trashy little demon, the look in your eyes has been real different.”

“Really?...As perceptive as always, Master. You always see right through me.”

It wasn’t just about protecting people. He was fighting because he wanted to end conflict.

To end conflicts that came from people’s malicious desires.

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“If you’re trying to reach out your hand to people who can’t be saved, I guess you’ve picked up too many weird things from me. You can’t just end up dyin’ on us right when you figured out what you gotta do, you imbecile.”

“Haha, I didn’t expect you to give me a lecture when I’m on the brink of death...”

“Well, that’s why I’m callin’ you an imbecile, you imbecile of a student. This isn’t the time for you to be dyin’.”

Gankuumon X grasped JESmon X’s right hand tightly.

“You’re not gonna die. Listen up. I’m gonna give you my X-Antibody right now.”

He’d probably said this this intending for his X-Antibody to heal JESmon Xs wounds. But X-Program research had already revealed that an overdose on the X-Antibody would lead to a physical rejection.

“Well, about that. I don’t get all the trickly little details and all, but the rejection’s supposed to happen when you have two X-Antibodies from different folks compressed into one body. We’re doin’ something different, right?”

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Indeed, JESmon X's current X-Antibody was actually originally bestowed on him by Gankuumon.

In other words, they were going to have the normally impossible case of "two X-Antibodies coming from the same person", and JESmon X would be absorbing that into his body.

"Well, without the X-Antibody, I'll just be a normal old man, but...that's not a big deal as long as you get to live."

"Master..."

"Since you've figured out your own kind of justice, I can rest easy lettin' you take over for me."

His master started accumulating concentrated power, and he felt warmth coursing through him. Once he figured out what was going on, he saw that Gankuumon X's right hand was glowing. The warmth, which was so strong he felt he might melt, indicated that the X-Antibody had begun the conversion process.

"You know what to do. Don't be like me and get all distracted by how much power you have."

The light was getting stronger and stronger, to dazzling levels.

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“Keep pushing on straight forward, in your own way, with what you want to do.”

As the light got stronger, his body felt like it was about to burn.

“And keep pushing on all the way to the end.”

It was like he was melting right into Gankuumon.

“You’re gonna be carrying on the will of the Royal Knights from here on out.”

His entire body was engulfed in the light of evolution.

“W...W-W-Whoaaaaaa!!”

Chapter 9

Everyone around the world could see.

It wasn’t the JESmon that everyone knew. He was clad in red and white armor, wielding golden gauntlets in each arm, and there were brilliant white wings of

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light sprouting from his back. Everyone's attention was drawn to JESmon, who had gone beyond the X-Antibody and awakened his new power.

JESmon GX.

But all those who saw him called him "he who was unfettered" — the Generics.

Chapter 10

JESmon GX flew up even higher, turning around in the air. Light flew down from his wings in the sky, raining upon the Digimon who were fighting up against Ogudomon X. Bathed in the light, all of the Digimon there, both big and small, found their wounds healed and their strength restored.

Even the other Royal Knights, who had been defeated by Ogudomon earlier, got up as well.

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“Jes...mooooooooon....yooooooooou!”

Ogudomon X — no, Lucemon X — let out a huge roar from his huge body, causing the earth to shake.

Realizing that something very unusual was happening around him, Lucemon X immediately used Ogudomon's huge body to start attacking JESmon GX. He swiped at him through the air with a slash. He flew at him with his six bladed arms, faster than the speed of sound. But instead of bothering to guard against the attack, JESmon GX simply stood there, glaring back at Ogudomon GX.

“You heard me earlier, didn't you, Lucemon?”

I'm going to stop you. So I'm putting those words into action immediately.

The blades didn't even scratch JESmon GX. Instead, they stopped to an instant halt right in front of him, as if blocked.

“Is that...the Immortal Program!?”

He was correct, but it was a bit off the mark. JESmon GX responded to his question in turn.

“It's OS Generics. Right now, I can't be affected by any of the normal laws of the world — “

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He probably wouldn't have been able to give himself the Immortality Program just a little while ago, but GX's power was on a completely different level.

“You’re saying you’ve managed to exceed my expectations…? Why, you ought to know your place!”

Ogudomon X was no longer in the calm mood he was earlier. Right now, the only one left there was a seethingly angry Lucemon X with the shape of an Ogudomon X.

“Crush them, Diablomooon!”

Lucemon X looked down at his puppets swarming the earth and called them to attack. The hordes of Diablomon X, which had been busy fighting off the surrounding Digimon, began stirring more violently and forcefully, as if egged on by the strange voice above them.

” — You do realize I can do this too, right?”

The moment JESmon GX spoke those words, the light surrounding him became even brighter. The other Digimon, who were fighting up against the Diablomon, began to glow in the same way as JESmon.

“I’m not the only one who can use OS Generics…!”

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They repelled all of the Diabloomon X's attacks, and in a flurry of attacks, the Diabloomon X were all easy obliterated. It was as if all of them had become JESmon GX.

“Right here, right now, this power is for everyone!”

Voices rang out from all over the earth. In response to those voices, the light from his wings began glowing even brighter, spreading out over a wide area.

“...Wh...y...Why...”

“Everyone's up against you, because they all want to put an end to this fighting! We're gonna stop you!”

In conjunction with JESmon GX, toms of the Digimon came rushing forward. Even the other Holy Knights whom Ogudomon X had defeated earlier were there.

“Why, JESmon?! Why must you reject the road I walk?! Do we not possess the same goal!?”

Among the many Digimon were Omegamon X and Alphamon, accompanied by human boys. The Royal Knights were there too, as well as the other Digimon without that title. Everyone who was there to protect the

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old Digital World was there, and even those who had escaped from the Dark Area were there.

“You definitely convinced me that we have the same dream, I’ll give you that!”

Everyone accompanied JESmon GX in heading towards Ogudomon X, all at once.

“But you see, I’ve decided to go down that road a little differently!”

Magnamon X and Dynasmon X worked together to destroy one of Ogudomon X’s arms.

“Fighting isn’t always useless! Maybe before now, we were all fighting instead of understanding each other, but right now we’re all fighting together to stop you!”

Sometimes fights happened because people wanted to understand each other. There was no need to go as far as to stop those. As JESmon GX shouted out his words, Sleipmon X and Craniummon X destroyed a second arm.

“You say our fighting instincts are a curse? That kind of despair comes from the exact kind of ego and line of thinking that made you into a Demon

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Lord...But you know...I can't agree with your ideas of wiping out all conflict, or rejecting the idea that we can understand each other through it! Isn't that how we've 'evolved' in the first place?!"

The onslaught kept going. The third arm was cut off by LordKnightmon X and Duftmon X.

"Nggggh! How dare you filthy Royal Knights do this to the arms of a god!"

As each arm was lopped off one by one, Ogudomon X bellowed in Lucemon X's voice. He thrashed around violently, trying to shake off the Digimon around him.

"This kind of fighting will give us a future! For us, and for you!"

Disregarding the chaotic attacks being hurled at them, UlforceV-dramon X and Examon X completely destroyed the fourth arm.

"We're going to save you!"

Finally, Omegamon X and Alphamon took care of the fifth and sixth arms.

"Save me, you say...!?"

"Yeah, that's right! We're gonna save you from that despair you've been putting yourself in about our so-called 'curse'!"

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Perhaps in response to all six arms being destroyed, the Diabloomon X combined together into a single arm.

“So if you’re gonna be in despair, we’re gonna pierce through that darkness with even more light!”

But JESmon GX, carrying the faith of his friends with him, continued to speed towards him, undeterred.

Go forth, JESmon.

Those words were from Dukemon X and Gankuumon, who were bestowing them upon him with their trust. In a single swoop, they struck down the last barrier in his way.

...Yeah. I'll be back.

JESmon GX and Ojudomon GX. The Holy Knight clad in light and the giant large enough to pierce the clouds were converging in on each other. In that moment, JESmon GX could sense that everyone had returned the power of OS Generics that he'd distributed among them.

...Guys...!

JESmon GX's wings shone yet even brighter.

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“Let us understand each other, Lucemon...”

And so, the light from his wings formed a giant sword, bigger than even Ogudomon X himself.

In that moment, he had manifested his yet-unseen ultimate sword, “Knights’ Intruder”, shining with golden light. JESmon GX took it and headed for his opponent’s head, swinging it down in one strike.

“How dare you face me and invoke all of those words of light or despair or all of those other things! Well, how interesting that your ‘justice’ of hope is against my ‘justice’ of despair! Let’s see who has the better right to rule!”

As Lucemon X shouted those words, the sword from Ogudomon X’s head fired off a black aura, blocking JESmon X’s sword of light. Light and darkness. With sparks flying at the meeting of blade to blade, the distance between both Digimon narrowed into nothing.

“Take thiiis!”

And with that, they were both engulfed in light.

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Chapter 11

JESmon GX's ultimate sword had sliced right through Ogudomon X, and the giant gate leading to the Dark Area vanished. The fragmented textures in the sky slowly began to reform.

The fight's finally over, thought JESmon as he looked up at the sky regaining its blue color.

Having used up all of his energy in that one final blow, JESmon had lost the power of GX.

And as soon as he'd sliced through Ogudomon X, Ogudomon X's body had immediately dissipated into dust. Then, JESmon X saw it be absorbed into a number of lights and carried back to the Dark Area.

The only thing remaining was a single DigiEgg.

Someone bent over to pick up the egg. He saw that someone was wearing a white jacket loosely hanging over his shoulders and sandals. It was Gankuumon.

“You did it.”

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His smile was wide enough to show his teeth. He tossed the DigiEgg in his hands to JESmon X.

“...Master.”

“Stop calling me that. You’ve graduated.”

Have I really graduated? Gankuumon was saying it like a joke, but JESmon X knew he meant it for real. He’d heard that Gankuumon had been training him up as his successor.

“Yggdrasil dropped you a line, don’t you remember?”

JESmon X nodded. Just earlier, the Royal Knights had received some mail data from Yggdrasil addressed to them.

According to the message, Yggdrasil would be bringing the New Digital World and the old Digital World together.

“If the world runs over capacity again, d’you think it’s gonna pull another Project Ark?”

“Probably? But as far as that goes, Alphamon and Omegamon and those kids said they’d take care of the little stuff.”

“...Oh.”

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He had no idea what “the little stuff” was supposed to mean, but he knew that those humans were going on a journey through the world like he and his master had, and that they were forming bonds with all kinds of Digimon. He was sure he could have faith in those kinds of people.

“So? Whatcha plannin’ to do now?”

“Me? Oh, right...Hmm.”

They’d just been in an emergency, so all of the Knights had gotten together and fought. But the Royal Knights weren’t normally a monolith, and each of them had their own ways of “justice” they were to follow.

But most importantly, Gankuumon was resigning from his position as a Holy Knight. The word “graduated” had come directly from his mouth, and JESmon X knew that this truly meant he was on his own as a Holy Knight now.

” — I think I’m gonna go on a journey.”

“Hah?”

“Well, if you’re quitting the Holy Knights, I’ve gotta find a successor.”

Hearing this, Gankuumon sighed more deeply than he’d ever done before.

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“What did I tell you...You’ve graduated, and now you’re gonna do what I did?”

“Yeah. But I’m not doing it to copy you.”

I want to go on a journey. I want to do this from the bottom of my heart. With that in mind, he continued.

“I might as well bring this along.”

JESmon X looked at the DigiEgg in his arms, vocalizing the idea he’d just come up with.

“Not sure if I can do a good job bringing it up, but I figured, trying to actually raise someone will be good training for me.”

Maybe someday, he can become a Holy Knight too. In response to this conclusion, Gankuumon gave his most dramatic shrug of his shoulders.

“Training, training. Look at this imbecile. Man, you turned out like me in all the wrong ways.”

“I’ll take that as a compliment.”

“It’ll be a long journey, you know.”

“I’ll get used to it.”

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“There’s a lot of things you won’t like about it.”

“Well...I’ll cross that bridge when I get to it.”

“And then after that?”

“Come on! I said I’ll be fine! Didn’t you say I’ve graduated?”

“...Well, yeah. Fine, then. Stand up tall and proud and go on your way, Royal Knight!”

Gankuumon spoke those words with all of his chest in them. JESmon X put the DigiEgg under his arm and took off with all of his strength, not even looking back at Gankuumon.

He was heading into the world of the sky alone. His master would not be coming along.

He felt a sense of warmth pushing him forward on his back.

He felt as if his very soul were blazing.

<< CHRONICLE-X: THE LAST EPISODE >>

END

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