The Domino Effect

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The Domino Effect

by FireDragon1321

Summary

When a new threat called the Domino Army makes their mark on the Digital World, they have a new, creative way to deal with the DigiDestined- turn them into evil Digimon loyal to them and only them! Unfortunately for the Domino Army, one of the Carriers of their transformation virus escaped in order to warn the DigiDestined of their plot. Will the DigiDestined be able to stop them? Or will they all fall to corruption?

Notes

Well, here we go, I guess.
I posted this work on deviantArt under another name. That account contains all transformation stories, but this story has a plot and some interesting developments, so I decided to put it here and see how it goes. It is not complete, but most chapters are. I will post them soon.

Because this is Chapter 1, I'll get the disclaimer out of the way here. I do not own Digimon-Bandai and Toei do. The designs for all the Carrier Digimon (save for Yoleimon, who you'll meet later) are redesigns of characters created by NikkiNeeP, and you can see her original characters here- http://www.otaku-village.com/ddestined.html . I do not mean to claim any the characters as my own- I'm merely borrowing them and twisting things a bit.

One last warning- this was originally a transformation story, so the transformations will get quite graphic/intense, hence why this is rated M. The rest of this work is probably only rated T, but I just wanted to be safe.

With that out of the way, get ready to dive into the Digital World on an epic adventure!
Wake the Darkness

There were twelve DigiEggs in the warm red room. Each one glowed a faint green, contrasting with the pulsing red walls of their incubator. A Digimon observed the eggs from the surrounding darkness. They were key in his ultimate plan. When they hatched, the Digimon would aid in the creation of the strongest Digimon ever known and the paradise this creature hoped to forge.

A crack echoed throughout the chamber. The Digimon growled in delight as an orange egg decorated with yellow sun-shaped patterns began to crack open. After rattling about for a time, a small, blob-like Digimon emerged. The Digimon had yellow skin, four tiny, clawed feet and bright, cheerful blue eyes. But the real proof that the experiments were going well so far were the goggles around the creature’s head and his soft, fluffy brown hair.

The Digimon crawled out of his shell and began to stumble around his surroundings. He looked up at the older Digimon, who grinned down at him gleefully. “You are finally born,” he said. “I shall call you Tainimon.”

The newborn Tainimon began to wail in hunger. His caretaker threw a leg of meat at him, which Tainimon began to happily munch on. The Digimon watched Tainimon eat with an emotionless expression that hid his excitement well. There were so many failed experiments that he nearly deleted that fool Reevemon more than once. But now, there was at least one viable Digimon. Even if the others were miserable failures, he’d be able to snag the leader of those foolish DigiDestined. Without a leader, the rest would fall like dominoes.

Another DigiEgg began to rattle and crack. This one was light blue and covered with tiny white spots. The older Digimon ignored Tainimon to focus on this egg. As a blue eye peered at him through the cracks in the egg, the Digimon smiled at the thought of the new world order this newborn would bring in. A white, puppy-like Digimon came out of the egg and glared, almost defiantly, at his new master.

The older Digimon watched each egg hatch and named each Digimon as it was born. None of them suffered from any deformities like the first twenty-seven batches. This was the one. The Digimon felt it in his great and heavy bones. His dreams would surely become reality.

Of course, the Digimon would grow up. And when they grew up, they would get their own ideas about his mission.

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Four years passed since the defeat of MaloMyotismon. The Digital World was currently in a state of peace, although there were strange disappearances that foreshadowed the coming of another war. On File Island, the moon was high in the sky, casting a benevolent glow upon the sleeping Digimon below. Everything was serene and peaceful.

That is, until a twig suddenly snapped.

A group of Tanemon were suddenly startled out of the ground as two Digimon raced by. One bore a resemblance to one of the DigiDestined heroes in his youth. He sported goggles and a wild mop of brown hair. But there was no mistaking the child for a human. He was clearly a reptile, with soft orange scales covering most of his body. Red leather belts were wrapped around his feet. The blue, orange and yellow shirt he wore was a size too big for him. The Digimon’s long tail ended in a red flame. His green eyes were wide with terror as he snapped yet another twig while he ran along.
The second Digimon was truly frightening. He was so scary that the Tanemon instantly burrowed into the earth again. The creature was a long, lean red wolf. He was so skinny that he appeared starved. However, one could tell by his long purple claws and enormous mouth filled with razor-sharp teeth that he was, in fact, a skilled hunter. A series of belts completely coated his skinny limbs. Yellow eyes shone malevolently in the moonlight and his whiplike tail thrashed with each step. Drool dribbled from his mouth at the mere thought of catching his prey.

The lizard Digimon leapt into a hiding tree. He curled his flaming tail around his shivering body. The night was cold and his feet hurt terribly, but he could not stop. He could not let the wolf Digimon catch him. If he did, there was no hope for the Digital World.

“Taimon,” hissed a low, gruff voice. “Oh, Taimon? Where are you? I know you’re here. I can smell you. You reek of fear!”

The word “fear” was viciously snarled as the wolf Digimon pounced into the hiding tree. Taimon ran out of the tree at top speed. He escaped his adversary, but only for a moment. The wolf fell flat on his face, but then got back up and bounded after Taimon again.

“I’m not afraid!” Taimon shouted, a bit uncertainly. “I’m not going to surrender to you, Fangmon! There’s no way you can take me back to those freaks in the Domino Army!”

“Master Dominomon would be quite upset that you called him a ‘freak’, you foolish Rookie,” Fangmon growled. “I’m quite offended myself. If Master Dominomon did not order you to be taken back alive, I would have blown you to smithereens with my Blast Coffin long ago.”

“Well, I’ll tell the DigiDestined to give him a thank you before they delete him!” Taimon shouted back with a cheeky smirk that only made Fangmon angrier.

The Digimon kept up the chase, with neither party losing speed. Fangmon was a fair bit larger than Taimon, who was only the size of a human child compared to the massive wolf. This did not slow Fangmon down at all. Meanwhile, Taimon was having difficulty breathing in the thin night air. If he did not find an escape soon, he would be captured by the slobbering beast.

There was no way he was going to give Fangmon that satisfaction.

Taimon took in as much air as he could, shouted “Petite Fire!” and shot a tiny fireball out of his mouth. The attack bounced harmlessly off of Fangmon, who grinned at his victim.

“Do you really think such a puny attack could harm a Champion, stupid child?” Fangmon asked. He made it sound more like a threat.

The air around Taimon grew warmer, and he soon realized it was the foul-smelling breath of Fangmon. The creature was breathing down his neck, assaulting his nostrils with the smell of rotting meat. Taimon shrugged it off as he burst out of the dense jungle. He was running so fast that he didn’t see the cliff below him. The ground suddenly vanished beneath his feet as he plummeted down.

Fangmon snapped his huge jaws at the empty air, growling in irritation when he came up with nothing. He then looked over the edge of the cliff, watching Taimon scream as he fell down to the bottom of the crevasse. A faint splash was heard shortly after he disappeared from view.

Fangmon let out an instinctive howl of triumph, sure that his prey was dead. He then remembered that he was ordered to take Taimon back alive. At first, he was afraid his master would become angry at his carelessness and delete him. However, he was an experienced hunter, and he knew
when a Digimon was killed, they would turn into data particles that floated into the sky to be reconfigured.

Fangmon waited a few minutes, but no stream of data came out of the ravine to indicate that the reptile Digimon was dead. Despite the harrowing fall, he was still alive. With an enraged snarl, Fangmon began to seek a safe passage to the bottom of the cliff. It seemed that the hunt was not over yet.

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The young lizard-like Digimon washed up on the riverbank, alive but unconscious. The flame on his tail was out, and it would take a while to generate a new one. In his weakened state, however, it would be a miracle if it came back at all.

As the lizard boy was unconscious, he could not see a certain teddy bear Digimon approach him. The bear was far from his home of Toy Town, out looking for abandoned toys he could add to the population. He did not know what kind of Digimon the lizard boy was, but he had a big heart and could not stand to leave him to suffer.

In any case, his strong resemblance to a certain DigiDestined was probably not a coincidence. Something was definitely amiss in the Digital World again. There were odd Digimon appearing everywhere as of late, capturing innocent Digimon and taking them to who-knows-where. The soft-hearted teddy did not want another war. Perhaps he could stop it before it even started.

The bear picked Taimon up and stomped off towards Toy Town, where the hurt Digimon would be relatively safe. While he healed, the bear decided to contact Gennai. Surely he would know all about the strange Digimon and why he resembled the DigiDestined’s leader.

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About five hours passed before human feet touched Digital World soil yet again.

In those five hours, the bear-like Digimon- known to his friends as Monzaemon- took the unconscious lizard back to his colorful home in the Misty Trees. Once there, he made the little Digimon comfortable and sent one of his toy planes to Gennai’s home with a message.

The toy plane arrived in about a half-an-hour. Gennai read the whole thing twice. He was a bit skeptical, but Monzaemon was a trustworthy Digimon. So Gennai proceeded to send emails to the D-Terminals of all twelve DigiDestined children. He was as aware of the kidnappings as Monzaemon was and- while there were plenty of new DigiDestined about- these twelve were the cream of the crop. Only they could be trusted with this mission. Tai was especially needed due to the mysterious Digimon’s appearance, while Joe- who was a Digimon doctor in-training- could heal the injured Digimon enough to get him to talk.

The message Gennai sent to the DigiDestined read as such-

_DigiDestined,

No doubt you’ve heard about strange disappearances and kidnappings in the Digital World. A few hours ago, Monzaemon found a young Digimon that looks quite a bit like Tai. We don’t know if this Digimon has any connection to the disappearances- as he is currently severely wounded and unable
to tell us anything— but this is the first time a Digimon resembling a DigiDestined appeared in the Digital World. In addition, he showed up mere weeks after the kidnappings started. Come to Toy Town and see if there’s a connection between this Digimon and the disappearances.

Gennai

As soon as the messages were sent out, the DigiDestined and their partners dropped whatever they were doing and ran to the nearest computer. The twelve of them spawned in roughly the same area, so they had no trouble finding each other. Once they were together, they began to head towards Toy Town.

By now, the DigiDestined knew their way around File Island so well, they could traverse it in their sleep. Unfortunately, they all spawned in the Gear Savannah, not too far from the factory where the first generation of DigiDestined met Andromon. It wasn’t too far a hike to get to Toy Town, but it would be some time before they arrived.

Tai Kamiya was surprisingly interested in the Digimon. Sure, Izzy was as curious as always about this new digital life-form, but Gennai specifically stated that the Digimon resembled himself. He imagined the Digimon was an exact copy of him, only with the incredible powers Digimon possessed.

Tai glanced around, finding almost everyone deep in conversation. Sora, Mimi, Yolei and Kari were all chatting about some girly thing or another that Tai didn’t really care about. Davis and Ken were talking about last night’s soccer game— a conversation he would have happily joined if he wasn’t thinking about the mysterious Digimon. Izzy was clearly lost in thought and Tai didn’t want to snap him out of Izzy Mode. Cody was trying to disentangle a small cactus-like plant that somehow got stuck on Joe’s blazer while Joe freaked out. Even the Digimon were engaged in separate conversations.

The only person not in another conversation, in a state of deep contemplation or having a panic attack was Tai’s best friend, Matt Ishida. Tai shouted, “Hey!” to get Matt’s attention. When Matt turned around, he said, “So, the Digimon apparently looks like me.”

“Probably only knows Bubble Blow,” Matt said with a small chuckle.

“No way! That’d be your Digimon!” Tai snapped back.

“How do you know there’s a Digimon version of me running around?” Matt questioned.

Tai shrugged. “I don’t think there is,” he said. “But if there was, it’d totally just know Bubble Blow and nothing else. Meanwhile, my guy is probably just like Agumon and gets awesome digivolutions.”

“Sure,” Matt said. He glanced over his shoulder to see Cody finally extracting the cactus from Joe’s blazer.

Joe was still in a panic, for the blazer was now completely shredded. “This uniform is really hard to replace!” he shouted. “Oh no! What are my professors going to say? I can’t explain to them that it got ripped to pieces by a cactus!”

Tai was snapped out of the conversation by a loud roar. A black dinosaur Digimon ran past the group of teens and Digimon. They knew it was DarkTyrannomon, a relatively common Digimon. However, there was something more menacing than normal about the creature.

The roar was quickly followed by a high-pitched voice crying, “Don’t eat me!” This is when the kids noticed a Lopmon running from the DarkTyrannomon.

DarkTyrannomon just laughed at the little rabbit as he picked it up with a big, clawed hand. Lopmon squealed in terror. DarkTyrannomon just laughed, filling Lopmon’s nostrils with its foul breath. “I’m not going to eat you,” he said in a gravelly voice. “You’re coming with me alive.”

“Hey!” Davis shouted. “Leave him alone, you big bully!”

DarkTyrannomon turned and growled at the small army ready to fight him. “DigiDestined,” he snarled. “Forget about this piece of garbage.” Here, he flicked Lopmon away like the little rabbit was a mere scab. “Lord Dominomon wants you in the Domino Army to usher in a new world order.”

“We’re not going to join you, you big bully!” Tai shouted.

Tai held out his Digivice, while Davis did the same. Their Digimon partners- Agumon and Veemon- began to glow with white light. They steadily grew. When the light faded, the Digimon were replaced with Greymon and ExVeemon, two powerful Champions that were more than a match for DarkTyrannomon.

The other DigiDestined hung back, ready to digivolve their partners just in case anything went wrong. But it was unlikely that they would be needed. The DigiDestined were trying to save their energy in case of surprise attacks. Gabumon was tired from fighting off a hostile Snimon earlier. Having all twelve Digimon in the same condition was not good at all. So the others simply waited in reserve and let the Digimon that were already digivolved do their thing.

“Fire Blast!” DarkTyrannomon shouted, expelling a blast of black flames at Greymon.

Greymon winced, but shook the attack off easily. “Nova Blast!” Greymon cried, firing a huge sphere of fire. DarkTyrannomon swatted the attack away with his long, strong tail, but was still slightly singed from the attack. The blast hit ExVeemon, who stumbled and nearly fell. He recovered quickly and prepared his attack.

“Vee Laser!” ExVeemon roared, firing an energy beam at DarkTyrannomon. This attack hit the enemy dead-on. He howled in agony as Greymon rushed at him with his horn. DarkTyrannomon opened his mouth, trying to fire another attack, but Greymon’s horn stabbed him in the throat. He let out a low, gurgling howl and shattered into data.

Their purpose served, Greymon and ExVeemon returned to their Rookie forms. Lopmon bounded over, shaking that sand out of his ears as he went. “Thank you, DigiDestined!” Lopmon chirped. “If it weren’t for you, I would’ve been caught like all the others.”

“Do you know anything about the Domino Army?” Kari asked.

Lopmon shook his head. “No,” he said. “Just that they’re mean and capture Digimon weaker than them, who are never seen again. You came to stop them, didn’t you?”

Tai sighed, knowing the Digital World was facing yet another significant threat. From past experience, he knew it wouldn’t be long before the Real World would be under fire as well. As a DigiDestined, however, he could not refuse. “Sure,” he said. “We’ll kick their butts.”
“Thank you, DigiDestined,” Lopmon said happily. “I’ll try and be more careful next time, though. One day, maybe I’ll help you out, too.”

Lopmon ran off into the desert, leaving the DigiDestined and their Digimon alone again. They continued towards their destination, wondering who the Domino Army really were and what they meant by a new world order.

They didn’t notice several small green Digimon watching them leave.

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The twelve DigiDestined arrived in Toy Town late that night. They were so tired they could not keep their eyes open. Tai swore he heard someone shouting and a string of beeping sounds, but it was probably his imagination.

Monzaemon was waiting at the front gate with several toy soldiers. He seemed a bit wary at first, but when he saw it was just the DigiDestined, he ordered his guards to stand aside.

“How’s that Digimon you found?” Agumon asked.

“You kids are pretty lucky,” Monzaemon said. “He just woke up, but he’s still in pretty bad condition. I can take you to him if you’d like. Just follow my soldiers.” With a wave of Monzaemon’s large paw, the soldiers began to march further into Toy Town.

As the kids passed row after row of colorful buildings and streets lined with living toys, the newer DigiDestined were clearly excited and awed at the sight. The older DigiDestined remembered their previous experiences too well to be as enraptured. In fact, when Tai passed a particular blue car, he felt like it was staring at him, longing to “play” again.

Tai couldn’t remember being mind-controlled that well. He remembered being captured by Monzaemon’s corrupted Hearts Attack, several voices muttering in the back of his skull, then complete and utter blackness. But it wasn’t entirely like death. He could feel his body moving through the darkness, trying to go somewhere, but his brain wasn’t awake. He wasn’t thinking. He was half-alive until Mimi managed to purify Monzaemon. While Tai and the others forgave Monzaemon, Tai could not bring himself to forgive that damned toy, which decided to follow him until they arrived at a bright yellow building with a glowing pink cross on its roof. One of the soldiers gestured with its bayonet towards the door. The DigiDestined all piled in. Fortunately, the car was too big to follow, so it gave a sad honk and rolled away.

“Good riddance,” Tai thought. He did not want to think about being that thing’s play-toy again.

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Taimon woke up in a cheerful blue room on a soft bed. The blanket that covered his body was soft and white. He felt like a baby Digimon in Primary Village, the sun on his scales as he was roused from his sleep. The feeling quickly faded when he realized that the “sun” was just a bright overhead light.

Taimon moaned, for his body ached horribly. He looked down to find his limbs and torso wrapped in multi-colored bandages. His memories came back in an ugly river and he instantly remembered everything, including the fact that he was never one of the precious babes in the Village. He was created by that damned Dominomon. Even as a little Tainimon, he lived with the creature’s shadow looming over him.
Taimon didn’t dwell on this fact any more. He struggled out of the bed reluctantly and limped to the door. Like everything else in the room, the door was soft and squishy. The weakened Digimon struggled to push it open and continue his mission. He then proceeded to barrel into a toy soldier as big as he was, clutching a large gun.

Most Digimon were stronger than Taimon- as he was a mere Rookie- and this one looked like no exception. Instead of fighting, Taimon chose to talk to it. “Hey,” he said. “Do you know where I am?” No response. “Tell me where to find the DigiDestined!” Taimon demanded.

The toy soldier remained stalwart as it pushed Taimon back into the soft room. “Hey!” Taimon shouted, but the voiceless soldier closed the door behind him. This time, Taimon heard a lock click.

Taimon ran around the room as fast as his aching body would allow, trying to find an exit. When none was found, he fell asleep on the floor. It was soft. Debatably, it was softer than the bed. Falling asleep on it caused no discomfort. He was still sleeping on the floor when the door unlocked and people began to shuffle into the room.

Unknown voices woke Taimon up. He sat up, dazed, and found himself face-to-face with a human. The human looked like a less-scaly Taimon with brown eyes and a much larger body. The two of them stared at each other for a while, not able to think of anything to say. Taimon looked around to see more humans with Digimon beside them. He tried to force himself to talk, for he knew they were the DigiDestined, but he found the words caught in his throat.

That is, until the human version of him reached out to touch his arm.

“Do-don’t touch me!” Taimon shouted, limping into the corner. “Please don’t touch me! I have an evil virus in me!”

“A virus?” asked a human with short red hair. “What kind of virus?”

Taimon sighed. The words started to flow freely from him, like water. “Most Digimon in this world are older Digimon reborn,” he began. “But not me. I was created by an evil Digimon who calls himself Dominomon. Dominomon wants to take over the Digital World with his Domino Army and usher in a new world order.”

“So you know those bozos?” asked a boy with spiky hair and goggles.

Taimon blinked. “You met them?” he asked.

“We met a DarkTyrannomon who claimed he was one of them, but we deleted him,” said a Biyomon.

“Thank goodness,” Taimon said. “If you didn’t and he caught you, it’d be all over.” Taimon began shaking uncontrollably, ready to sob. A girl with light brown hair bent down and hugged him. Taimon, too weak to fight back, didn’t try to stop her. The girl seemed completely unharmed, even after holding Taimon for a few seconds. Taimon found himself zoning out and melting into the hug.

“I thought you had a virus in you,” Taimon’s clone said, his tone accusatory.

“I do! I do!” Taimon insisted. He then took a deep breath. “See, Dominomon knows that you guys stopped other evil Digimon before,” he explained “So he’s going to try and make you serve him. He created twelve special Digimon called Carriers and inserted viruses deep within their DigiCores. When a DigiDestined touches an infected Digimon, they’ll transform into a slave to Dominomon. But not just any slave. They’ll turn into a super-powerful Mega-level Digimon who’ll never question a thing Dominomon says or does. The Carrier who infected the DigiDestined will then disappear. I
don’t know if we get reconfigured.”

“But why didn’t Kari get infected?” the redhead asked.

“The viruses are very unique,” Taimon said. “There’s twelve strains, and each strain only affects one DigiDestined. I don’t think this girl is the one who’ll trigger my virus.” Here, Taimon glanced at his clone. “I have a funny feeling it might be you.”

“Me?” his clone asked.

Taimon nodded. “What’s your name?” he asked.

“My name is Tai,” the human said.

“I’m Taimon,” Taimon said. “I’d shake hands, but I don’t think that’d be a good idea.” He chuckled weakly.

A blue-haired boy and his Gomamon knelt beside Taimon and said, “Kari, you need to let Taimon go so we can have a look at him.” Kari complied, leaving Taimon feeling slightly empty. “How did you get hurt?” the blue-haired boy asked.

“I fell down a cliff, mister, um...” Taimon’s voice trailed off.

“Joe,” the blue-haired boy said.

“Right. Joe,” Taimon said. “An evil Digimon named Fangmon was after me. I fell over the cliff trying to get away from him. Next thing I knew, I woke up here.”

“Was he with the Domino Army?” asked a black-haired boy.

“Yea,” Taimon replied. “He was a big buttface. Unfortunately, he’s still out there.”

“Buttface?” a purple-haired girl asked with a chuckle.

“Hey, what’s wrong with- ow!” Taimon gasped in pain as Joe examined his left arm. A similar pain came when Joe prodded at his chest and tail.

There wasn’t as much pain in the other areas of his body, so Taimon used that time to gather the names of the other kids. He knew the other eleven Carriers well, and he figured out which of the kids would trigger which Carrier by their names alone. This was very important, as the other Carriers were not as friendly towards humans as he was.

And yet, he still missed them terribly.

After examining Taimon for a while, Joe came to the conclusion that he broke his tail, arm and two of his ribs. Since he was a Digimon, the injuries would heal in a matter of days, but he’d have to take it easy until then. He wrapped extra gauze around the affected areas until Taimon couldn’t even twitch them. It felt uncomfortable, but Gomamon explained that this would help his bones recover.

Once his wounds were taken care of, Taimon struggled into the bed with Kari’s help and lay on his right side. He coughed a few times, then said, “I gotta warn you about the other Carriers. They aren’t as nice as I am. Dominomon’s totally brainwashed them into going with his mission. I can tell you all about them, since they were like my brothers and sisters.”

“Which one will affect Kari?” Tai asked worriedly.
“You mean Karimon?” Taimon asked. “I guess it would be her, ‘cause of the name. Well-”

At that moment, the door burst open and a toy soldier entered the room. He hastily handed the group a piece of paper before racing away. Davis bent down and picked it up. His eyes widened with each word he read.

“What is it?” Gatomon asked nervously.

Davis gulped. “Toy Town is under attack.”
Evil Lies in the Domino Army

My name is Taimon, and I’m a Digital Monster, or Digimon for short! I used to work for a big jerk named Dominomon, but I don’t any-more. He’s capturing Digimon everywhere and wants to do evil things to the DigiDestined! I had to warn the DigiDestined about Dominomon, so I left him. Unfortunately, I got chased by a nasty Fangmon and got hurt trying to escape him! I passed out and woke up in this weird place called Toy Town, which is currently under attack by the very same group of Digimon I just got away from! At least I managed to find the kids and warn them about Dominomon. I wish I could beat all the bad guys up, but I got hurt too bad. I hope the DigiDestined can kick them out before they destroy this place!

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An hour before the Toy Town attack, two Digimon were in a room that softly glowed red. The taller of the two was a woman-like Digimon with blue skin and jet black hair. Her eyes glowed a soft yellow and two fangs emerged from her mouth like a vampire’s. She had large bat wings and a tail with an arrow-head at the end. Most notable about her was her extravagant dress and fine jewelry. Her bracelets, necklace and other accessories appeared to be carved bone, while her dress was the color of blood.

Her name was Baronessmon, and the room was her personal vanity. She was running her long red nails through the blond hair of a smaller Digimon that sat in front of her. This Digimon was wolf-like, but stood on two legs like a human. Most of his body was covered in cream-colored fur with brown stripes that was neatly cut short. His claws were once pink like Garurumon’s, but they’d been painted black. He wore a simple green sleeveless sweater and jeans. His eyes were heavily lashed and a striking gold color. A torn sheet was tied loosely around his neck.

The little Digimon twitched his dog-like nose as he stared at his reflection in the mirror in front of him. His tail swept back and forth absently like a huge yellow broom. The tail endured a long period of washing and curling to get to its current state, which was soft, wavy and fluffy.

Few Digimon could afford the luxuries of good grooming, but Baronessmon had her ways of obtaining the supplies she needed to give this luxury to the Carriers. Today was their big day, and they all needed to look their best. Making sure they got regular beauty treatments was an odd quirk of her’s that developed over the years of rearing them. Perhaps she developed it to keep up the illusion that she was the mother of these creatures. But she wasn’t. She only cared for them to help Dominomon reach his new world. This was the last time she ever had to wait on the pawns.

But the little wolf-boy didn’t know that. He didn’t even know he’d disappear when his purpose was served. That was one of many secrets Baronessmon kept from him and his kin.

How Taimon figured it out, she would never know.

Baronessmon began combing the Carrier’s still tangled hair. It was the last thing she had to work on before she released him, and he was the last Digimon she had to groom. Then, she and the others could proceed towards their utopia.

“I miss Taimon,” the wolf-boy said, breaking Baronessmon out of her thoughts.

“You’ll see him soon, sweetie,” Baronessmon purred as she yanked on a particularly tough knot,
perhaps a bit too hard. “Fangmon managed to follow his scent all the way to Toy Town. We got lucky that some of the Monitamon found him when they did, didn’t we? Not to mention that some of the Monitamon saw the DigiDestined head towards Toy Town as well. They’re such good spies, aren’t they? Without their scouting skills, the Domino Army would be lost. And so would Taimon.”

“He was my best friend, you know?” the wolf-boy said with a melancholy sigh. Baronessmon exchanged her comb for a pair of scissors and began to hack away at the Digimon’s split ends. “Er, just do my hair how you usually do. Anyway, we hatched seconds after each other, didn’t we?” Baronessmon nodded. “We grew up together. I still don’t really understand why he just ran off. He just said that Lord Dominomon was bad and that I should come with him.”

Baronessmon stopped snipping for a brief moment. This was the first she was hearing of this. “You saw him leave?” she asked.

“More like stumbled into him leaving,” the wolf-boy said. “After using the bathroom the night he ran away.”

“Then you are the only one who saw him leave,” Baronessmon said seriously as she began to work on his bangs.

“I am?” the wolf boy asked, wrinkling his sensitive nose at a few blond hairs fell on it.

“Yes, you are,” Baronessmon said. “Do you know how he did it?”

“No,” the wolf-boy said.

Baronessmon sighed as she began to dry her “son’s” hair. “That would have been helpful,” she said. “Then we can make sure he never runs away again. You’d like that, wouldn’t you?”

The younger Digimon brightened, but only a little. “Yea,” he said. “Then we can enter Lord Dominomom’s paradise together.”

Baronessmon tried not to laugh out loud at the other Digimon’s naivety. Instead, she focused on running a thick sap through his hair, spiking it as she went. “Yes,” she said. “We’ll get him back and begin our mission.”

This made the little Digimon feel better. “I can’t believe the day of our mission is finally here,” he said. “I’m a bit nervous.”

“You’ll do fine, dear,” Baronessmon said, untying the sheet and letting it fall uselessly to the ground. She was pleased with the end result, especially since it was the last time she’d ever see him.

The wolf boy stared at himself in the mirror for a while, then looked back at Baronessmon with big, sad eyes. Baronessmon swallowed nervously, wondering if he somehow knew this would be their last meeting. “Thanks for taking care of me, Baronessmon,” the wolf boy said. “I’ll try my best to make you proud.”

Baronessmon’s ruby-red lips curled into a smile. “I know you will, Matimon,” she said as she watched the Digimon leave the room.

Matimon usually enjoyed Baronessmon’s pampering, but he was too anxious about Taimon and the mission to allow himself to focus on it. As a result, it almost felt like it never happened. He was just as nervous after his grooming as he was before it, despite expecting some of that stress to be relieved.
Still, he didn’t hesitate to join the rows of Porcupamon and Armormon gathering at the base on Infinity Mountain. These Digimon were both bodyguards for the Carriers and soldiers who would raze the cheerful town to find their targets. They surrounded Matimon on all sides. The only other Digimon present were the other Carriers. There were ten in all—minus Taimon and himself—and they all ranged from excited to nervous.

“Lord Dominomon has given the order to march!” shouted one of the Armormon.

“Grand,” growled an unfamiliar voice. “I can’t wait to catch that little runt.”

Matimon peered through the ranks of Digimon to find a Fangmon he hadn’t noticed before amongst them. There were a few Fangmon amongst the Domino Army, but the Carriers usually stayed away from them due to their mean attitudes. Matimon half-remembered Baronessmon mentioning one of them, but he didn’t expect the Digimon to actually join them.

The Digimon all marched in time with each other. One two, one two. Matimon tried to keep calm, but it was obvious that he wasn’t doing a good job of it. It was hard to breathe, and only got harder with each step.

Before long, the Digimon were at their destination. Matimon never traveled this far from Infinity Mountain before. He heard about all the places on File Island—including Toy Town—but never visited there. Several toys were rolling, flying and marching up and down the streets, retreating in horror as the Domino Army approached them.

Matimon was so consumed by his turbulent emotions that he didn’t register when an Armormon fired the first shot.

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“Toy Town is under attack,” Davis said to the shock of all his friends.

“Who would attack a peaceful place like Toy Town?” Palmon asked.

“The Domino Army, that’s who,” Davis growled, crumpling up the message. “Monzaemon doesn’t know what they want. He barely had enough time to write up this note before rushing out to stop them.”

“They probably want me,” Taimon said sadly. “Look, I did what I was supposed to do. I warned you guys. If you have to give me back to them to make them go away, I’ll go quietly. Even if they kill me, I’ll still get the last laugh when you kick their butts.”

“We’re not giving you back to those jerks,” Tai said. “We’re gonna boot them out of Toy Town! Besides, you still have a lot more information on them that we don’t know, like the scoop on the other Carriers. We still need you. Heck, we might even need you until the end of this thing. So we’re not gonna turn you in. Got that?”

Taimon grunted in pain, but managed a weak nod. “Got it,” he said. He seemed somewhat confused, but shook it off and closed his eyes, preparing to go to sleep.

“Someone should stay here with Taimon, just in case the Domino Army finds him,” Joe pointed out.

“Got it,” Tai said. “Joe, Gomamon, Kari and Gatomon, you guys stay here and keep Taimon safe. The rest of us are gonna go kick Domino Army butt!”

“Why do we have to stay here?” Gatomon asked. “I mean, I understand why Joe has to stay, but—”
The real reason Tai wanted Kari to stay behind was to protect her from the Domino Army and possibly the Carrier that could infect her. However, he knew that if he said that, Kari would object and tag along anyway. So he thought up a quick lie. “Taimon seems to have taken a liking to you,” he said. “Just stay here and keep him company so he doesn’t get bored.”

“Are you sure that’s the real reason?” Kari asked, raising an eyebrow.

“Yes,” Tai said. “That’s the real reason.”

Tai hastily left the room, followed by the other DigiDestined. He knew Kari didn’t buy his lie, so he had to leave quick before she had a chance to tag along. He never really got over nearly killing his little sister all those years ago. Sure, he’d come a long way since he first entered the Digital World, but the ghost of the incident still haunted him.

To lose her to the Domino Army would be a terrible, terrible thing.

The world outside was like a horrific painting. The artist tried to paint a cheerful, fun-filled scene, but, in a fit of rash fury, dumped orange and black and gray paint everywhere. The colorful buildings had holes in them that secreted flames and wisps of smoke. Shots fired all around like a series of firecrackers.

Strange Digimon marched up and down the streets. They looked like robotic centaurs with guns for hands and fired at anything they could, glaring with angry red eyes. There were others who were purple and vaguely bear-like in shape, covered with spikes that were jagged like glass. A tube was attached to their chests, the other end horrifically crammed down their throats. They had no eyes, merely stitches. Both Digimon looked like the stuff of nightmares.

Toys were beeping and squeaking in panic, taking shelter wherever they could. Only the toy soldiers fought the oncoming army. Each was dispatched rather easily by the black robots or the purple bears. Monzaemon was at the center of the chaos in the town square, firing wave after wave of pink hearts. He was trying his best, but the evil Digimon popped the hearts easily with their own attacks.

The DigiDestined and their Digimon were very used to battles, so they wasted no time digivolving their partners. Six Champions and two Ultimates stood where their Rookie forms once were in an instant. Davis, Cody, Ken and TK chose to DNA Digivolve their partners, providing a little extra firepower. The mighty Palidramon and Shakkoumon led the charge towards the square, where most of the chaos seemed to be centered.

“We won’t ask again, bear,” growled one of the robotic Digimon. “Where is Taimon?”

“I don’t know what a Taimon is!” Monzaemon insisted. He then shouted, “Hearts Attack!” before firing off another barrage of hearts.

The robot Digimon held up his cannons. “Justice Strike!” he roared, firing both of his guns at the hearts with deadly accuracy, popping each one like they were mere balloons. He laughed lowly. “Do you really think such a puny attack can finish off an Armormon?” he questioned.

“Desperado Blaster!” cried Palidramon as he finally reached the Armormon. Twin blasts of energy eliminated the creature mid-boast. The fighting ground to a halt as the DigiDestined and their Digimon arrived on the scene.

“It’s the DigiDestined,” wheezed one of the bears.
“Where are the Carriers, Pocupamon?” shouted an Armormon.

“Near the entrance,” the Pocupamon said sheepishly.

“Go get them!” Armormon commanded. It then turned towards the DigiDestined. “We’ll take care of the ‘Chosen’ Digimon. They’re useless to us, anyway.”

Greymon growled viciously, as if offended at being called “useless”. “Nova Blast!” he roared, firing directly into a group of Pocupamon and injuring them severely.

Tai saw the Pocupamon who’d spoken earlier retreating towards the entrance, gesturing for two other Porcupamon to follow him. “We can’t let them get the Carriers!” Davis cried. “Shakkoumon! You stay here with Birdramon, Togemon and Kabuterimon! Palidramon, Greymon, Garurumon, Aquilamon, let’s go get those guys!”

The Digimon and DigiDestined nodded before splitting up. Tai leapt on Greymon’s head, while Matt hopped on Garurumon’s back. Yolei leapt on Aquilamon’s back as he took off. Davis and Ken mounted their combined Digimon and led the charge. The remaining DigiDestined took shelter behind a chunk of a roof that was thrown to earth by a shot and watched the battle unfold.

“Justice Beam!” Shakkoumon cried, firing a laser beam at the already weakened group of Pocupamon. They shattered into data instantly. Shakkoumon then hovered alongside Monzaemon to protect him from a small incoming group of Armormon.

Togemon felt oddly nostalgic standing in the square. This was the place where she first became Togemon, after all. But she couldn’t let the nostalgia prevent her from protecting Toy Town.

“Needle Spray!” the cactus Digimon hollered, managing to stick five Pocupamon.

The Pocupamon were not happy about the hundreds of needles now sticking out of their bodies like so many pushpins. They turned on Togemon, crying out “Slash and Rip!” at roughly the same time. They sliced at Togemon with their sharp claws, leaving deep gouges in her flesh. Togemon tried to punch at her enemies, but they were quick, and they were starting to wear her down.

“Electro Shocker!” Kabuterimon was destroying wave after wave of Pocupamon. But they just kept coming. It seemed that two would arrive for each one that reverted to data. And the Armormon were even worse. Kabuterimon only managed to finish off one of them, for they had incredible defenses.

Another rain of bullets struck Kabuterimon, nearly knocking him out of the air. Fortunately, Birdramon noticed her ally was in trouble and swooped in. “Meteor Wing!” she cried, drowning the Armormon in a sea of fiery meteors that ended his digital life instantly. Unfortunately, Birdramon was temporarily blinded by the resulting stream of data and took a direct hit from a Pocupamon who stabbed her in the foot. Birdramon howled in pain. Kabuterimon fired another blast of energy at the offender, deleting him.

“Thank you, Kabuterimon,” Birdramon said, preparing to attack another foe.

“Coconut Punch!” Togemon cried, grinding the last of the Pocupamon into data. She glanced around to find that more and more members of the Domino Army were arriving. Togemon panted heavily, hoping she’d have the strength to handle them all.

Tai was not prepared for what he saw at the gates of Toy Town.

There were eleven Digimon standing in the center of a group of Armormon. From his good
viewpoint atop Greymon, he could see that they all bore uncanny resemblances to the other DigiDestined. He noted a cat-girl with yellow fur covered in orange stripes. She wore a green shirt and pink scarf, red gloves and a whistle. Her short brown hair was highly reminiscent of Kari’s. She stared up at him with bright green eyes. No doubt this was Karimon, the Carrier made to spread a horrible virus to Tai’s beloved sister.

A red wolf-like Digimon came out from behind the group of Armormon as the DigiDestined dismounted. It was less chaotic here than out in the square. There were only the three Pocupamon, the Carriers, the wolf and five Armormon. Tai didn’t know the actual threat level of the Carriers in battle, but he wasn’t going to take chances. He would have to delete all of them. Part of him felt bad for attacking Taimon’s family, but he knew that, if he finished off the Carriers now, he’d put a huge wrench in Dominomon’s plan.

The red wolf growled at Garurumon, who growled back. “Fangmon,” Garurumon said in a low, feral voice. “Stand back, Matt. He’s a really evil Digimon.”

Fangmon laughed. “So we finally meet, Garurumon,” he said. “I can smell Taimon on you. Perhaps you know where my prey is hiding?”

“If I do, there’s no way I’d tell a Digimon as foul as you!” Garurumon declared. “Howling Blaster!”

Fangmon agilely leapt out of the way. With Garurumon and Fangmon clearly locked in battle, the other Digimon were left with the remainder of the Domino Army. Greymon, Palidramon and Aquilamon rushed their enemies without mercy. In mere seconds, they were locked in combat.

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The Carriers hid behind the line of Armormon that formed to protect them. This was their first meeting with DigiDestined, and they seemed strong. Matimon became truly fearful when their Palidramon fired a shot at one of the Armormon, instantly deleting him. The Armormon were known for their toughness. If one could be finished off like that...

Matimon raced over to a Digimon who looked like a small, honey-colored bear with bat wings. He wore a big green hat and had a baggy green sweatshirt. A Holy Ring was attached to his right arm, just like the one on Karimon’s tail. The Digimon looked up at him with terrified blue eyes as he held him close.

“I won’t let them get you, Tiikeimon,” Matimon vowed.

Matimon was close to Tiikeimon. The younger Digimon followed him everywhere back home like a puppy. Now, he was shaking horribly as a Pocupamon exploded thanks to the DigiDestined’s Greymon. Matimon knew his DigiDestined was there. He could just feel them around. But, despite that, he was fully prepared to make a break for home with Tiikeimon in tow. As another Pocupamon bit the dust, he began to run off, carrying Tiikeimon.

“Where are you going?” barked one of the Carriers, making Matimon freeze in his tracks.

This Carrier looked like a human girl covered with pale blue feathers. She wore a feather headdress in her long purple hair. Long feathers covered her arms. She had pointed ears and wore a stern frown on her face.

“I’m going home with Tiikeimon before they kill him,” Matimon croaked.

“We can’t go now!” the Digimon said. “We’ve got work to do! I can feel my DigiDestined is here! Can’t you?”
Matimon nodded. “I can, Yoleimon,” he said, “But-”

“‘But’ nothing,” Yoleimon said with a shake of her feathered tail. “Karimon and I have a plan. We’re going to execute it now. If it works, we’ll get all the kids here in one blow.”

Matimon sighed and returned to his spot. “Alright,” he said. “Let’s hear it.”

“Blast Rings!” Aquilamon cried, firing another attack at the Armormon he was busy fighting. The Armormon finally caved, disintegrating into data. Three Armormon remained, and they did not seem tired at all.

Palidramon flew over to help, hip blasters at the ready. He obliterated another Armormon in a single hit before being struck out of the sky by the remaining two. Grunting, Palidramon got back up and prepared to keep fighting.

Meanwhile, Garurumon and Fangmon were racing around, biting and scratching at each other. They seemed evenly matched in strength and speed. For a while, they were at a complete stalemate.

Fangmon began to gather dark energy in his mouth. “Blast Coffin!” he howled, firing at Garurumon. The attack hit dead on, and Garurumon nearly fell. But he managed to struggle to his feet and fire off another Howling Blaster. With a sickening grin, Fangmon dodged the attack, which instead blew a huge hole in a nearby building.

“Look who’s destroying the town now, oh ‘Chosen One’!” Fangmon bragged.

Instead of being discouraged, Garurumon got an idea. “Greymon!” he shouted. “Help me!”

The orange dinosaur finished off the Porcupamon he was fighting and ran over to Garurumon’s side. “Nova Blast!” he shouted, firing off a great ball of flame.

Fangmon smirked and leapt out of the way. However, that’s exactly what Garurumon wanted. “Howling Blaster!” Garurumon cried.

Fangmon noticed the blue flames in his path a second too late. He found himself surrounded by them. With a howl of agony, his very essence burned away into nothing, reducing him to a harmless stream of data.

Garurumon had no time to thank his friend, for a Digimon cried out “Wonder Purr!” A soothing rumbling followed, calming the Digimon and their partners.

A little yellow cat-like Digimon emerged from behind the line of Armormon, followed by three other Digimon. They looked a lot like Kari, Yolei, Matt and TK, only covered with fur or feathers. The cat-like one’s green eyes were glowing faintly.

“All this fighting is getting a bit silly,” the feline purred. “I think we should all try to be friends instead. The Domino Army is trying to help you, DigiDestined. Do not fear us.” The DigiDestined wanted to object, but they couldn’t. Not even their Digimon could move. The other Digimon stepped forward, glancing around.

“I am Karimon,” the feline-Digimon went on. “These are my friends, Matimon, Tiikeimon and Yoleimon. What are your names?”

The DigiDestined introduced themselves, one at a time. The responses were automatic, almost
robotic. For some odd reason, they had no choice by to obey Karimon. The soft rumbling was still present in their ears, but it was slowly growing fainter.

“Tai, Matt, Davis, Ken and Yolei, huh?” Karimon asked. The DigiDestined confirmed with a nod. “You should stay here for a minute. I’m going to get Daevimon and Kennimon. They’d like to meet you, too.”

The DigiDestined and Digimon had no choice but to wait as Karimon disappeared behind the two remaining Armormon. Matimon walked over to Matt with Tiikeimon still in his arms. Blue eyes met gold ones as the human and Digimon stared at each other. The rumbling began to grow softer and softer, like a gossamer murmur at the back of everyone’s minds. Greymon willed himself to step forward and suck in some air to resume the battle, but remembered Karimon’s honeyed words and only exhaled a puff of smoke.

Meanwhile, Yoleimon, unable to hold back her excitement any more, rushed up to Yolei and leapt on top of her. Yolei was knocked to the ground before she could do anything. As soon as Yoleimon made contact with Yolei, her body disintegrated into data, which surrounded Yolei like a shroud. Her Digivice radiated black energy, then vanished into her body. Matimon saw this and gasped. He stood, frozen to the spot, and watched as Yolei’s body glowed a faint red.

Yolei steadily grew until she was slightly bigger than Aquilamon, shredding her clothes in the process. Her legs grew scaly as her feet began to morph into deadly talons. Some of her toes fused together, giving her three toes in place of five. A fourth toe of sorts grew from the back of her foot. Each toe was tipped with a black and deadly claw.

By this point, the rumbling was gone, and the DigiDestined and their partners were back in control of their senses. Matt was now able to put a fair amount of distance between Matimon and himself, even though Matimon showed no signs of ill will.

Karimon returned with a blue dragon-like Digimon wearing a flame jacket and goggles, along with a green, insect-like one with butterfly wings and a right arm that looked a lot like Devimon’s. “These are my friends, Daevimon and Kennimon,” she said. She looked around. “Where is Yoleimon?” she asked.

“She just disappeared!” Matimon cried, clutching an incoherently wailing Tiikeimon closer to him.

“What?” Karimon asked in shock.

“Yolei!” Davis shouted, running over to the giant girl who was now screaming in pain. Red sparks flew off of her as her arms stuck straight out. Her hands morphed and melted with uncomfortable-sounding squelches. They disappeared entirely as brown feathers exploded from Yolei’s arms. Within about ten seconds, Yolei had wings with red markings on them. She also grew horns of bone with a great resemblance to Aquilamon’s, only they were covered in spikes.

“How do we stop this?” Ken demanded.

Kennimon laughed in a way that made Ken incredibly uncomfortable, like the ghost of the Digimon Emperor was staring him in the face. “You can’t,” he said. “There’s no way to reverse the transformation.”

Rage boiled inside of Davis and he leapt at Kennimon, punching the insect boy squarely in the face and sending him flying to the floor. Daevimon growled and tried to scratch at Davis, but Davis was able to race away before he could. He accidentally stepped on Yolei’s discarded glasses, shattering them. “Yolei!” he shouted. “Sorry about your glasses!”
“I don’t need them,” Yolei said darkly.

“Huh?” Tai asked.

“This transformation...it’s clearing my vision,” Yolei panted. “It...mrrrr...feels good. Power. The power, the power!”

Yolei let out a cry that was half-human and half-raptor as her lips and nose twisted into a hard yellow beak with spikes running along the upper lip. A few sharp teeth poked out, twisted in a manner similar to Birdramon’s. Her eyes turned blood-red and fierce. Feathers covered the rest of her body as her breasts melted away, for she no longer needed them.

With a loud crack, her spine re-aligned itself. Her back became covered with a plate of pure bone, which looked vaguely like a turtle shell. A tail of three razor-sharp bone plates grew as the newborn Digimon let out another screech.

As all of this was going on, the DigiDestined were shouting at Yolei, trying to get her to come back. It was all in vain. Their cries were completely and utterly useless. The Aquilamon-like Digimon stared down at them, a regal yet deadly figure. Bone accessories covered her legs, while a bone pendant appeared around her neck.

“Yolei!” the real Aquilamon cried. “Don’t let them beat you! Fight back! You can do it! I know you can!”


Matimon stared up at BossAquilamon in wonder and confusion. One one hand, he was awed to see the virus in action and the terrifying final product. But why did Yoleimon disappear like that? Did she fuse into BossAquilamon? Or was she just completely gone forever?

The surviving Armormon knelt down, as if bowing to BossAquilamon. “What is your first order, my liege?” one of the Armormon asked.

BossAquilamon smirked. She gazed at the five Digimon before her. “Kill them,” she said.

“With pleasure. Justice Strike!” the Armormon cried out.

The attack hit the stunned Aquilamon, who de-digivolved back to Hawkmon and fell unconscious. Matt grabbed the fallen Digimon as BossAquilamon’s wings began to glow pitch-black, with hints of blood-red. “Darkness Wing!” BossAquilamon cried, slamming into Palidramon. He was downed in one blow, reverting to Leafmon and Chibomon. Both Digimon were knocked out, just like Hawkmon.

Matt hopped on Garurumon. “We need to retreat!” he shouted.

“No way!” Tai said. “We won’t surrender! Right Greymon?”

“Right,” Greymon agreed. “Nova Blast!”

The attack hit BossAquilamon, but didn’t do a thing. “Why are you attacking Yolei?” Davis demanded.

“It’s just like when I was controlled by the Digimon Emperor,” Greymon said. “Maybe if we defeat her, she’ll turn back to normal.”
“There’s no cure, you idiots!” Kennimon shouted. “Didn’t you hear me?”

Greymon growled and prepared to say something when BossAquilamon charged him as well. He turned back into Agumon and landed a few feet away from Tai.

“Agumon!” Tai cried.

Agumon coughed weakly. “I’m sorry, Tai,” he said. “She’s become too strong. I think she’s a Mega-level.”

Tai looked at BossAquilamon, then at the Armormon, who were aiming their weapons at Agumon. Tai growled, “We don’t have a choice. As much as I don’t like it, we have to get out of here.”

Davis wanted to object, but a single glare from Tai shut him up. The DigiDestined avoided the Armormon’s attacks as they all hopped on top of Garurumon and ran off towards the square.


The Armormon silently obeyed, trailing Garurumon back to the square. Garurumon fired a Howling Blaster at them, killing one but leaving the other one alive. As they finally returned to the square, they found their friends no longer there. They could only find a few mortally wounded Porcupamon.

“Let’s try the hospital!” Tai shouted.

They continued to run as fast as they could, Armormon still following. As they approached the building, they found it relatively undamaged, but the buildings around it were riddled with holes. “Justice Str-” the Armormon began, but he never finished.

“Meteor...Wing,” gasped a voice from above. It was Birdramon, and she sounded incredibly tired. A stream of meteors hit Armormon, finally killing him. Shortly afterwards, a de-digivolved Biyomon crashed to the earth.

“Biyomon!” Ken cried. “Are you all right?”

Biyomon struggled to sit up. “Fine,” she muttered, her head feather drooping. “The others are fine too. We’re in the hospital. We managed to drive them away. But-” here, she began coughing weakly and could not stop for several seconds.

The DigiDestined dismounted Garurumon, who reverted into an exhausted Gabumon. “What happened, Biyomon?” he panted.

Biyomon shivered. She looked around with tears in her eyes. “It’s Monzaemon,” she said. “He’s dead.”

Eleven Rookie Digimon sat on BossAquilamon’s back as she flew towards her destination. One of them- a little yellow Digimon with a bowl cut, golden armor and long claws, stared at the feathers beneath him with anxious green eyes. “We failed,” he said in a raspy voice.

“No we didn’t, Kodimon!” Daevimon assured him. “We managed to capture one of the DigiDestined!”

“But we didn’t get Taimon,” Matimon said sadly.
“The Armormon will handle that,” Karimon assured him.

“Right. Of course they will,” Matimon said sarcastically. He knew it was a lie. He’d seen how easily the Armormon were destroyed by the Chosen Digimon. He knew deep down that they’d never catch them.

“We could do without the sarcastic remarks, brat,” snarled BossAquilamon.

“Sorry,” Matimon said, running a paw through his hair.

The Carriers didn’t want to leave Toy Town without finishing their mission, but they knew what kind of Digimon BossAquilamon was. Once they completed their mission, the DigiDestined would become a General Digimon who would serve alongside Dominomon forever. The Generals’ orders were as good as those coming from Dominomon himself. They were not to be ignored. This did not mean Matimon felt more hopeful about the Domino Army’s mission in Toy Town.

His hand rested in his blond hair, and he suddenly wanted Baronessmon’s hand there, like a mother comforting her child.

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From the shadows, Dominomon heard a voice.

“I have come, Lord Dominomon,” the voice said. “I hope you don’t mind me bringing the Carriers back, but I did not wish to lose them. I had to report to you, anyway, to prove your great plan was working. The DigiDestined managed to retreat, but some Armormon should be bringing them here soon if they didn’t get themselves killed.”

“Who are you?” Dominomon demanded.

The voice snickered. “You do not recognize your own General?” it asked.

A bird-like Digimon entered Dominomon’s field of vision. The evil Digimon was absolutely floored at the sight of it- or, rather, her. “That means the virus-” he began.

“It worked perfectly, Lord Dominomon,” the creature said, bowing her head. “I am no longer one of those puny humans. I am BossAquilamon.”

Dominomon stared deep into BossAquilamon’s loyal eyes. He then began to laugh a cold, cruel laugh. It echoed all over his chamber and filled BossAquilamon with joy.

She could not help joining in.
Matimon here. Today, I began my mission to bring the Domino Army towards the utopia everyone’s striving for. But the DigiDestined are really powerful. One of their Digimon killed an Armormon in one shot! Karimon and Yoleimon cooked up a plot to catch the DigiDestined. Using her Wonder Purr, Karimon made the DigiDestined more receptive to our way of thinking, but not for long. At least Yoleimon managed to get to her DigiDestined in time, and that human girl became General BossAquilamon. But Yoleimon disappeared after that. I still don’t know what happened to her. I’m starting to wonder if Taimon had a point that night...

So that’s a Digivice?” Taimon asked.

He was studying the tiny robotic gadget in Kari’s hand with great interest. He traced the edge of it with his right claw and received a sudden burst of energy.

The fighting outside woke Taimon up shortly after he closed his eyes. The two humans and three Digimon were afraid, but Kari, Gomamon and Gatomon hid it quite well. They talked with Joe and Taimon to get their minds off of the din outside. Every once in a while, the sound of gunfire would make them jump anyway.

The door suddenly burst open. Gatomon and Gomamon leapt in front of Taimon, ready to defend him. They relaxed when they saw it was merely a few of the DigiDestined. “Where is everyone else?” Kari asked worriedly.

Biyomon sighed sadly. “I’m not sure,” she said. “Things got a bit crazy after we lost Monzaemon.”

“What?” Kari, Joe, Gomamon and Gatomon all said in unison.

“Monzaemon?” Taimon asked. “Who’s that?”

“He’s the mayor of this town,” Gomamon explained. “He’s a friendly Digimon who would do anything to help a Digimon or toy in need.”

“And now he’s-” Taimon began.

“Gone,” Tai confirmed, clenching his fists.

Biyomon began to shake violently. Kari knelt beside her. “What happened, Biyomon?” she asked gently, stroking the soft pink feathers.

Biyomon blinked the tears from her eyes. “I’m sorry,” she said. “I’ll try to explain.”

“Meteor Wing!” Birdramon destroyed another wave of Porcupamon, then soared high above the battlefield to assess her current situation. The humans were still safe, huddled under the debris. Monzaemon’s toy soldiers were sprawled out all over the square, out of commission. A few stubborn ones were flailing their limbs to no avail.

Monzaemon himself stood in the center of the square, surrounded by eight Armormon. He’d long ago given up on Hearts Attack and was unleashing powerful punches that not even Togemon had
seen before. They were far more effective at destroying the Armormon, but Monzaemon’s energy was running lower and lower. His punches were sloppier each time.

Birdramon swooped over to assist Monzaemon when three Armormon snuck up behind him and unleashed a barrage of bullets at his legs. The attack brought the shocked Monzaemon to his knees. The Armormon proceeded to crawl all over him like metal ants.

“Oh no,” Birdramon thought. “I can’t get at them without hurting Monzaemon!”

By this time, Kabuterimon noticed what was going on. “Beetle Horn Atta-gah!” he cried as another Armormon tackled him, sending him flying across the square.

The Armormon swarming Monzaemon simultaneously pointed their weapons at the fallen teddy bear. “Any last words, you yellow freak?” demanded one of the Armormon, who seemed to be the unofficial leader.

Monzaemon tried in vain to shrug the creatures off of him. “Do what you want to me, but you’ll never get Toy Town!” he declared. “The DigiDestined will protect it!”

“Monzaemon!” Mimi wailed as the lead Armormon used one of its clawed feet to rip open Monzaemon’s back. It stuck its gun in the newly opened hole and prepared to fire when dark energy poured out of the wound. As soon as it struck Armormon, he was deleted. The other Armormon tried to get away, but they were too slow. The dark energy consumed them all with the ravenous appetite of a starved serpent. The entire time, Monzaemon’s eyes flickered like broken headlights as his body began to shatter into data. His face was contorted in agony.

“Monzaemon!” Mimi cried again. She prepared to run towards him, but TK grabbed her arm.

“If you just run out there, that weird stuff will get you,” TK said sternly.

“I don’t care!” Mimi sobbed. “Someone needs to help him!”

“I don’t think there’s anything we can do, Mimi,” Izzy said sadly.

The last of Monzaemon’s body disappeared, and the dark energy vanished with it. The Chosen Digimon were fortunate enough to avoid the attack, but they were all frozen with horror. The Domino Army used this as an opening and began to fire at them.

After that, everything became a blur. Birdramon remembered getting separated and fighting alongside Kabuterimon for a while. Eventually, she lost track of even him. She was alone, near the hospital, when she heard a commotion coming from that direction. Afraid the hospital might be under attack, she flew over to see some of her friends running from some Armormon. Sora was not amongst them, and she didn’t know where the kids or Digimon from the square were.

Birdramon was so tired that she was ready to drop out of the sky, but she had to do something to save them. With the last of her power, she gathered flames around her great orange wings. She flapped feebly, but it was enough to destroy the enemy. Birdramon then shrank back down to Biyomon and entered a terrifying freefall, Monzaemon’s pain-filled face burned into her brain.

Kari held the shaken Biyomon in her arms as the little pink Digimon finally began to weep silently. “Where’s Yolei?” Kari asked.

Tai and the others froze. Taimon sat up, looked down at Hawkmon, then looked directly at Tai.
“They got her,” he said. It was a statement of fact, not a question.

Tai nodded. He then proceeded to explain everything that happened that day to the best of his ability, from the start of the battle to their hasty retreat towards the hospital.

“Is there anything we can do?” Ken asked Taimon.

“Not that I know of,” Taimon said. “Oh, this is terrible! Terri- ow!” He clutched his injured arm and flopped back down on the bed.

“Now what do we do?” Gabumon asked wearily.

“Toy Town seems clear for now,” Tai said. “There’s not much we can do right now except rest.”

“But what about TK and the others?” Matt asked.

“We’ll look in the morning,” Tai said. “We’re all pooped right now. The Digimon have to rest. And so do we. I don’t even think we have it in us to look for a TV at the moment, so we’re gonna have to spend the night here.”

Joe glanced nervously out the window. “The Domino Army might come back,” he said.

“Then Gatomon and I will take care of them,” Gomamon said. “We didn’t fight, remember? We’ll keep everyone safe if they do come back!”

“There were a lot of them,” Agumon said nervously. “And after Yolei transformed, she had the strength of a Mega Digimon. She single-handedly defeated almost all of us. Even Palidramon couldn’t beat her.”

Upon mentioning Yolei’s transformation and subsequent betrayal, the room fell silent. Ken retreated to a nearby corner and hugged his knees to his chest. Silence covered the room like a heavy blanket. Human and Digimon alike quietly found a corner of the room and collapsed in exhaustion, unable to say or think anything else.

Finally, only Kari, Gatomon and Gomamon remained awake. The Digimon were keeping watch at the door. Kari was half-focused on Ken, who fell asleep huddled in the corner. She shifted her gaze to Tai, who was asleep near the door. He was as far away as he could get from Taimon, who lay on his back. He’d injured himself to warn them of what was to come. Kari thought that good would triumph over evil once more, and the bonds of their friendship would prevent any conversions.

How naive she was.

With her DNA Digivolution partner gone, it was difficult to go to sleep. She kept thinking about her. When she wasn’t thinking about Yolei, she was thinking about the other kids and Digimon in the room. Kari already missed Yolei deeply. What would she do without the others? Davis? TK? Tai? Her stomach churned thinking about it. It took several hours for her to finally fall asleep.

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Meanwhile, a campfire was slowly dying.

The flame was not too far from Toy Town. Sora, Mimi, Izzy, TK, Cody and their Digimon friends were all gathered around it, huddling for warmth. Sora was gazing into space. Everyone had their Digimon- even if they were the powerless Tokomon and Tsubumon- except for her. Biyomon was missing, and they weren’t able to find her. She could only hope the other kids had her and not the
If the Domino Army had her—oh! She didn’t even want to think about it. They were probably torturing her. Judging by their cruel murder of Monzaemon, she didn’t put torture beneath them. Of course, Biyomon could still be safe somewhere, but Sora couldn’t help but worry anyway.

Sora glancedSadly at the huge, colorful mass that blocked the only entrance to Toy Town. The entire reason they were out in the cold and not in Toy Town united with their friends was because of one Porcupamon.

Everything was hard to follow after Monzaemon’s death. The entire area erupted into violent fighting. Eventually, Sora could not see Birdramon anymore. Kabuterimon returned after a brief absence that worried Izzy, but Birdramon never returned. She didn’t think much of it at the time. She simply assumed Birdramon was lost in the madness. Perhaps she was on the ground—a rarity for her, but possible.

Soon, all that remained was a single Porcupamon. Kabuterimon and Togemon were both exhausted, and returned to their original forms. That left Shakkoumon, who chased the single Porcupamon to the outskirts of Toy Town. Like fools, the kids followed, collecting their Digimon along the way.

Porcupamon stood just outside of Toy Town. Everyone followed it as it slowly backed away. Suddenly, it picked up speed and raced inside the borders of Toy Town. Shakkoumon found no need to re-enter the gates, and neither did the kids. It was just one grunt.

“Justice Beam,” Shakkoumon said, firing his red laser.

The Porcupamon dodged again and again before finally being deleted, but not without a cost. The missed attacks caused buildings to crumble and debris to fall in the DigiDestined’s path. Shakkoumon turned back into two Digimon again and fell next to their partners, their energy so spent that they could barely keep their eyes open.

The five DigiDestined stared at the barrier numbly for a long time. If they had more powerful Digimon with them, the barrier would not be an issue. As it was, they only had four exhausted Digimon, two of which were merely babies. They would have to wait until tomorrow to get past the barrier.

And on top of that, Birdramon really was missing.

“And has anyone seen my partner?” Sora asked, her voice surprisingly crackly.

“No,” Izzy panted in reply. “I haven’t seen her since Monzaemon—”

Upon mentioning Monzaemon’s death, a horrible wave of sadness crashed over the little group. Mimi couldn’t handle it. She began to cry, holding tightly to Palmon. “Mimi, don’t cry,” Palmon said softly. “You’re making me cry.” Shortly after this, Palmon began to sob as well.

The other four DigiDestined and their partners knew better than to interrupt Mimi. Sora, Tsubumon and Tokomon stayed with her while the others went off to look for food and firewood. Tokomon and Tsubumon were bawling, partly from hunger and partly from grief. Sora wanted to cry too, but she had to be strong and keep a lookout, just in case more Domino Army goons arrived on the scene. Fortunately, none did.
The second the campfire was set up and some strange fruits were served, Sora finally permitted herself to weep.

The tears dried ages ago, but everyone was still having trouble sleeping. Palmon suddenly jumped when the bushes rustled. A chubby green Digimon emerged from its hiding place and entered the campsite. The Digimon had no face, merely a screen. It wore a weathered backpack and a belt with various pouches. “Greetings, DigiDestined,” it said in a male voice from a speaker at the base of its screen.

Palmon and Tentomon immediately became more cautious. “What kind of Digimon is that?” Izzy asked.

“That’s a Monitamon,” Tentomon explained. “They’re sneaky Digimon that spy on people. And where there’s one, there’s probably more.”

“It’s just me!” the Monitamon insisted, waving his hands about. “I swear! I was part of the Domino Army, but I left them before they fed me to the Fangmon. And get this- I saw one of the Carrier Digimon in the woods, looking for you. I wanted to warn you before he arrived.”

“Do you know where he is?” Cody asked.

“He’s lurking around Toy Town, but he was headed this way,” Monitamon said. “I know a safe place where he won’t find you. Follow me!”

The Monitamon waddled off into the woods with the gait of a chubby toddler. Mimi and Sora began to follow him when Cody asked, “Are you sure we can trust him?”

“He said he ditched the Domino Army,” TK said, cradling a sleeping Tokomon in his arms. “I think we can trust him.”

The bushes rustled again, causing the DigiDestined to leap into a blind panic. They raced after the Monitamon as fast as they could. The Monitamon led them deeper and deeper into the woods, moving with surprising swiftness for its size and weight.

They were so busy following it that they did not see the pair of golden eyes watching them.

An hour before, Matimon attended a celebration welcoming the new General, BossAquilamon. It wasn’t too grand, but it was highly important. The entire Domino Army gathered to meet her and pledged their allegiance to her.

Matimon remained relatively silent the whole time, his attention focused on both the bouncy Tiikeimon and the sullen Kodimon. Kodimon had been unusually moody since the Carriers were forced to retreat. This made sense to Matimon. He was a stubborn, prideful Digimon and didn’t like leaving things unfinished.

The very second the formal ceremony ended and wild partying began, Kodimon ran over to the nearest Monitamon and began whispering something to him. The Monitamon seemed to refuse at first, but Kodimon offered something that Matimon could not clearly see. Perhaps it was food? Or maybe DigiDollars? The Monitamon were so weird that it could have been an old screw! Whatever it was, this changed the creature’s attitude, and they began to walk away.
Curiosity seized Matimon, and he followed them down Infinity Mountain. With most of the Domino Army celebrating, the Carriers and the Monitamon were able to leave unnoticed. They progressed silently towards Toy Town. Instead of returning to the town, however, they stopped in a clearing covered in dense fog. If Matimon did not have superior hearing and smell, he would have lost Kodimon and his friend. Fortunately, he was able to overhear their conversation.

“I’ll wait here,” Kodimon said. “You go find the DigiDestined and bring them here. Say that you left the Domino Army so they trust you. Then I’ll finish what we started back in Toy Town.”

“Got it,” the Monitamon said, hobbling off to find his targets.

Matimon remembered Yoleimon’s disappearance. This sent him barreling off after Monitamon. He didn’t really know what to do when he caught up to him. All he knew was that he had to do so before Kodimon did anything weird. After all, although Kodimon was going along with Lord Dominomon’s plot, he wasn’t authorized to leave when he did. Maybe if he stopped Monitamon, got Kodimon to turn around, then they’d be in slightly less trouble than they were already in.

At the same time, part of him wanted to know if the blond haired boy was there. That boy was his DigiDestined. He knew it. Thinking of the boy made him understand Kodimon a bit better. If he just went ahead and quickly fulfilled his mission, maybe it would be less scary. Maybe it wasn’t disappearing. Maybe it was becoming complete, in a sense. Matimon then remembered the painful-looking transformation. Would he feel it, too?

Heck, maybe the creature would lead him to Taimon! After all, Taimon did say that he wanted to find the DigiDestined. Perhaps he was with them. Maybe he’d be willing to give up and come back home.

Confused and conflicted, Matimon followed Monitamon all through the night.

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Monitamon led the DigiDestined to a foggy clearing. “It’s safe here,” he said. “This fog is so thick that the Carrier will never be able to find you! Wait here until morning.”

“Thanks,” TK said.

The footsteps of the Monitamon became fainter and fainter before he vanished into the fog entirely. Mimi was holding Palmon’s hand and TK and Cody had their partners in their arms. Only Tentomon was not attached, but the buzzing of his wings made his position apparent. “Tentomon,” Izzy whispered. “Can you land? Your wings might give us away.”

“Sorry, Izzy,” Tentomon said. The buzzing died near-instantly.

Tentomon shuffled over to Izzy’s side after trying to find him for several minutes and lay on the hard ground. His friends were soon to follow. It was cold in the clearing—far colder than it had been at the campsite. Sora silently wished Biyomon was there with her. At least her feathers could help keep her warm.

As Sora was musing, she felt something poke her arm. She leapt up and looked around, but could see nothing. Moments later, TK muttered, “Who poked me?”

“You felt something too?” Sora asked.

“Ah!” Palmon cried, clinging tighter to Mimi after she, too, felt a poke.
A twig snapped, causing everyone to spring to their feet. “It looks like we aren’t alo-” Cody began, but he never had the time to finish. Something scraped against his leg. It felt like a normal claw, but quickly morphed into burning pain that caused him to cry a strangled cry and fall to the floor. The clearing suddenly lit up with black and red energy.

“I’m too late,” said a soft voice that sounded something like Matt’s.

Everyone except for Cody and a concerned Tsubumon turned to find a pair of golden eyes blinking at them. “Who are you?” TK demanded.

“I was following Kodimon,” was the reply. “But it sounds like he made contact with his DigiDestined. Technically, this helps Lord Dominomon, but he wasn’t supposed to sneak out. I don’t know. Is this good or bad?”

“Bad, obviously!” TK snapped.

No one could see the transformation, but they could hear bones creaking and stretching. Cody’s voice was quickly reduced to animalistic roars. Occasionally, the black and red light permitted a glance at the transformation. Cody’s face stretched into a short muzzle, while his arms and legs became thick as tree trunks and forced him onto all fours. Some of his fingers and toes fused together, leaving him with jagged claws that steadily lengthened.

A tail grew from the base of Cody’s spine. It grew until it was about eight feet in length. A sphere slowly weaved into existence on the end of the tail, appearing layer by patient layer. Once it was in place, spikes suddenly burst from it like flowers from soil. As the transformation wound on, Tsubumon bounced up and down helplessly as the other kids called Cody’s name, but it did nothing.

“Okay,” the soft, Matt-but-not-Matt voice said suddenly. “I’m just going to go ahead and do it.”

“Do what?” TK asked.

The voice sighed. “I’m really nervous,” he said. “But I’m just gonna go ahead and transform another one of you.”

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As soon as the words escaped Matimon’s lips, panic filled the clearing. Despite his enhanced hearing and smell, he couldn’t see any better than anyone else in the fog. Like Kodimon, he would just have to get lucky.

Putting his nervousness regarding his destruction by the wayside, he lunged at the person who just spoke, only to trip on a small object he couldn’t see. Teeth sank into his leg as a muffled voice growled, “Leef Tee-Kehf alof!”

Matimon howled in pain and tried to shake his assailant off to no avail. “Poison Ivy!” cried a female voice. Vines lashed out of the fog and grabbed Matimon’s arm.

Matimon was fully terrified now, but he knew where the vine-user was thanks to the sound of her voice. He gazed in that direction. “Glowing Blaze!” he shouted, his eyes glowing white. He inhaled deeply before firing a blast of white flame from his mouth. The execution of this attack took about two seconds and hit its target before she had time to react. The vines released his arm instantly. A voice called out, “Palmon!” as Matimon finally managed to free himself from the original Digimon’s iron grip.

Matimon raced around the clearing on all fours, grabbing at anything he could. He found, in no
particular order, a rock, a tree, another hostile Digimon (which promptly electrocuted him), two humans that were not the correct match and rough, scaly skin that made him freeze the second he touched it. There was a loud cough. Matimon began to nervously back away, but something grabbed him by the collar. He was lifted into the air and silently carried off into the night.

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“After him!” TK shouted as Tokomon leapt in his arms.

Sora found Tsubumon rather quickly and held tight to him as they followed Cody’s heavy footsteps out of the clearing. The fog slowly began to recede as the group progressed towards Infinity Mountain. As the fog disappeared, they could make out the vague shape of Cody’s new form, but couldn’t see all the details. Whatever it was, it was quite big, standing at three times the height of a grown man.

“Please listen, Mister General, sir!” the voice- which was clearly one of the Carriers- begged desperately. “I was just trying to-”

“Shut up,” grumbled a rough voice. It was as raspy as Cody’s was, but far deeper.

The DigiDestined silently followed the creature, not daring to make a single sound. As soon as they reached the base of the mountain, “Cody” spit the Carrier out. He did not make any attempt to run. “Cody” then poked at the mountain until he found a strange rock. Upon pressing it, a secret door opened, bathing the world in golden light.

Now Cody’s new form could clearly be seen. The beast bore a great resemblance to Ankylomon. He was mostly light brown, with skin with the look and texture of sandpaper. A smooth shell made of bone sat on his back, and the club on the end of his aild and horns were made of the stuff as well. Red spikes coated the creature, and each thick leg ended in three long, red claws.

“Now,” rumbled the creature.

The bushes suddenly rustled as several red, wolf-like Digimon leapt from them, surrounding the small group of DigiDestined. “Wha-” TK began.

The Ankylomon-monster turned around. Red eyes glowed brightly in his hideous head, which looked like a skull. A red wolf forced the Carrier towards the open door, while its friends did the same with the DigiDestined and their Digimon.

“Oh no you don’t!” Tentomon cried, flying above the group. His wings began to buzz as he cried, “Super Shoc-”

“Blast Coffin!” One of the wolf Digimon attacked, knocking Tentomon out in a single hit and sending him spiraling into Izzy’s arms. The other Digimon became fearful after seeing what had become of their friend from just one hit.

“Take them inside,” “Cody” growled. “Lord Dominomon wants to see them.”

“Cody, stop this!” TK cried. “This- this isn’t funny!”

The monster laughed a deep, rumbling laugh. “This is not a joke,” he said. “I am MasterAnkylomon now. And soon, you will join me as Lord Dominomon’s eternally loyal generals.”

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The Domino Army was excited. They gained not just one illustrious General, but two. On top of that, they had more DigiDestined in their custody. And, best of all, all of this was accomplished in the same day! Most of the Domino Army celebrated this late into the night.

Not everyone, however, was partying. Many Digimon were left to guard the many entrances and exits to their base. Some were assigned to the dungeons where the unconverted kids and their Digimon were kept. And Matimon sat, alone and afraid, in Dominomon’s chambers. He told Dominomon the entire story, from Kodimon and Monitamon leaving to MasterAnkylomon’s return.

“That Monitamon is fortunate,” Dominomon said. “He came back without anyone realizing he’d left. Because he was able to bring back a General, he will live. However-” Here, the evil Digimon’s eyes narrowed. “-you came back empty handed. Now, as a Carrier, you are too valuable to kill. However, that does not mean you won’t be severely punished.”

“What?” Matimon cried. “No please-”

His cries fell on dead ears. “Ashes Ashes,” Dominomon intoned. A dark fog filled the room, completely obscuring all of Matimon’s senses. He could not see. He could not hear. He could feel nothing but cold and smell nothing but decaying bodies.

Matimon knew this attack quite well. The Carriers experienced it as a form of discipline since they were very small. Whoever fell victim to this attack did not die, but they were lost in a haze similar to death itself.

“No!” Matimon cried. “Not that again! Not-”

The rest of his statement was lost to a gut-wrenching howl of pain, followed by a wave of nausea. He proceeded to vomit on the spot, the rank stench filling every corner of the room. Dominomon watched him suffer, a bored expression on his face. Poor Matimon vomited at least two more times before the dark fog lifted. Matimon dry heaved once more, even though there was nothing left in his stomach to throw up. At last, he fell face down on the cold floor, narrowly avoiding the puddle of vomit nearby. As his vision faded to black again, the last thing he saw was Dominomon’s disapproving gaze.
Lost in Paradise

Hey, it’s Matimon again. Yesterday was pretty crazy. We captured some of the DigiDestined, and one of the Monitamon guarding them spread a rumor that Monzaemon, Toy Town’s mayor and guardian, got deleted in the big battle there. When General BossAquilamon arrived, we had a big party, which Kodimon snuck out in the middle of with a Monitamon in tow. Using the Monitamon to lull the DigiDestined to a foggy clearing, he completed his mission, creating MasterAnkylomon. As for me, I steeled myself to complete my mission realy quick before I thought too much about Taimon or disappearing. But I failed. Instead, I got Lord Dominomon really mad at me, and he unleashed his awful Ashes Ashes attack. I’m not gonna get him mad ever again...

The afternoon sun steadily trickled into the hospital room. It shone directly on Leafmon, who woke up nestled in Ken’s arms. Ken must have woken up at some point and picked him up. That wasn’t his main concern. His main concern was that he was starved. And, like all babies, he expressed his starvation by crying loudly enough to wake up everything in a five-mile radius.

Ken was the closest to him, so he was the first to awaken. Chibomon was next, and he decided—whether through his own hunger or pure mischief—to add to the crying. Before long, there was not a single soul in the room who wasn’t awake, grumpily staring at the culprits as they rubbed their eyes.

“Good morning to you, too,” Tai muttered, running a hand through his wilder-than-normal hair.

Taimon coughed weakly as he opened his eyes. “Haven’t heard that noise since I was a baby Digimon,” he said softly. He rubbed his eyes and let out a yawn.

Before long, everyone was awake. The disaster of yesterday seemed so long ago now that they were fully rested. One thing was certain— they had things to find. First, they had to find food. Then they had to find the others. Finally, they had to find Dominomon and defeat him before he could cause more harm.

“Hey, Taimon,” Davis said, asking a question to make things a bit easier. “Where is Dominomon?”

“He’s at the top of Infinity Mountain, not too far from here,” Taimon replied.

“Why do all the evil Digimon like to make their home base up there?” Tai wondered, remembering that Devimon and Piedmon also took up residence atop the large mountain. “Well, anyway, let’s find food. I’m sure there’s something in Toy Town for the babies to eat.”

Joe sat beside Taimon and examined him more closely. “Someone has to stay behind and watch Taimon,” he said.

“I will,” Ken said. He hadn’t moved from his position in the corner.

“So will I,” Kari added.

“I’m going to stay, too,” Joe said. “There needs to be a doctor around, just in case.”

“I guess that just leaves Matt, Davis and I to go hunt down the food,” Tai said. “Do you want to come, Biyomon? We might find Sora.”

Biyomon nodded. “Sure,” she said. “I’d rather be with you looking for Sora than sitting her worrying
about her.”

Joe walked over to Davis and held out his hands. “Chibomon should stay here in case the Domino Army is still hiding someplace,” he said.

“But-” Davis began.

“Joe’s right,” Tai said. “We can’t be worrying about trying to protect him if the Domino Army comes back.”

Davis growled and handed his partner to Joe. “Take good care of him,” he said, following the others out the door. He stopped in the doorway, taking one last look at his defenseless partner before leaving.

This left Ken, Joe, Kari, Gomamon, Gatomon, Taimon and the two babies in the room. Gomamon and Gatomon immediately took their place by the door, fully ready for a leftover goon to arrive. Chibomon and Leafmon continued to wail, their cries being the only thing in the room. Ken rocked Leafmon gently a few times to try and get him to calm down, but it did little.

Time slowly trickled by, but Tai’s group did not return, nor did the babies cease their high-pitched wailing. “They better come back soon,” Gatomon said. “That crying is driving me crazy!”

“I feel you,” Joe agreed.

Kari turned to Taimon, who was still weak but awake due to the crying. “So, Taimon,” she said, trying to distract everyone from the babies. “How did you escape?”

“Wha?” Taimon mouthed.

“I asked how did you escape?” Kari repeated, louder this time to get over the crying.

Taimon sighed. “Well, that’s a bit of a long story,” he said. “But I’m happy to tell it.”

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Taimon used to be a normal member of the Domino Army. He worshipped the ground the great Lord Dominomon walked on. Like the other Carriers, he was excited about his future, but didn’t really know what it would be. All he knew was it would be a happy paradise, and who didn’t want that?

Yes, things were simple back then. But, of course, they weren’t going to stay that way.

One fine day, Taimon was wandering around Infinity Mountain. As a Carrier, he had both a lot of range to roam and a lot of free time, so he explored Infinity Mountain until he knew almost every inch. The few inches he didn’t know were “off limits”, but Taimon was nothing if not a curious Digimon, and he wanted to know what was hiding just out of his reach.

One of these areas was the meeting room where Dominomon met with his assistants Baronessmon and Reevemon. And that was where Taimon was headed. Part of him was curious, but another part of him was hungry. He couldn’t reach his favorite DigiTreats in the kitchen, so he wanted to find the much taller Baronessmon, who would always help him reach the snack. Unfortunately, she was in the meeting room. But Taimon was hungry, curious and determined all at once. With that combination, nothing could stop him from sneaking past the sleeping Porcupamon and Fangmon that “guarded” the room and entering.
The room contained a stone table at its center, with two thrones surrounding it. Dominomon’s seat was not visible, for the great Digimon liked to keep to the shadows at the far end of the room. Taimon could clearly see the beautiful Baronessmon seated upon one of the thrones.

Upon the other throne was Reevemon, a weird but brilliant Digimon who was responsible for the creation of the Carriers. He was an odd-looking Digimon that resembled a huge, blobby puppet with small, shiny eyes and a wide grin. Its skin was torn and hastily stitched together. However, this puppet was not his main body. His main body was the broken-down cat puppet that was about a third of the larger puppet’s size and rode on its back. This creature had wires and stuffing loose and only one working yellow eye. The other eye bugged out of the cat’s head, like a horrific jack-in-the-box.

“We have just acquired more servants for our army from the desert,” Baronessmon reported. “We were even able to capture a Megadramon and Gigadramon.”

“Excellent,” Dominomon said, his deep voice echoing throughout the dark chamber.

Hearing Dominomon gave Taimon shivers. As great as he was, he was always frightening to see or hear. Taimon dove behind a nearby rock, where he hid as he continued to eavesdrop. Maybe Dominomon would leave to use the bathroom and he would have a chance to get Baronessmon alone. But then there was still Reevemon. Taimon was now aware he made a royal mistake, but he was still determined to get his snack. So he stayed behind his rock and continued to listen in.

“When are we gonna be done capturing Digimon?” Reevemon asked in an expressionless, echoing voice. “It just seems meaningless at this point. The Carriers are ready to go.”

“Well, it’s simple, Reevemon,” Dominomon explained. “Not only to we buff up our own forces, but the captures will serve as bait for the DigiDestined. Hearing that we are taking innocent Digimon and forcing them to serve us, they will arrive to try and save the day. That’s when we strike.”

“It’s too bad the Carriers will disappear,” Reevemon said. “I worked so hard on that virus.”

“It’s for the best, anyway,” Baronessmon said, inspecting her nails. “We won’t need them after we get our Generals. They’d just be more mouths to feed.”

“More mouths to feed?” Taimon thought. “What is she talking about? Baronessmon would never say that about us. She loves us!”

“I agree with Baronessmon,” Dominomon said. “Once the Carriers make contact with their DigiDestined, they shall release the virus in their DigiCores and vanish. Once they see this, they may become reluctant to carry out their mission. Therefore, we must talk about the real reason I called you here today. How do we deceive the Carriers into staying on track, should we fail to obtain all of our Generals at once?”

“Let me handle it,” Baronessmon purred. “They love me, and they think I love them. I’ve spoiled them since they hatched, you know. I have them wrapped around my finger. All I have to do is say that they’ll be joining a greater being and they’ll just go along with it.”

“So, instead of vanishing, they’ll be reborn as the Generals?” Reevemon asked.

“Exactly,” Baronessmon replied. “But in reality, they’ll be off to Primary Village if they’re lucky.”

“They’re planning on killing us!” Taimon shouted in his head. “Were they always planning to do that? Oh my God, I don’t want to die!”
This sudden realization plunged the little Digimon into the deepest depths of terror. Taimon swore that Dominomon could smell his sweat, hear his heart pumping a mile a minute. Any second, he’d come racing out and delete him in a fit of anger. But Dominomon never emerged from the shadows. Taimon simply waited behind the rock and held his breath. His snack was completely forgotten. Now, he was trying to see if any more information could be obtained from this conversation.

“And what of this world once we enter Phase Two?” Reevemon asked. “I propose we study the Generals and continue to augment them until they become the strongest of all Digimon.”

“They may be strong, but I shall not allow them to surpass me, Reevemon!” Dominomon boomed. His voice shook the room like thunder. Taimon let out an involuntary squeak, and he swore that red eyes briefly flashed in the darkness, aimed directly at him. Reevemon looked equally terrified, sharing Taimon’s fear of being deleted on the spot.

Fortunately for both Digimon, Dominomon was not interested in deleting anyone. “No,” the dark Digimon purred. “The Generals shall make all of the Digimon our slaves. And with the Digital World under control, taking the Real World will be no problem at all. Humans and Digimon alike will know the true bliss of obedience. They will be unable to disobey us. Just like those foolish DigiDestined children will be once they become our Generals.”

“Wait a minute. That doesn’t sound like a paradise,” Taimon thought. “That sounds super-evil. I wouldn’t want to live in a world where I have no freedom.”

Taimon heard enough. He slunk out of the room, past the still-sleeping guards and right to the small cave which served as his room. His room was very simple, featuring only a bed made of leaves in the corner. A few bones from leftover meals of DigiMeat littered the room.

Taimon kicked the bones aside and collapsed on his bed, squeezing his eyes shut. It was a bad dream. He’d open his eyes and everyone would be normal again. He would have a grand mission to build a utopia, and he wouldn’t die. Everything would be okay.

He opened his eyes, but the conversation lingered in his mind. It was real. It really happened. He thought back to his fears of being deleted. They were not unfounded. Dominomon would delete any Digimon that angered him. Baronessmon explained that those Digimon were bad Digimon who could have possibly hurt him or his friends, painting Dominomon as a protector.

But what if they weren’t? What if they were really good Digimon who discovered the same awful truth he did and stood up for themselves?

Part of Taimon was still convinced that the whole thing was a joke, that it didn’t really happen. He wanted to ask one of them and find out for sure. Dominomon was, of course out of the question. Reevemon was too smart. He’d see what Taimon was trying to do and tattle immediately, which would lead to the same messy results of trying to talk to Dominomon.

That just left Baronessmon. The Digimon that considered him just another mouth to feed and nothing more. Taimon really didn’t want to believe that part. Baronessmon was like a mother to him, and he didn’t want to be without a mother. But Taimon’s desire for justice was stronger. He decided to approach her later in the day.

For now, he just needed to sleep. He didn’t have the strength for anything else.

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“Baronessmon?” Taimon asked.
The humanoid Digimon reached for the DigiTreats instinctively, but Taimon held up a clawed hand to stop her. They were in the kitchen. Here, they were alone. Here, he could get the answers.

“Baronessmon,” Taimon repeated. “What’s the new world going to be like, when I accomplish my mission?”

“What will it be like?” Baronessmon asked. “Hm. Well, I suppose it will be a better world for humans and Digimon.”

That wasn’t specific enough for Taimon. He knew he was treading on thin ice, and so chose his next words carefully so Baronessmon would not know that he’d been eavesdropping. “How would it be a better world?” he asked.

“You know how you like to play on the cliffs of the mountain?” Baronessmon asked. Taimon nodded, recalling all the fun times he spent jumping from cliff to cliff with his friends. “Well, Taimon, what if you fell and hurt yourself? That would be bad, right? So Lord Dominomon wants to create a world where that doesn’t happen. It can’t happen, because he doesn’t want it to. If everyone follows Lord Dominomon’s will, no one can get hurt. Isn’t that a better world than one where you can get hurt?”

“YeasoundsgreatIgottagobye!” Taimon blurted out all at once.

Taimon raced out of the room at breakneck speed. He now had solid proof that the Domino Army was actually up to no good. A world where no one could play amongst the cliffs? How boring and sad! Taimon had to stop it. But how could he? He was just one measly little Rookie, not a big strong Mega level. And it wasn’t like he could digivolve on command like the Digimon who were partnered to the DigiDestined.

"Wait. The DigiDestined! Of course!" Taimon thought. "They can defeat Lord Dominomon. Wait a sec. I’m not gonna call him “Lord” ever again. He doesn’t deserve that title! The DigiDestined will respond to all the captures going on and come here. Then I’ll warn them before they fall into a trap. That’s what I’ll do. And I’ll take the other Carriers with me. I won’t let them stay tangled up in this scheme!"

It was harder to convince them than he thought.

There was always someone around- be it a guard or Baronessmon or even Reevemon. Taimon was still able to get each Carrier alone and reveal the true nature of the Domino Army, but no-one believed him.

“Disappear?” Kenmon laughed. “Please, Taimon, there’s no chance of that happening. Stop worrying, you idiot! You sound like Jyoumon!”

“I think your proposition is entirely preposterous,” Izimon said. “There is no way the Domino Army doesn’t care for us. If they didn’t, we’d be living down in the dungeons, not treated as kindly as we are.”

“Taimon, I don’t want to say this, but I don’t believe you,” Karimon said. It was the disbelief in her soft voice that hurt the most.

All day long, Taimon searched high and low for Matimon. If he was going to get support, it would be from him. But he couldn’t find the white wolf Digimon anywhere. So he was forced to head out alone. He didn’t want to wait one more day. That night, he was going to break free of this prison.
Taimon snuck out of his room after lying idle for a bit after the sun went down. He had no possessions to bring with him- a blessing in this case for it lightened his load. The only thing he carried were a few legs of DigiMeat to bribe any guards he met into letting him pass. Taimon carefully snuck into the empty hallway and made his way towards the exit. Halfway there, he bumped into the very Digimon he’d been looking for earlier that day.

“Matimon!” Taimon shouted.

“Shh, Taimon,” Matimon said groggily. “You’ll wake everybody up.”

“Oh. Sorry,” Taimon whispered. He sure as heck didn’t want that any more than Matimon did, although for a different reason. “Matimon, I figured out something about this place. Something bad. Dominomon is evil and he’s planning on turning everyone into his slaves.”

“Lord Dominomon would never do that,” Matimon said.

“Matimon, what I’m about to tell you, you can’t tell anyone else,” Taimon hissed. “Never, you hear?”

Startled by the urgency in his friend’s voice, Matimon said, “What?”

“I was in the meeting room,” Taimon said. “I wanted a snack and needed Baronessmon to help me get it. Plus I was bored.”

“So you went in a restricted area?” Matimon asked.

“Yea,” Taimon said. “I overheard they were planning on taking everyone’s freedom away. Not only that, but they said that we’ll be deleted when we meet our DigiDestined. You need to come with me, quick! We can go warn them. That’s why I have all this food- so I can bribe the guards if I see them.”

“Taimon, that’s nonsense,” Matimon said.

“No! Come with me!” Taimon begged.

Taimon grabbed Matimon’s arm with his free hand and began to pull him down the hall. If he couldn’t save any of his other friends, he at least had to save his best friend. Despite all his pulling, Matimon didn’t budge. “Taimon,” he said. “I’m not going.”

“You have to go,” Taimon instead. “I’ll never see you again if you don’t come!”

Matimon shook his arm, causing Taimon to let go and nearly drop the DigiMeat on the floor. “I’m sorry,” Matimon said before racing down the hall at full speed.

Taimon sighed. He knew now that he’d be on this mission entirely alone. So he continued traveling through the sleeping base until he emerged at the foot of Infinity Mountain and barreled to freedom. Taimon only had to use a single hunk of meat on a not-so-bright Porcupamon near the exit that wanted to know where he was headed. Taimon abandoned the rest of the DigiMeat at the foot of the mountain, save for a single leg for himself. He chewed on it as he went. The lizard Digimon didn’t know exactly where the DigiDestined were, but he knew deep down that he’d find them.

By the time morning rolled around, everyone in the Domino Army knew that Taimon was gone.
Taimon finished his tale with a grunt of pain. “So no one believed you, did they?” Kari asked. “That’s so sad.”

“Oh, I think they’ll get it now,” Taimon said. “Y’know how I know? Because someone was transformed and Tai’s group came back to tell the tale. They weren’t changed, that’s for sure. So the others probably saw what happens. Maybe now, they’ll believe me.”

The room was filled with the softest of snoring. Taimon’s story apparently put Chibomon and Leafmon to sleep. Leafmon was cuddled in a surprised Ken’s arms, while Chibomon was at the foot of the bed. “Can I see him?” Taimon asked.

“See who?” Kari asked.

“Chibomon,” Taimon replied. “He used to be a Veemon, right?”

“Yes, but when we digivolve to the higher levels, we de-digivolve to our baby forms for a while to recover our strength,” Gatomon explained as she placed Chibomon right next to Taimon’s head.

“And how do you get back to normal?” Taimon asked.

“Food!” Gomamon replied. “Lots and lots of food!”

“Speaking of food, I wonder how my brother is doing?” Kari asked. “I hope he and the others are okay.”

“

“This is so not okay!” Tai shouted, kicking a squeaky donut across the floor.

Toy Town was not meant for humans. It was meant to be a toy paradise. Play food for dolls and toy soldiers and even fuel for the vehicles was abundant in the wrecks of the buildings, but there was no sign of actual food to be seen.

Biyomon gulped nervously when she saw a very familiar toy chest lying on its side. The chest was a bit charred, but it was unmistakably the one that she and the other Chosen Digimon were locked in when poor Monzaemon was turned bad by a Black Gear. Seeing it made memories of claustrophobia bubble to the surface. Her stomach churned, and she was forced to look away.

She turned to see a frustrated Tai, who was busy kicking the donut like a soccer ball in a small frustrated tantrum. Behind him sat a huge toy car. It wasn’t moving, but Biyomon could tell it was still operational from the purr of its engine and its active headlights. In fact, despite most of Toy Town being reduced to rubble, the car seemed entirely undamaged.

“Um, Tai?” Biyomon asked.

“What?” Tai snapped, more than a bit angered from being unable to find food.

Matt now saw what Biyomon saw. “Looks like you’ve got company,” he said with a smirk.

Tai turned around to find the car. “Oh come on!” Tai shouted. “Monzaemon’s dead, Yolei’s gone, I don’t know where half the team is and I can’t even find food for Chibomon and Leafmon! The last thing I wanna see right now is you, ya bucket of bolts.”

The car honked its horn. Though it lacked a face, it seemed hurt. The car rolled away, running over
broken-up pieces of buildings as it went. “Hey, that was a bit much, Tai,” Matt said.

“Sorry,” Tai said. “I’m just at the end of my rope here.”

“Me too,” Davis growled. “I gotta make sure Chibomon and Kari are okay!”

“And we need to set out to find Sora soon, too,” Biyomon said sadly.

There was a low rumbling as the car returned to the scene. It rolled up to Tai and honked excitedly. “No,” Tai said, crossing his arms and turning away. “I don’t want to play with you.”

“Wait a minute, Tai!” Davis shouted. “That car has food!”

“You mean cookies and milk for a dollie?” Tai said in a mocking voice.

“No!” Gabumon said. “It smells real! It’s actual food!”

Tai turned around and saw that it was true. Inside the car was a huge pile of DigiMeat. There was enough for both them and everyone in the hospital to share. Upon seeing and smelling the meat, Tai’s expression softened. “You— you’re trying to help us,” Tai said. “I didn’t realize that. Sorry I snapped at you. It’s just, well, I had a pretty bad time all those years ago and I took it out on you. It was really all because of Devimon that I went through that, not you. Can you forgive me?”

There was a long silence before the car happily honked its horn. Tai was about to lead the toy to the hospital when the flapping and buzzing of wings filled the air. The group looked up, fully prepared for the Domino Army to attack.

Instead, Pegasusmon descended steadily, Tentomon buzzing beside him. On the back of the creature sat TK. A familiar little white-furred wolf boy hugged TK’s waist tightly as Pegasusmon landed.

“That was something else,” Matimon said as he and TK dismounted Pegasusmon, who de-digivolved into Patamon.

“TK!” Matt shouted, rushing up to his brother’s side. Matimon nervously stood aside as Matt raced past. “TK!” Matt repeated. “Are you alright? What happened? Where is everyone else? And why is one of the Carriers with you?”

TK stared at Matt with huge, wild eyes. “It’s a long story,” TK said. “I can explain what happened to the others and why Matimon is with me back at the hospital. But it isn’t pretty.”

“Where is Sora?” Biyomon asked. “At least tell me if she’s alright.”

Tentomon sighed sadly. “I’m sorry, Biyomon,” he said. “TK was the only one to escape the Domino Army’s clutches. Everyone else in our group is gone.”
Heyo, Taimon here! It’s kind of boring now since most of the DigiDestined left to get food for two super-hungry babies. While they were out, I told Joe, Kari, Ken and their Digimon all about my escape. It started when I overheard a conversation between some of the Domino Army’s head honchos. I learned they were up to no good and wanted to control everyone- both humans and Digimon. Unfortunately, my friends didn’t believe me, not even Matimon! But now that they’ve witnessed a transformation, maybe they’ll believe me now. I hope he’s doing okay.

Load after load of DigiMeat was carried up to the hospital room, much to the delight of Chibomon and Leafmon. They were so busy eating that- for once- they weren’t crying. Both returned to their less-demanding In-Training forms before all the food was brought to the room.

Kari was very happy to see TK again and both Gatomon and DemiVeemon were thrilled to see Patamon was alright. There was a bit of confusion regarding Tentomon. Although he was present, Izzy was nowhere to be seen. When questioned, Tentomon just said he didn’t want to talk about it yet and went downstairs to get more food.

The only person from TK’s group not delivering food was Matimon. As soon as he saw Taimon, he ran up to him and gave him a big hug that nearly crushed him. “I’m sorry, I’m sorry, I’m so, so sorry,” Matimon said. “I didn’t have any idea. The Domino Army did horrible things to those kids. They do horrible things to us Carriers, too. But now they’re gonna kill me.”

“The DigiDestined will protect you,” Taimon assured. “You’re gonna be okay now, Matimon!”

“Yea,” Matimon said. “I still can’t say sorry enough.”

When everyone was fed, it was time to address Tentomon’s lack of a partner. “They got Izzy, Mimi and Sora,” TK explained, much to the shock and horror of all present. “I would’ve been changed too, if it wasn’t for Matimon. He helped me escape, and now he’s going to help us fight the Domino Army.”

“You said you’d tell us what happened when you got back,” Tai said. “Can ya tell us now?”

TK nodded, took a deep breath and began.

TK, Mimi, Izzy, Sora and the Digimon were thrown into a large, stinky cell in the bowels of Infinity Mountain. Several stalagmites formed pseudo-bars from all sides except one, where a locked metal door was embedded in the rock-face. The top of the cell was very close to the stalagmites, preventing Tentomon from flying out. With the Digimon still too tired to digivolve, the group of eight were completely, hopelessly trapped.

Tsubumon was wailing at the top of his tiny lungs, desperate for food. “Shut up!” barked the largest of the three guards. The creature did give his name as Aegiochusmon when they first were sent to this cell. He was a hulking monster with the upper half of a man and the lower half of a goat. Twisted horns, jet-black wings and wicked scythes on his arms and tail hinted towards him being a Virus-type of some kind, but not even Tentomon could give any more information on the creature.

The other two were Gladimon- small, round, silver knights who were far less hostile. Tentomon was
able to identify that they were in-training to become virtuous Knightmon, so why they were working with such evil Digimon was a mystery.

The Gladimon were nicer than Aegiochusmon in the sense that they weren’t constantly hostile towards the DigiDestined. Instead, they merely bantered with each other, complaining about being unable to attend the “celebration” because they were on guard duty. A growl from Aegiochusmon was enough to shut them up for a bit, but they went right back to talking once his back was turned.

Izzy examined the cell until his head hurt, but he could not find a way out. TK had his hand at it as well. Sora and Mimi used all their brain-power, but the stalagmites were simply too strong and too close together for any of their ideas to be of use. Even if they got out, there was still the three guards to deal with, and with the Digimon being so tired and Aegiochusmon being such a big question mark, it wasn’t worth it to fight them. There was little they could do but await their fate.

In the middle of all this sulking, TK decided that the Digimon should sleep and recover some of their power. Everyone agreed, and it wasn’t long before the most of the humans were taking a power nap as well.

Therefore, no one saw or noticed Tsubumon. They mostly tuned out the baby Digimon, who was pretty much useless for fighting their way to freedom in his current state. He could not even offer any input on how to get out. But Tsubumon was not as useless as he seemed. He was driven to get out by animalistic hunger, a force which the humans were underestimating.

Tsubumon wailed and wailed and banged on the bars with bubbles and the force of his body, which didn’t do much in the long run. After doing this for a while, Tsubumon was able to locate an opening. It was quite high up. Tentomon found it earlier, but disregarded it because he couldn’t fit.

With a lucky bounce, however, Tsubumon could squeeze through.

Tsubumon jumped into the air towards the opening and surged forward with all his strength. The baby Digimon passed through the hole and fell to the floor with a plop. His landing was soft and the plop itself muffled, so neither the DigiDestined nor the Domino Army noticed him. He proceeded to bounce around the corner, looking for some kind of food.

However, TK- who was struggling to fall asleep- saw the whole thing. He wanted to call Tsubumon and tell him to come back, but too tired to offer up anything beyond a weak “Tsubumon.”. He fell asleep shortly after that.

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Without warning, Matimon began to tell more of the story from his perspective.

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Matimon ran straight to find Baronessmon after his punishment at the claws of Dominomon. He still felt nauseous, even after he recovered from fainting. Maybe Baronessmon would help him feel better. She always did.

Before he could find the regal Digimon, he found Karimon talking to Reevemon. “And so it’s true that we disappear completely?” she asked him sternly.

“Yes, I’m afraid,” Reevemon said seriously. “But you aid the Domino Army in your sacrifice. You become part of something greater- a powerful General. Would you not like to be powerful?”

“I would,” Karimon said. “But-”
‘But’ nothing,” Reevemon said. ‘Buts’ are useful for nothing but creating DigiSludge!”

“I’m a big Digimon now,” Karimon said flatly. “You can call it ‘poop’.”

“Anyway,” Reevemon said, his shifty eyes glancing back and forth. “Look, when I said ‘disappear completely’, I meant your body does. You don’t. Your personality changes a bit to match the persona of a General, but otherwise, you’re still you.”

Reevemon did not sound very convincing to Matimon, but Karimon seemed to buy it. “So I am in charge of the DigiDestined’s body instead of my own?”

“Basically,” Reevemon said.

“But you said we disappear completely,” Karimon said.

“Your body does,” Reevemon insisted. “That is what I meant!”

“Oh. Understood,” Karimon said, now completely pacified. “So about these DigiDestined MasterAnklyomon caught-”

“They will be given to their respective Carriers as soon as possible,” Reevemon proudly announced. “The birth of these four new generals will conclude the ceremony.”

“Have you told them yet?” Karimon asked, her tail twitching nervously.

“They know, and they are prepared,” Reevemon said.

“Okay,” Karimon said sadly. “If they can be prepared, then I can be too.”

“Atta girl,” Reevemon said, patting the cat-girl’s head.

As the two Digimon parted, Matimon found too many things off with Reevemon’s story to accept that he wouldn’t fully disappear. So he prepared to find Baronessmon and get the full truth, but he tripped on something small and squishy. Looking down, he noticed a beige lump with a long ear of sorts, staring up at him with big eyes.

“Tsubu?” the little Digimon asked. It seemed less hurt and more inquisitive.

Matimon had never seen this Digimon before. This newcomer certainly wasn’t a member of the Domino Army. At the same time, he was just a baby. Reporting him as an intruder would only result in his death. But he had to do it. It was his duty.

Matimon somberly picked up the baby Digimon and walked into the center of the party in order to find Baronessmon. Reevemon and Dominomon could deal with the tiny intruder too. But the last conversation Reevemon had with Karimon screamed “two plus two equals fish” and Dominomon’s punishment was still too fresh in his mind. If there was anyone he trusted who could dispose of this baby as painlessly as possible, it was Baronessmon.

As Matimon walked by a huge stack of DigiMeat, the little Digimon wiggled out of his arms and began to gobble down as much as it could. “Hey!” Matimon cried, trying to catch the bouncing creature. But it was no use. The little critter was too small and fast and bouncy. Matimon wound up face-first in the pile of meat, tail in the air and the creature on his head.

“Tsubumon digivolve to- Upamon!” the little Digimon shouted.

The freshly digivolved and now(named) Upamon jumped excitedly about and landed with a plop on
Matimon’s rear. “Ah, that was delicious!” Upamon chirped.

Matimon shook Upamon off of him, then grabbed the new Digimon and ran blindly away from the scene of the crime. “Oh, howdy!” Upamon said cheerfully. “What’s your name?”

“Um, Matimon,” Matimon said.

“I’m Upamon!” the young Digimon chirped. “Well, I was Tsubumon, but I just digivolved. You think you can do me a favor real quick?”

Matimon stopped in his tracks. “What kind of favor?” he asked.

“Well, my friends are locked up in the dungeon,” Upamon explained. “I need help getting them out.”

“Your friends aren’t the DigiDestined, are they?” Matimon asked.

“How’d you guess?” Upamon said. “Their names are Sora and Izzy and TK and-”

“Stop. TK?” Matimon asked, nervousness creeping into his voice. He quickly put two and two together and found that “TK” sounded a lot like the “Tiikei” in “Tiikeimon”. His entire world lurched. If this TK kid was sacrificed tonight, Tiikeimon would enter a strange purgatory that could possibly range between what Reevemon said (which Matimon didn’t fully buy) and complete annihilation. His heart raced as the data deep within his DigiCore urged him to do something to spare the little Digimon such a horrific fate.

“Where are they?” Matimon asked.

“Why, they’re in the dungeon!” Upamon replied.

“I know where that is,” Matimon said. “I’m not allowed there but- oh! Who cares? I have to do something or else Tiikeimon will disappear.”

“Tiikeimon?” Upamon asked. “Is he a friend of yours?”

“Yea,” Matimon replied. “You could say that.”

“Sounds sort of like ‘TK’, ” Upamon said. “I used to DNA Digivolve with his partner, but without Cody, I’m not sure if I can anymore.”

A light bulb suddenly lit up. “I’ve got a plan,” Matimon said. “But you have to do everything I say. Got that?”

“Yes sir!” Upamon replied.

Matimon ran right for the dungeons, unaware that Baronessmon overheard every word he and his new companion said. He thought he saw the edge of a red dress vanish around the corner, but it was quickly attributed to his imagination.

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Matimon fell silent, and TK resumed telling the story from the depths of the dungeon.

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TK slept for a very short amount of time, holding Tokomon in his arms like a stuffed animal.
Suddenly, Aegiochusmon’s began stomping around, which woke up him. The massive Digimon blocked his view of the world outside, but he could still overhear a conversation.

“Hey, Aegiochusmon,” a soft voice asked. TK knew immediately it was the Carrier from the clearing.

“What?” snarled the evil Digimon.

“I have direct orders from Lord Dominomon,” the wolf Digimon explained. “I must take the DigiDestined of Hope and his partner to his chambers immediately.”

“For what reason?” Aegiochusmon inquired.

“A very important one!” chirped a voice.

“Upamon?” TK thought. “How did he digivolve? Who cares? It looks like he went to go get help. But why did he choose that wolf, and why is he only asking for me?”

“What are you?” Aegiochusmon challenged. “You look an awful lot like one of the prisoners.”

“I am not,” Upamon explained. “I am a traveling Digimon, you see, and I wanted to join the Domino Army and share my secrets. I met Matimon here, who wants to help as well. Have you ever heard of DNA Digivolution?”

“I’ve heard of it, but haven’t seen it,” Aegiochusmon replied skeptically.

“The DigiDestined are capable of performing it,” Matimon said. “And Upamon here told Lord Dominomon that MasterAnkylomon once was able to do this. His partner, so to speak, was the DigiDestined of Hope. Their Chosen Digimon combined to become an incredibly strong Digimon. Lord Dominomon wants to transform that DigiDestined in his own chambers, with MasterAnkylomon present, to see what will happen.”

There was a long, sickening pause. “Very well, Carrier,” Aegiochusmon said. “Take them.”

A Gladimon was summoned to open the door, grumbling as he did so. TK nudged Sora in an attempt to wake her, but Gladimon hissed, “Lord Dominomon requests the presence of you alone!”

“But what about my friends?” TK asked.

“You’ll see them later,” Gladimon said.

TK growled. Matimon and Upamon’s escape plan seemed flawless at first, but now it was clear there were some holes. Unless, of course, Matimon devised those holes himself. He needed TK alone for some reason, but for what, he wasn’t certain. TK decided to play along for now and trick Matimon into helping the others.

“Fine,” TK spat. “I’ll come along, but only if I can take Tokomon with me. I think he might be able to help with this DNA Digivolution thing.”

“Deal,” Gladimon said.

TK slowly shuffled out the door, unwilling to leave his friends behind, but he knew that he had no choice now. He walked up to Matimon and Upamon. “Lead the way,” he said.

Matimon led TK further down the hall. As they walked, Tokomon woke up and mumbled, “Whass going on?”
“We’re getting out of here!” Upamon chirped. “Well, I hope we are. There’s some DigiMeat in the next room!”

“Yay!” Tokomon said with a big toothy smile. “I’m really hungry!”

“Er, the Domino Army is everywhere in that room,” Matimon said. “I’ll go get it. You wait here in the hall. If anyone tells you anything, say that Lord Dominomon requested you and that I’m taking you to him, but I’m just going to get something to eat and I’ll be right back. Don’t tell them I’m helping you escape. Okay?” He put Upamon down and started to walk away.

“Okay, but why are you helping us escape?” TK asked. “More importantly, why are you only helping us? Why not Sora or Izzy or Mimi and their Digimon?”

Matimon turned back sadly. “I can’t tell you,” he replied. “It’s personal.”

Matimon disappeared, leaving TK, Tokomon and Upamon alone in the hall. TK slumped against the wall, praying that no-one would come down the hall. He was too focused on trying to fish information out of Matimon and trick him into saving the others. They needed him! They couldn’t stay locked up in that filthy dungeon until the Domino Army decided to change them, too!

TK glanced back in the direction of the dungeon. He wanted to go back that way, but he risked foiling the one escape he had. TK was heavily torn between his desire to escape and his need to save his friends as well. He was still thinking about what he should do when Matimon returned with a single leg of DigiMeat. Tokomon cheered as he jumped at the meat, eating it all in one go.

The second the hungry little Digimon finished swallowing the food, he began to glow. “Tokomon digivolve to- Patamon!” he shouted, returning to his Rookie form.

“Alright,” Matimon said. “Now we have two Rookie-level Digimon and one baby Digimon. There’s a lot of Digimon out there that are Champion level or above. In addition, all the exits are totally blocked.”

Patamon glanced at the ceiling. “What about up?” he asked.

“What do you mean?” Matimon asked, scratching his head.

“Well, maybe I can digivolve and blast a hole in the ceiling,” Patamon explained. “Then we can get out of here without dealing with the guards!”

“You’ll just go further into the mountain,” Matimon said, causing Patamon’s ears to droop. “It won’t work.”

“Actually, it might,” TK said. “It depends on the angle we do it. If we do it straight up, then we’ll go further into the mountain. But if we attack the side of the mountain, then not only can we get out, but we might be able to weaken the Domino Army’s stronghold.”

“They’ll fix that hole quickly,” Matimon pointed out. “It won’t do much to weaken Lord Dominomon’s army.”

“But we still have enough time to get out, right?” Patamon asked hopefully.

Matimon nodded. “We should,” he said. “Everyone will be too shocked to do anything at first. But we have to do it at the right time, in the right place, when everyone’s distracted.” Here, Matimon looked TK dead in the eye. “We have to do it during your friends’ conversions. It’s the only time enough Digimon will be distracted and not notice us.”
“But- wait- you want me to leave them behind?” TK asked.

“We have no choice,” Matimon replied. “I have a friend I need to get out of this place who can fly, but he’s just too small to carry anyone other than maybe Upamon. How many Digimon can Patamon carry when he digivolves?”

“I was thinking I could become Pegasusmon, but I can only carry two people tops that way,” Patamon said.

“Then if TK and I ride Pegasusmon, we can’t get anyone else out of here,” Matimon said.

TK became violently angry at the one-millionth mention of being unable to rescue everyone. “What is your problem?” TK growled. “Why won’t you try to rescue anyone else? Are you really on our side? What is your story, Matimon?”

Matimon shrunk back, startled by TK’s change in temperament. “I- I’m sorry!” he blurted out. “I’m just trying to save Tiikeimon! You’re the one who will be changed by him, and I don’t want him to go away!”

“Well, you didn’t care at all in the clearing,” TK pointed out.

“I- I- I-” It took a while for Matimon to stop babbling and to recover from the series of deep, short breaths he was taking, like he’d just run a marathon. “I’m sorry. Tiikeimon is a dear friend of mine. I have to protect him.”

TK swallowed nervously as his anger melted away. From the determined look in his eyes to the desire to protect his friends, TK could see the Matt in him now more than ever. “Well, Matimon,” he said. “Sora, Izzy and Mimi are my friends, too. We need to help them escape, as well.”

“We could make the hole closer to the ground so they could crawl through,” Patamon suggested.

Matimon sighed deeply, then finally nodded. “Alright,” he said. “We can do that, but we have to be quick. At this point, I suggest waiting for the final part of the ceremony, then blasting a hole in the wall as soon as they’re in the room.”

“Roger that!” Patamon said.

Patamon leapt on TK’s head as TK and Matimon raced down the hall, desperate to begin their plan.
Hiya, Taimon here! I finally met up with Matimon again! It was a real surprise to see him come out of the sky on Pegasusmon’s back! But not all the news is so good. For starters, only a few of the Chosen Digimon got away, and only one DigiDestined. Cody’s partner Tsubumon escaped and became an Upamon, where he befriended Matimon. Matimon—finally starting to see some sense—realized that Tiikeimon might vanish if he did nothing, so he helped TK get away. But now, the other DigiDestined are still in danger. And—as we all know—their plan to save them doesn’t work. Still, I wonder how they were lucky enough to escape Infinity Mountain alive.

Finally, Tentomon buzzed forward to finish the horrific tale of his partner’s demise.

Back in the dark, dank cell, water dripped from the ceiling and fell on Tentomon’s antennae. He sat up with a jolt and looked around to find TK, Tokomon and Tsubumon missing. “Wake up!” he shouted, shoving the closest person to him—Izzy. “Some of our friends are gone!”

Izzy was slower to wake than his partner. “Wha?” he asked.

Tentomon was about to repeat himself when Aegiochusmon rapped on the bars with one of his great scythes, forcing everyone awake. “Open the door, you mangy mongrels!” the great evil Digimon shouted at one of the Gladimon. Shaking, the little Champion-level Digimon followed his orders.

“What’s going on?” Palmon asked.

Aegiochusmon simply jerked his head in the direction of the exit of the dungeon. “Follow me,” he said. “Lord Dominomon requests your presence.”

Sora, Mimi, Izzy, Tentomon and Palmon hesitantly followed the evil Digimon through the winding halls of the Domino Army’s base. They all silently wondered where their friends had vanished to, or if they were alright. When Izzy dared to ask, Aegiochusmon simply snapped, “It’s private business!” and said nothing more of the subject.

The room Aegiochusmon led them to was large and contained countless Digimon. Some were familiar to the kids and their Digimon friends. There were Raremons, Wendigomons and—to the combined horror of the group—at least two Devimons. But many were unfamiliar or just recently made familiar, such as Armormon and Porcupamon.

The evil Digimon were surrounding a very large stone platform in the room’s center, which was carved with a series of intricate DigiCode runes made in various colors. Aegiochusmon shoved the DigiDestined right onto the platform, causing all the Digimon who saw them to boo loudly and violently. A few feral hisses could also be heard.

The booing was replaced soon enough by cheering as a plant-like girl, a bird girl, a bug-boy and a winged boy arrived. The throng of evil Digimon parted in order to let them pass. Tentomon buzzed into the air to get a better look at them. They were Carriers—that much he knew. And he knew the insect-like boy was meant for Izzy.

“What’s going on?” Palmon asked. Since she was ground-bound, her vantage point wasn’t very good.
“They’re going to change Izzy!” Tentomon cried.

“Oh no!” Palmon shouted. “Mimi too?”

“Mimi, Sora, and TK, I’m guessing,” Tentomon replied. “But I still can’t find TK.”

Palmon began to sob quietly, but only for a bit. “Poison Ivy!” she cried, tears still in her eyes as she tried to move the Digimon in front of her out of the way. It was a red demon with purple bat wings, a pitchfork in hand and a long nose. Black tattoos covered his body. With a wicked grin and a flick of his arrowhead tail, he pushed Palmon back, causing her to fall onto the cold stone floor.

“Oh no,” she said, realizing what Digimon she just attacked- a Boogiemon. “I- I’m sorry!”

The angered Boogiemon didn’t listen to Palmon’s pleas. “Death Crush!” he roared, stabbing her with his trident.

Palmon’s vision swam with red pain as she lay on the ground, unconscious. “What did you do to her?” Tentomon roared.

“I went easy on her,” Boogiemon replied with a shrug. “She’s one of the Chosen Digimon, is she not?”

Tentomon nodded. “So am I,” he declared. “And you don’t want to mess with me!”

Boogiemon just laughed at the angered insect. “Look, pal,” he said. “If I unleashed the true power of my Death Crush, she’d be nothing but a pile of code on its way to Primary Village right now. No, I can’t kill you. Well, I can, technically. But I don’t want to. It’d be more fun to watch you suffer as your partners forever transform into our Generals.” He capped off his statement with another wicked laugh.

Tentomon took aim at the bug boy. “I won’t let that happen!” he declared. “Super Shocker!”

Just as Tentomon began to attack, a magical barrier appeared around the stone platform. The Super Shocker bounced harmlessly off of it and hit Tentomon square in the face, sending him spiraling to the floor. Boogiemon just laughed again- a laugh that Tentomon was honestly getting sick of by now- as the barrier vanished. “Lord Dominomon enchanted that platform, you dumb bug,” he explained. “No attack may pass through it- not even a Mega Digimon’s, and certainly not yours!”

Tentomon was reeling, but he managed to buzz back into the air. Smoke leaked in thin wisps from his shell. He was hurt, but not hurt enough to lose consciousness. He decided to leave Boogiemon alone and focus his attentions on Izzy. Poor, poor Izzy! There had to be something he could do to save his beloved partner.

At that moment, the evil Digimon- Boogiemon included- began to stamp their feet and chant in an unknown, demonic language. Like the Red Sea, the Digimon on the opposite side of the stone arena parted to let a massive Digimon through. The creature resembled a western dragon on four strong legs, but it was made entirely of bleached white bone. Its sharp teeth were black as night, as were its horns and claws. Tentomon was reminded of SkullGreymon when he looked at the creature’s wings. They weren’t really wings at all, but rather a series of bones meant to resemble them. More bones stuck out at various angles to form spikes. Blood-red eyes glimmered with pure evil as the chanting became more clear- “Lord Dominomon! Lord Dominomon!”

Only then did Tentomon realize the beast’s true nature. This was the beast who led the Domino Army- Dominomon himself.
With a stomp of his mighty foot, Dominomon instantly silenced the chanters. “My great army,” he began. “We have scored an incredible victory today. Not only have we obtained BossAquilamon and MasterAnkylomon, but we shall obtain four more generals! This places half of the DigiDestined kids under our control!”

The Boogiemon raised his clawed hand. “But my Lord!” he shouted. “There are only three DigiDestined brats here!”

Dominomon surveyed the three shaking DigiDestined to find that Boogiemon spoke the truth. “He’s right,” Dominomon growled. At an earth-shattering volume that shook the whole cave, he added, “Where is the fourth child?”

Aegiochusmon stepped forward and said, “I thought he was with you discussing DNA Digivolution, Lord Dominomon. Matimon told me that you needed him.”

Dominomon’s eyes glowed even brighter as he stomped over to where Aegiochusmon stood. He towered over the other Digimon, who seemed so threatening before. Now, he was shaking nervously as he awaited his leader’s judgement.

“What is the fourth child?” he asked, his voice cold as ice. “For I never gave him any such order.”

“Wha-” Aegiochusmon began, but that’s all that he could say.

Dominomon slashed his minion’s head off with a single clean swipe of his claws. “How sad for you that you are not a Carrier or otherwise useful to me,” Dominomon growled as Aegiochusmon shattered into data. “Then I might have let you live.” Turning to the rest of his minions, he said, “From now on, do not take any of the Carrier’s words at face-value! Always, always check with me before doing anything they say! And do not worry about our little Matimon. I’ll just have to punish him again. But I can worry about that later. Tiikeimon! Leave the platform! We will attempt your ceremony again when your DigiDestined is actually present.”

The winged boy’s face fell, but he obeyed the fearsome beast’s orders and left the platform with a slow, shuffling walk. Once he was gone, two new Digimon arrived and sat on either side of Dominomon. They were, of course, his other two Generals, wanting a better look at the ceremony.

“As you all know, these are BossAquilamon and MasterAnkylomon,” Dominomon announced. “They have decided the order in which these children will join them. Now, tell us all! Who will be the first, second and third to change?”

“BossAquilamon said. “However, it doesn’t affect the rest of our choices too much. First will be the DigiDestined of Love, then Knowledge and finally Sincerity.”

Palmon sat up woozily as the crowd cheered. “What’s going on?” she asked. “Are they gone yet, Tentomon?”

“No. Not yet,” Tentomon replied nervously. “But they will be very soon.”

The bird girl smiled and walked forwards to meet Sora. “Do not be afraid, DigiDestined of Love,” she said. “I am Soramon, and I can assure you that you will not be in any pain.”

Sora retreated from the little bird girl as she reached out a feathered hand. Just as the two were about to make contact, a loud cry of “Equus Blaze!” filled the chamber.
A hole appeared rather suddenly on the western side of the room. One minute, it wasn’t there, the next it was. Debris began to crumble from about seven feet above the floor to the floor itself. The clear night sky could be seen outside. It was already starting to give way to morning slightly. The cold air lowered the temperature a bit, causing Palmon to shiver.

Pegasusmon rode high above the crowd, carrying not only the missing child, but Matimon as well. Upamon was being held in TK’s arms. “Guys!” he shouted. “Hurry! We need to get out of here!”

“Tiikeimon!” Matimon added. “Come with us! Follow us! We’re going to go somewhere safe, where you won’t disappear!”

“I’m not gonna disappear!” Tiikeimon objected. “I’m gonna become part of something greater! Reevemon said so!”

“Reevemon’s lying!” Matimon shouted back.

“No he ain’t!” Tiikeimon replied, stomping his tiny foot.

In the middle of this conversation, Soramon, the plant girl and the bug boy leapt at their designated targets all at once. Black and red energy filled the room in a thick fog as all three DigiDestined simultaneously screamed in agony. BossAquilamon and MasterAnkylomon watched with anticipatory grins plastered on their faces.

“Mimi!” Palmon cried, flinging herself underneath Boogiemon’s legs and hitting the platform hard. The screams caught TK’s attention. “Pegasusmon!” he cried. “Go help them!”

“Already on it,” Pegasusmon replied.

The winged horse Digimon flew over the evil Digimon and landed directly on the stone platform. As soon as he did, Tiikeimon rushed out and cried, “Thunder Clap!”

With a flap of his mighty wings, a supersonic burst hit not only Pegasusmon, but all of his riders. Matimon winced with shock and pain while TK- frozen with surprise- opened his arms, allowing with stunned Upamon to slip out. Pegasusmon recovered from the Rookie-level’s attack fairly quickly and took off again, nearly losing TK and Matimon as well.

By the time TK realized what happened, it was too late. Upamon recovered and tried to fire off a set of Bubble Blows, but Tiikeimon picked him up. “Gotcha!” he said, holding Upamon up in the air for all to see with a proud smile on his face.

“Upamon!” TK shouted.

Tentomon flew after Tiikeimon to recover Upamon, Palmon following him. Meanwhile, the three Carriers had completely vanished. Sora was the first to undergo visible changes. Her hair flared out into a red and orange crest of feathers that circled her head like a lion’s mane. Sora’s face then painfully stretched out into a beak, the top half of her face becoming covered with bone armor as it did so.

Her teeth did not vanish, but instead all became vicious canines. Some of them were too big for her mouth and morphed into the skull helmet. Needless to say, this whole rearrangement caused Sora unimaginable amounts of agony.

“Dannippp!” Sora mumbled, finding coherent speech was impossible.
BossAquilamon watched the whole thing with a smug smile. “It looks like you’ll be a bird Digimon, just like me,” she said.

“Anetah- never be like you!” Sora declared as her mouth finally finished changing, restoring her ability to speak properly. She had a new problem, however- her new head was too big and heavy for her body, causing her to topple over.

The weight of Sora’s new head caused a small earthquake, which knocked Palmon off of her feet. “Palmon!” Tentomon cried as the stunned Palmon was dragged away by none other than Boogiemon.

“Hang in there, Palmon!” Tentomon shouted. “Tentomon digivolve to- um, Tentomon?” He looked at himself to find no changes.

MasterAnkylomon noticed the commotion. “Trying to digivolve?” he asked. “Well, you can’t! Now that your partner is becoming a Digimon, you’re back to the natural rate of digivolution. While that rate is quick for small Digimon like Upamon, it takes far longer for a Rookie to become a Champion. In other words, maybe you should wait a few- oh, I don’t know- months before you try digivolving again?” He let out a cruel laugh as Boogiemon took the struggling Palmon away.

“Palmon!” Mimi cried as her back began to sizzle like bacon on the griddle. It was an odd sensation, but one Mimi instinctually knew was her skin fizzling away, revealing the bone underneath.

From this bone sprouted two pairs of gossamer red wings, which ripped right through her clothing. They looked almost like a dragonfly’s wings, but much larger. Mimi tested them to find she could fly with them, which she could. As she buzzed away, what remained of her shirt fell away, revealing a set of thin bone “armor” that protected her modesty.

Mimi wasn’t the only one to gain wings. Izzy grew a pair of wings as well. They were the same color and had the same insect-like quality, but he only had one pair, which pointed downwards. He studied the wings curiously, wondering if he could truly fly with them. As he tested the wings, he found that he could, but he crumpled to the floor as new pain struck him. His whole body turned almost liquid, while an exoskeleton of bone formed around him. The exoskeleton had a long horn on his head and many sharp teeth, but they weren’t part of his main body. Neither were his new stout legs or additional set of arms that were currently taking shape.

All of his hands morphed into clawed fingers. He gained a stinger made of the same “black bone” that Dominomon possessed. Izzy’s eyes bulged out and became compound, just as they turned red. His body- which previously felt like a puddle of slime- began to rearrange itself to fit his new exoskeleton. It now felt soft and mushy. He really did need the exoskeleton to keep himself from turning into a puddle of mush. Fortunately, that skeleton was made of not only tough bone, but the strongest Digizoid! As if in response to that thought, a red shell made of the stuff appeared on his back, shielding his wings.

Izzy didn’t know how he knew about the Digizoid shell. It just seemed natural, though- almost like he had it all his life. More Digizoid covered his horn, hands and feet. With the strongest metal in the Digital World augmenting his body, Izzy felt truly powerful. He was a tank! Nothing could penetrate his powerful defenses!

And who did he have to thank for this? The great Lord Dominomon, that’s who! It was because of him that he now had this powerful shell. Izzy- no, that name didn’t fit. He was HackerKabuterimon now. He briefly sent a charge of red electricity to his horn with glee. Yes, a perfect name for a perfect Digimon.
Unknown to Hacker Kabuterimon, Tentomon witnessed the whole transformation. His antennae stood up on end, then drooped as he realized that there was nothing he could do for his partner— the one he was programmed to protect. “Izzy! No! Izzy!” he cried.

Sora noticed Tentomon’s horror as her body grew, feathers sprouting from her arms as they morphed into wings. She thought of Biyomon. Weak, pathetic— no! Biyomon was good and kind! Sora missed Biyomon, the little Digimon who taught her everything she knew about love.

Of course, she wouldn’t need those lessons anymore.

Parts of her wings rotted away, revealing bone. The skin of her legs peeled away painfully— almost like a snake shedding its skin— exposing bony bird-like talons underneath. It reminded Sora of Birdramon’s feet, and how weak that Digimon was. She never needed Biyomon in any of her forms. Only she mattered! She was strong! She could feel it in her talons.

A huge tail exploded from Sora’s back. It was mostly brown, but had long strands of red feathers, each tipped with black. A fin of sorts appeared on her back. It was the same color as her mane. Sora tried to think of anything she could to remember herself—Biyomon, her mother, her friends— but all of them were weak and powerless and useless to her! She didn’t need them now. She only needed Lord Dominomon, for she was his great General—SaberPhoenixmon!

Mimi was relieved to find that she was staying relatively humanoid for the most part. Her feet and hands became dainty and tiny and delicate. A dress of light plated bone appeared on her body. The dress was covered with such pretty red swirling designs that they held Mimi spellbound. This dress was even prettier than the ones the Gekomon gave her. It calmed her, allowing her to accept the rest of the changes.

Mimi’s hair restyled itself so it stood proud and tall, gaining red streaks as it went. Her ears became long and pointed. A bone staff tipped with a rose appeared in her dainty hand. She took it gratefully, feeling its power throb in her hand. This staff carried powerful magic. It was something she knew, as if on instinct. With a cruel smile that exposed her new, sharp fangs, she knew who she was now. She was DeathRosemon, and she would serve LordDominomon until her dying days.

The transformations trigged something deep inside Tiikeimon. He looked at Pegasusmon, who was making a beeline for the hole. Handing Upamon to a nearby Porcupamomon, he dashed after the graceful Champion, his tiny hands open. “I’m coming, DigiDestined!” he shouted. “I’m gonna—”

Tentomon snapped out of his funk to notice Tiikeimon was dangerously close to Pegasusmon. “Super Shocker!” he cried, zapping Tiikeimon with all his might.

“Tiikeimon!” Matimon cried, holding out a paw for the other Carrier.

It was no use. Tiikeimon’s wings froze up, forcing him to crumble to the ground. Tentomon’s job completed, he buzzed alongside Pegasusmon. “Tentomon,” TK said. “Thank you for saving me.”

Tentomon nodded. “It’s no problem,” he said. “I’ll try to protect you and the other DigiDestined until we find a cure for Izzy.”

“Until?” Matimon asked. “There’s no cure.”

“No,” TK said. “There’s always a way. We’ll find a way to get everyone back to normal!”

From there, everything became a blur for Tentomon. He followed after Pegasusmon, nearly falling behind several times because the Champion-level was simply faster. It was his job to protect TK from behind, zapping away at Tiikeimon whenever he got too close and dodging his Thunder Clap.
attacks. Meanwhile, Pegasusmon cleared the way forward, attacking Dominomon’s minions with his Star Shower attack.

HackerKabuterimon was shouting orders at the evil Digimon, commanding them to stop the escape attempt. Tentomon felt physically ill with each word the Digimon barked out. That creature was Izzy! Oh, sure, his voice echoed like cold metal, with the occasional raspy, glitchy yells, but Tentomon could still hear Izzy underneath it all.

But they couldn’t do anything now. Not as weak as they were.

With a great flap of his wings, Pegasusmon sailed into the night air. Tentomon followed, Infinity Mountain shrinking behind him. Tiikeimon—evidently having given up—was nowhere in sight.

“What do we do now?” Tentomon asked.

“We go back to Toy Town,” TK said. “Or, y’know, what’s left of it. We need to reunite with the others.”

“It’s about time,” Pegasusmon added.

“Is Taimon there?” Matimon asked.

Pegasusmon nodded. “Yes,” he said. “You'll see him very soon.”

Pegasusmon flew nonstop as the night turned to day, carrying the lone survivor of the attacks on his back. Tentomon couldn’t help but notice that TK was occasionally looking back to check on him and make sure he was alright. After all, he’d lost a partner. That experience was something forever burned into TK’s memory, even if it was a bit different.

And TK wasn’t alone. Palmon, Upamon, Biyomon and—judging by the appearance of that other raptor-like General—Hawkmon were all without partners. Tentomon hoped that TK was right, that there would be a cure.

He hoped all through the night, even as the night bled into day.

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With the story finished, Tentomon wandered off into a corner. It took a while for the other DigiDestined to think of a proper response. Finally, Davis said, “What are we doing sitting around? We need to go get Palmon and Upamon back and save everyone!”

“We can’t just storm Infinity Mountain!” Joe said.

“Yea we can!” Davis said, hands balled into shaking fists. “We have Taimon and Matimon! They can help us navigate—”

“But Joe has a point,” Matt said with a wave of his hand. “Those converted DigiDestined are too powerful for our Digimon right now.”

“You and Tai can still use Omnimon!” Davis protested. “He might be able to do something!”

“We could, but if we mess up, we might delete our friends by accident,” Tai said. “They’re Digimon now. Who knows what damage we could do to them if we just blindly charge in? We need a better way.”

“What kind of better way?” Davis asked.
After a quiet moment of thought, Kari said, “We could go to Gennai.”

“He didn’t know squat about Taimon,” Tai pointed out. “That’s why he sent us to the Digital World in the first place!”

“But we know some things that might help Gennai come up with a solution,” Ken said. “Besides, I doubt Gennai’s head is buried in the sand. He’s bound to notice that almost half of us have turned into evil Digimon.”

“I’m still not sure-” Davis began.

“Me neither, but I think we should put it to a vote,” Tai said. “All in favor of going to Gennai’s place before we do anything, say ‘aye’, but remember- we’re gonna have to go on a long trip to the Server continent to reach him.”

This made several people uneasy as this hadn’t occurred to them before. However, it didn’t sway their decisions too much. All of the orphaned Digimon partners, both Carriers, Kari, Ken, Joe, Matt, TK and their partners all voted “aye”.

“Then it’s settled,” Tai said. “We’ll rest a bit longer, then we’ll go to Server. I mean, I’m not completely okay with the idea myself, but I can definitely see the advantages.” Turning to Taimon, he added, “Are you sure you can go?”

“I’m feeling a lot better,” Taimon replied. “It still hurts a bit, but maybe if I could ride in that toy car for a bit, it’ll be okay.”

“Toy car?” Matimon asked.

“Oh yea! There’s lots of living toys here!” Taimon said. “A nice toy car brought us some food!”

“But how are we gonna get him across the ocean?” Tai asked.

Ken spoke up at that moment. “I may not be the best with mechanics,” he said. “But I know some things. If I get you guys to help me, we can turn a few of the toys here into boats. Then we can sail across and go right to Gennai’s place. You told me he lives in a lake, right?” Tai nodded. “Well, lakes and rivers all connect to the ocean, unless they’re completely artificial. I bet we could ride the modified toys all the way there.”

This sounded like a good idea to the rest of the group, who unanimously agreed. “Then it’s settled,” Tai said. “First, we go to Gennai and see if he has anything helpful for us. Then we come back here, race to Infinity Mountain and take down the Domino Army once and for all!”

This caused some of the Digimon- Taimon included- to cheer. Matimon simply smiled quietly. He knew now that the Domino Army was evil, but there were some nice Digimon in it, such as Baronessmon. Perhaps he could persuade the DigiDestined to spare her life, at least.

As for Dominomon himself, Matimon had taken his last punishment from the monster. He would help the DigiDestined now. After all, he didn’t want to disappear.
Another Start, A Brand New Story

This is Matimon, and I’ve finally decided to abandon the Domino Army. I just hope Tiikeimon is okay. My plan to keep him from disappearing succeeded, but not without sacrifices. Soramon, Meimon and Izimon are gone, along with the Digimon they were assigned to. Now, almost half of the Digimon serve the Domino Army. We’ve decided to meet up with a man known as Gennai. I don’t know who he is, but the others had a lot of faith in him. A few days ago, Ken finished turning the toys into some boats we can use to cross the ocean. Hopefully, Gennai can help us get to the bottom of this.

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Two Days Later

In a warm red room, the Generals gathered around Dominomon. Their lord and master was pacing around the room furiously, tail swishing like a wave in a storm and knocking down a strange structure made of bone.

“What do you mean you can’t find the Digimon?” Dominomon finally spat.

“We’ve searched the entirety of File Island, but those brats are gone!” BossAquilamon explained. “The Monitamon told us they left Toy Town two days ago, but they haven’t been able to tell us if they’re hiding elsewhere on the island. Lousy things.”

“And you yourselves cannot find them?” Dominomon growled.

“We’ve scoured the island and scattered our troops, but they’re nowhere to be found,” DeathRosemon said sadly.

“How could they have vanished in such a short amount of time?” Dominomon roared, knocking down another bone structure with the sound of his voice alone. “Did they return to the Real World?”

“I doubt it,” HackerKabuterimon said. “Our troops are guarding every television set on the island. Someone would have seen them if they made an attempt.” After a slight pause, he added, “I believe they might have fled to the continent of Server. A man named Gennai lives there- a man we once respected. Perhaps they are seeking assistance from him.”

The room was silent as death for several minutes. Dominomon processed HackerKabuterimon’s words for a while. Finally, he spoke up. “If this is the truth, HackerKabuterimon, then we must invade Server at once.”

“Doing so might be a bad idea,” MasterAnkylomon pointed out. “Our troops are stretched thin enough as it is.”

“Then gather them back here to Infinity Mountain,” Dominomon ordered. “Then get as many that can fly in the sky or swim in the sea. Lead them to Server to find the Digimon. I place SaberPhoenixmon and HackerKabuterimon in charge of this mission. Take two of the Carriers with you, just in case.”

Both of the mentioned Digimon bowed low. “It is truly an honor, Lord Dominomon,” SaberPhoenixmon said.

“We will get to work right away,” HackerKabuterimon added.
“Very well,” Dominomon said. “You are dismissed.”

With that, both DigiDestined-turned-Digimon left the room, their footsteps echoing behind them.

“What do the rest of us do?” BossAquilamon asked.

Dominomon grinned the best he could with his great, fanged maw. “Keep patrolling the island in case HackerKabuterimon is wrong,” he said. “But remember to leave enough Digimon here to guard Infinity Mountain. We can’t be foolish enough to leave it wide open. Then it might fall into enemy hands.”

“As you wish, Lord Dominomon,” the remaining Generals said in unison.

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“Ken, I have a question,” Tai asked, trying not to let anger slip into his voice. “How long is it until we find a river?”

“I- I’m not sure,” Ken replied nervously.

“But our food’s running low,” Taimon pointed out.

The DigiDestined and their Digimon friends were on a series of crude and colorful boats, led by the toy car. At first, the vehicle seemed nervous about losing its tires, but it was happy to help the DigiDestined- perhaps in honor of Monzaemon. Trailing behind the toy car were a few actual toy boats and a wheel-less train. They were tied together with colorful rope so they wouldn’t drift apart, leaving the kids and Digimon stranded.

There was quite a bit of food on the boat- enough to last for several days. But Taimon had a point. The supplies were dwindling. If they continued to aimlessly wander the continent’s shores in this manner, they’d never get anywhere.

“I think I over-looked something,” Ken said. “We’re in the Digital World. It doesn’t obey the laws of the Real World. We might have to find a dock and get to Gennai on land.”

“That sucks,” Davis muttered.

“We don’t have much of a choice,” DemiVeemon pointed out. “I don’t want to go hungry, Davis.”

“Me neither,” Taimon added. “Besides, you can’t die out here. We still have the Domino Army to take down!”

“Starving to death out here would be a lame way to go,” Tai mused. “Alright then. At the next place we can, we’ll get off the boats, take as much food as we can and leave!” Here, the toy car at the front of the makeshift super-boat honked sadly. “We’ll come back for you guys,” Tai assured. “Don’t worry! We’ll need you to get back to File Island and stop Dominomon.”

This made the toys much happier as they honked and squeaked with joy. Tai smiled a small smile. Of course, the toys were glad that they wouldn’t be forgotten. But there was another, deeper reason behind their joy. They wanted to help avenge Monzaemon in any way they could.

A few minutes later, this plan became moot, for Joe cried, “Guys! There is a river after all! Up ahead!”

The DigiDestined and their Digimon excitedly looked out the windows of the various toys to see
Joe’s statement was true. It was a small river, which led into a lush forest land.

“Forget finding a dock! Let’s go find Gennai!” Tai cried as he steered the toys towards the greenery and the river that flowed through it.

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Several hours later- after disembarking at the end of the river, taking as much food as possible and hiding the super-boat- it was clear that the DigiDestined made a mistake.

The small woodlands gave way quickly to desert, not to the lake they sought. The energy of the group quickly ran low as they plodded through the desert with heavy steps. While they’d anticipated a possible desert trek, they didn’t count on it being this long, and their water was quickly consumed. The heat made them sweat profusely, hair clinging to their necks and clothes turning into second skins. Of course, the smell was less than pleasant for all involved.

Nonetheless, they did not give up. They couldn’t! Their friends were counting on them! Gennai was the only one who could help them, and they’d be damned if they let this desert stand in the way between them and their friends turning back to normal.

But- alas- they could have been a bit more observant. If they were, they would have seen the storm of footprints they left behind them.

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SaberPhoenixmon and HackerKabuterimon, meanwhile, had a pretty easy time getting to Server.

They arrived in less than a day, found the toy boat half-hidden in the foliage, then followed the set of footprints the DigiDestined left behind. Riding on SaberPhoenixmon’s back was a seal-like humanoid with white fur with blue accents and a long blue mane. He panted weakly from the desert heat as his vest began to smell. His glasses were fogging up as well. HackerKabuterimon’s rider was much quieter. It was Kennimon, who simply studied the land below him as his Devimon’s claw opened and closed.

“Take out the smartest first.” It was the idea both SaberPhoenixmon and HackerKabuterimon agreed on. It was a no-brainer that Kennimon contained Ken’s virus, while the seal boy known as Jyoumon did the same for Joe. Both boys seemed quiet, but between Ken’s big brain and Joe’s medical expertise, they were great assets to the group. Take them down, and the remaining DigiDestined would fall into reckless despair.

They would have taken Karimon as well, but- when they departed- there was still the possibility of these footsteps belonging to someone else, with the kids still on File Island. The two Generals couldn’t rule that out just yet. Removing the DigiDestined of Light from the scene would be the next step. The total chaos that would bring would make the remaining DigiDestined easy pickings.

Seeing the toys in the foliage all but confirmed the kids were on Server, however. They would have to capture the kids and send them back once Jyoumon and Kennimon completed their jobs.

Soon, even the great Generals started to become tired of flying and were forced to land. They were careful not to disturb the DigiDestined’s footsteps as they went after the kids on foot, slowly but steadily, leaving much larger footprints behind them the distorted the tiny footprints of the DigiDestined and Digimon.

Eventually- as night fell- SaberPhoenixmon and HackerKabuterimon lost track of the footprints. However, they kept going straight north and soon came upon a small camp. This was most likely
where the DigiDestined were staying. They sunk into the sand as silently as they could. “Get off,” SaberPhoenixmon harshly whispered to Jyoumon.

“Finally. I thought I was going to pass out from the heat,” Jyoumon said as he and Kennimon slid off the Generals and hit the sand as well.

The two of them slunk ahead to the modest tent with the simple campfire outside of it. It was a bit small to be housing such a big party, but Kennimon lifted the flap anyway. However, as soon as he stepped inside, a harsh voice screamed, “Get out, bozo!” and a furry form tackled him to the ground.

At first, Jyoumon was frightened, unable to do anything. But- as Kennimon growled and lashed out at his assailant- he gained some courage. “Fountain Blast!” he cried, shooting a jet of clear water at the other Digimon. This Digimon looked up- revealing itself to be a Gazimon- and chuckled.

“What’re you tryin’ ta do? Get my fur wet?” the Gazimon bragged.

Kennimon used the distraction to push the surprised Gazimon off of him and land on top of him. “Dark Claw!” he roared, slicing the Gazimon again and again with reckless abandon.

Gazimon wriggled in the sand, trying to escape the barrage. It was little use. The Dark Claw paralyzed his body the more it hit, leaving him practically immobile below the neck before long. “Stop!” he cried, his voice cracking. “Don’t delete me!”

“You heard him!” HackerKabuterimon cried. “Cease your attack!”

Kennimon growled and backed away, leaving a smug yet still scared Gazimon on the ground. “Why did you make that order?” SaberPhoenixmon asked.

“Because we can ask that mongrel some questions,” HackerKabuterimon replied. He turned to the Gazimon, who became even more terrified upon seeing the two Mega-level Digimon he previously hadn’t noticed.

Catching on to what HackerKabuterimon was trying to do, SaberPhoenixmon boomed, “Where are the DigiDestined?”

“Uh, uh, they passed here a while ago,” Gazimon babbled. “After the whole business with Etemon, I didn’t dare confront ‘em. But they were talking about setting up camp. There’s a rock not far from here, a bit to the west. They’re over there. That’s all I know. Now let me go!”

The two Generals looked to the west and could, in fact, see the shadow of a large rock in the distance. But SaberPhoenixmon wasn’t content with merely “letting him go.” She walked up to Gazimon and stared down at him. She opened her beak and began to charge up energy.

“Is that all you have to tell us?” HackerKabuterimon asked, almost too sweetly.

“Yes! I mean no! I mean- ugh! Wait a sec!” Gazimon babbled as he tried to stand up, but he was still paralyzed.

“Crimson-Light Explosion!” SaberPhoenixmon roared, firing a strong but concentrated beam of red light at the Gazimon and shattering him into data. His campfire was blown out, the tent flew away in the wind and both Carriers were knocked on their backs from the sheer force of the move.

“You killed him,” Jyoumon said, his voice only a whisper.

“I was saving time,” SaberPhoenixmon explained. “After all, I would have killed him anyway if he
was lying. Now get back on. We have a rock to visit.”

Meanwhile, on the rock, things were peaceful- if uncomfortable. The DigiDestined and their Digimon were lying on the rough surface, with nothing to pad the ground. Still- with no supplies to make a proper camp either with them or in the surrounding area- this was as good a place as any to set up shop. It was high in the air, but Patamon- in the form of Pegasusmon- was able to transport Digimon and human alike to the top of the rock one by one. Now, he was Patamon again and asleep in TK’s arms.

No-one had any clue what was to come.

“Wakey wakey, DigiDestined,” an unfamiliar voice crooned in Tai’s ear.

Tai shot awake, only to stare into the blood-red eyes of an obviously evil Digimon. Unable to do anything about the creature himself, he shouted, “Wake up! Agumon! Everybody! We’re under attack!”

This roused most of the group, but Patamon- the most exhausted of the bunch- stayed asleep. TK carefully studied the enemy Digimon. “No way,” he said, his voice barely a whisper. “How did they follow us?”

“How did who follow us?” Gomamon asked.

“SaberPhoenixmon and HackerKabuterimon,” Matimon growled.

Remembering the story Matt, Matimon and Tentomon told back in Toy Town, the DigiDestined knew these were- in reality- Sora and Izzy. HackerKabuterimon all but confirmed it. “Why would I want to go by that stupid human name ever again?” he growled. “Too bad you kids are trapped on this high rock. Looks like it’s a one-way trip back to File Island for everyone! But first-”

Two new Digimon entered the fray, although they were much smaller and weaker. One was shaken and unfamiliar to all of the kids, but the other wasted no time introducing himself. “My name is Kennimon,” he said, bowing slightly. “Where is my new partner? I can smell him here.”

“You aren’t going anywhere near Ken!” Davis roared.

Everyone stopped what they were doing and looked right at him. “Well, since he’s named Kennimon, I just assumed-” Davis began, but Kennimon was already charging.

HackerKabuterimon flew to the other side of the rock, leaving the kids totally trapped. “C’mon, guys!” Tai roared. “We have to digivolve now!”

The order was kind of pointless, for Zudomon, MetalGarurumon, Angemon and Angewomon already made their appearances. Agumon heard Tai and nodded, becoming WarGreymon in a flash and taking to the sky. The rock creaked under Zudomon’s weight as he stood in front of Joe, blocking all attempts to grab him.

As a final measure, DemiVeemon and Minomon pushed themselves first into their Rookie forms, then used up as much strength as possible to try and fuse. This turned out to be useless and left both puffing and panting, so they settled for ExVeemon and Stingmon. The DigiDestined and remaining Rookies huddled behind the stronger Digimon in the center of the group. With WarGreymon leading the charge against SaberPhoenixmon and MetalGarurumon staring down HackerKabuterimon, it seemed like an easy win.
However, the good Digimon did absolutely nothing.

For a long while, both sides stared at each other, blinking owlishly. Finally, WarGreymon landed and said, “Tai, get on my back. We need to retreat.”

“You too, Kari,” Angewomon added as the few Rookies that could fly took to the air as well.

“That’s it? We’re just gonna leave?” Davis cried out.

“We can’t fight our friends, either,” MetalGarurumon said.

Upon realizing this, the DigiDestined looked at each other and then the two Generals with sad expressions. Their Digimon were right. They couldn’t fight the evil Digimon because those Digimon were Sora and Izzy. They had to find a cure for them.

“Fine then. I’ll start!” HackerKabuterimon cried. “Hacking Lightning!”

A blast of red lightning all too similar to Myotismon’s struck Stingmon, knocking him down in one hit and turning him into Wormmon again. This attack served as a wake-up call, causing the DigiDestined and the Carriers traveling with them to each board a Digimon. Zudomon roared, “Vulcan’s Hammer!” barely and purposefully missing HackerKabuterimon.

“Hey! What happened to all that love and friendship crap, huh?” HackerKabuterimon cried out.

“Now! Go! Get out of here!” Zudomon roared.

Ken was slightly delayed to board ExVeemon because he had to scoop up Wormmon. Kennimon grinned, knowing this was his chance. “Dark Claw!” he shouted, leaping forward and scratching Ken in the back. Ken fell to the ground as Kennimon- laughing hysterically- became a black and red mist and disappeared into the wound. Not soon after- insect-like wings sprouted.

“Ken! No!” Davis roared, barely being able to grab Wormmon before ExVeemon took off. “No!” Davis repeated. “ExVeemon! Go back! Hurry!”

“There’s nothing I can do, Davis,” ExVeemon said sadly as Ken writhed in pain on the ground.

From their perch on top of Angemon, TK, Taimon and Matimon watched the whole thing go down. “We’ve lost Ken,” Angemon said. It was a statement, a matter of fact.

“We could grab him and bring him to Gennai’s,” TK suggested.

“That won’t do much good,” Matimon said. “You’ve seen how big the Generals are. When he’s finished transforming, we won’t be able to move him anywhere.”

The rock began to creak again under the growing weight of Ken’s new body as his clothes ripped apart, like shed snake-skin. Bones decorated with red Chrome Digizoid began to cover the wings as Ken increased in size. He screamed as his body began to turn soft and mushy and his bones dissolved, but the horrific sight was shielded from the eyes of his friends by a tough bone shell.

With a sickening crack, a new pair of arms grew in. A new pair of eyes replaced his old, melted and useless ones. Despite being high up on a new, triangular head, Ken could see through them just fine. Ken began to hover off the rock as black claws and spikes burst out of him at every angle. Even his new antennae resembled horns more than anything else.

Finally, the back of his neck glowed dark purple with a power long-thought dormant. Ken was able
to keep his mind up until now— even though his body was now soft and nothing like his human body in any respect— but the agony of the Dark Spore reawakening sent pain through his body like none he’d ever experienced. He opened his new mandibles and let out a garbled scream.

In that scream, everything that made him Ken Ichijouji poured out, as if his identity escaped through his lips. Now, there was nothing inside of him. His mind was blank. What was he? A Digimon. A General. KaiserKuwagamon.

“Ken!” Davis screamed hysterically as ExVeemon carried him and Wormmon far away from the scuffle.

“What should we do about Zudomon?” Angewomon asked. “We can’t just leave him here!”

“I’ll help!” WarGreymon cried, swooping in to grab Zudomon with his claws. “I’m the only one strong enough to lift him. You guys go on ahead.”

Meanwhile, Zudomon and HackerKabuterimon were trading blows, all of Zudomon’s attacks missing to create a decent distraction to help his friends escape. The flying Digimon save for WarGreymon all flew off, while MetalGarurumon bounded down the mountain at lightning speed. It was up to Zudomon to make sure they all got to safety.

Even if he never did.

Zudomon was so focused on HackerKabuterimon that he failed to notice SaberPhoenixmon. She picked up Jyoumon in her beak and flew behind the two warring Digimon. Once she had a good angle, she prepared to drop Jyoumon.

“Are you crazy?” Jyoumon shouted. “If you drop me from this high up, I’m gonna die!”

“You’ll die anyway,” SaberPhoenixmon said darkly, her words somewhat muffled.

The General opened her beak, sending a screaming Jyoumon barreling into Joe. The two became one, and Joe screamed and screamed. Zudomon turned to face him, only to hear “Hacking Lightning!” and return in a flash to his in-training form of Bukamon. Now totally helpless, he could do nothing but hop over to Joe and cry out his name as the transformation began.

WarGreymon dodged another Hacking Lightning attack from HackerKabuterimon and took off even higher into the air, giving Tai a view of the transformation he certainly did not want. Brown fur began to sprout from Joe’s body as a black and red danced around him. WarGreymon growled and prepared to dive down again.

“WarGreymon,” Tai whispered. “What are you doing?”

“Trying to get Bukamon,” WarGreymon replied.

“I’ll be fine!” Bukamon shouted up at them. “I’m gonna stay with Joe!”

“Are you serious? They’ll capture you!” Tai cried.

“Crimson-Light Explosion!” SaberPhoenixmon unleashed another attack which WarGreymon barely dodged. “We have no choice,” he said, taking off towards where the other Digimon were fleeing.

“What about Bukamon?” Tai asked.

“You’re my partner,” WarGreymon said softly. “As much as I want to help Bukamon, I have to
Joe began to gain size and mass as Tai and WarGreymon vanished from sight. Bukamon began to cry—a rarity for the normally cheerful Digimon. Joe wrapped one big, beefy muscular arm around the little Digimon while the other grew from noodle to beefcake in the span of a second. His study legs cracked and reformed into bestial ones. Weapons of bone covered with black spikes formed on his back as his face stretched into a muzzle, complete with two long tusks.

Joe was too hurt to complain at this point. His ears stretched as he grew claws and the rest of his teeth sharpened to carnivorous proportions. His eyes grew small, red and beady. With a roar, an animal pelt appeared over the bony shell on his back as he rose to his feet. His new identity hit like a brick. He was BerserkVikemon, loyal forever to Lord Dominomon.

And—what was this brownish creature doing sobbing at his feet?

“A perfect future warrior, I suppose,” BerserkVikemon said in a low, husky voice, picking up Bukamon and hiding him amongst his fur pelt.

KaiserKuwagamon watched the DigiDestined retreat. “It seems they’ve managed to escape,” he said, his new voice deep and intelligent.

“But now what?” SaberPhoenixmon asked. “We’re out of Carriers, and we can’t dawdle around here. Lord Dominomon will wonder what we’re up to. Perhaps he might think we’ve betrayed him.”

“No! Never!” a chorus of voices all cried out.

“I’ll go after the children and Carriers,” BerserkVikemon said. “It’s not like I can fly, anyway. I do ask a favor of you all, however. Can one of you take this creature back?” Here, he parted his fur pelt to reveal Bukamon.

“We have no need for any of the Chosen Digimon,” HackerKabuterimon said dismissively.

“Perhaps,” BerserkVikemon said. “But maybe this one will be a good warrior to serve the Domino Army when he digivolves.”

This was something that never occurred to the other Generals before. “Gr- fine,” SaberPhoenixmon said. “I’ll take your pet back. But if Lord Dominomon wants this little squirt dead, I will kill him myself.”

“Then do as he wills,” BerserkVikemon said. “It’s not like I have much say in the matter.”

“I will go with you and help capture the children,” HackerKabuterimon said. “I believe it’s best that at least one new General reports to Lord Dominomon.”

“A sentiment I agree with,” KaiserKuwagamon buzzed darkly.

So the plan was set in motion. HackerKabuterimon and BerserkVikemon set a course for the general direction the DigiDestined and their friends fled in. Meanwhile, SaberPhoenixmon and KaiserKuwagamon took off back to File Island, carrying their latest prisoner with them.
Losing our Minds

Taimon here! We just got to the continent of Server, but- unfortunately- we didn’t get away from the Domino Army. I still don’t know how they followed us here! Four of the Generals found us and we were forced into battle, but the DigiDestined didn’t want to fight their old friends and decided to retreat instead. Unfortunately, Joe and Ken were turned into Generals too, and they took Bukamon prisoner. The Domino Army has a lot of good Digimon in its clutches. I really hope they’re okay.

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“Nobody knows the trouble I’ve seen. Nobody knows my sorrow.”

Palmon groaned softly. If there was one thing Upamon liked to do during his imprisonment, it was sing. Loud. At least it wasn’t another rousing round of “Ninety Nine Bottles of Digi-Beer on the Wall”.

Perhaps it was just his way of coping with Cody’s transformation. Palmon missed Mimi a lot, but she didn’t talk about it. She didn’t even want to think about it. Just the thought made her tear up. She wiped away her tears as she watched the Gladimon guarding her cell gossip.

A Fangmon approached the cell, carrying a small Digimon in his mouth like it was dead meat. “Open the door,” the Fangmon growled through the mouthful of Digimon. “I have another prisoner from one of the Generals.”

The Gladimon obeyed quickly. Palmon could have taken Upamon and ran, but she wouldn’t have gotten very far in her current form. Without Mimi to help her digivolve, she was helpless.

Fangmon tossed the tiny Digimon into the cell, revealing it to be Bukamon as it hit the floor. “Bukamon!” Palmon cried, rushing to his side as the cell door slammed closed.

“A third one?” one of the Gladimon asked. “Why do we even need any of the Chosen Digimon? We should just kill them all now!”

“I was given express orders not to kill that Bukamon from KaiserKuwagamon himself,” Fangmon replied. “You wouldn’t want to disobey a General, would you?”

“No!” the Gladimon said all at once.

Fangmon snorted triumphantly and left the Gladimon to guard duty without another word. Meanwhile, inside the cell, Upamon stopped singing to inspect Bukamon. “What happened?” he asked.

“I tried to protect Joe, but I couldn’t,” Bukamon said weakly. “I did my very best, but he turned into a General. So did Ken.”

There was a long moment of silence before Bukamon spoke again, this time recalling everything that happened after he and the other two Chosen Digimon were separated. “And then Joe-” Bukamon finished, “-Joe said to spare me. He said I’d serve the Domino Army well when I became Gomamon again, but I’ll never answer to them!”

“Neither will I!” Upamon agreed.

“Is that why we’re being kept alive?” Palmon asked. “Do our partners remember us, so they’re
sparing us?” The thought that Mimi was still somewhere inside of DeathRosemon brightened Palmon’s spirits. It meant she could be saved.

“There’s only one way to know for sure, and that’s to escape!” Upamon said, a bit too loudly.

“Upamo-” Palmon began, but a Gladimon answered for her.

“First of all, you aren’t going anywhere,” he said sternly. “Second of all, I believe I overheard DeathRosemon and MasterAnkylomon talking about sparing you a few days ago. But they only wanted to let you out if you promise to serve the Domino Army.”

Before Bukamon or Palmon could protest, Upamon piped up, “We will! Uh, long live the Domino Army!”

Gladimon just laughed in Upamon’s face. “You’re only saying that because of what I just told you!” he said. “Well, enough of that. You’re staying in there until you mean what you said!”

The Gladimon turned away from the three prisoners, who huddled up together. Palmon’s eyes narrowed at the stronger Digimon. Right now, she was the only Rookie with two In-Training Digimon at her side. She was currently the strongest Digimon out of the three of them. It was up to her to find a way out.

If only she could think of one.

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The night passed, and the Digimon did not stop fleeing the Generals until the sun rose. Their energy spent, they all landed or otherwise ceased to move, returning to their weaker forms to recharge. Tai held on to Koromon- who just de-digivolved from WarGreymon- and looked around. They were in a forest now. Hopefully, Gennai’s lake was nearby.

The Chosen Digimon were exhausted, but it was getting hard to carry them since so few DigiDestined were remaining. Matt had Tsunomon in his arms, while Kari carried Salamon. Wormmon was asleep in Davis’s arms, just as Patamon was asleep in TK’s. The rest of the Digimon had to walk, although the two Carriers had a bit more energy than the Chosen Digimon.

No-one spoke as they searched through the woods for their destination. What was there to say? Seven of their friends were gone, turned into those evil Digimon. As for the Carriers, they just saw poor Jyoumon drop to his death. Sure, Kennimon always weirded them out a bit- even though he was family- but Jyoumon was innocent.

He didn’t deserve to die.

The trees gradually parted as the DigiDestined wandered on, revealing a clearing with a large lake at the center. “Hallelujah,” Tai muttered, too tired to speak very loudly.

“What?” Davis asked.

“We found the lake where Gennai lives,” TK explained.

“All we have to do is go down the stairs,” Biyomon added. There was a long silence as the group studied the ordinary-looking lake before she added, “Well, we had Gomamon to help us last time.”

“I’ll try to find them!” Veemon cried, sticking his head under the water.
The dragon Digimon came up coughing and spluttering. “You alright?” Davis asked.

Veemon nodded as the water suddenly parted with a *whoosh*, revealing a gray, stone staircase.

“Looks like he’s been expecting us,” Taimon said as his human counterpart led the way down the stairs.

The stairs soon led to a small garden with a house on the other side. The house was plain, save for its ancient-style Japanese roof. Waiting at the front door of the house was Gennai himself. He looked from Tai to Taimon, then Matt to Matimon. The Carriers instantly froze up under his glance, like they were caught doing something wrong.

“It’s about time you came here,” Gennai said. “I’ve been waiting for you. Come in, come in. We have much to discuss.”

The interior of the house was simple, but cozy enough for the tired kids and Digimon. Together with Gennai, they all sat in a circle, each taking turns relating what happened up to that point. As they told the story, Gennai studied Taimon and Matimon carefully, making them more and more uncomfortable as time went on.

Finally, Gennai rose from his seat. “This is a bad situation indeed,” he said. “Fortunately, all hope is not lost. You brought the materials to create a cure, if Taimon and Matimon are willing.”

“We won’t have to die, will we?” Matimon asked, his voice shaking.

“No, no, of course not,” Gennai said. “I just need a sample of the virus from each of you. Just a small parcel of data will do. Then we can study it and see if we can make a vaccine from it.”

“But how will we do that without Izzy, Joe or Ken?” Tai asked. “They were always the best at that kind of stuff. Damn, maybe the Domino Army took them out as quickly as they could on purpose. That way, if we tried to make a cure, we wouldn’t have much help.” He clenched his fists harder and harder as he spoke.

“Don’t worry, Tai. We have Gennai now,” Kari said in an attempt to console her brother. “He can help us make a vaccine.”

“We’ll help too!” Taimon added. “Right, Matimon?”

“Will it bring the others back?” Matimon asked as he studied the floor.

“What do you mean?” Hawkmon asked.

“Will the other Carriers come back to life if we give the Generals the vaccine?” Matimon asked, looking up with surprising ferocity in his golden eyes.

“I don’t know,” Gennai replied. “I can’t answer that question until I have a sample from each of you.”

“Okay,” Matimon said. “I guess I’ll accept. For now. But only if I won’t disappear.”

“It’ll be okay, Matimon,” Taimon said. “He already said we won’t go anywhere. If we can’t fight, and we can only do this small thing to stop the Domino Army, we should do it.”

Taimon’s words seemed to pacify Matimon, who nodded as Gennai said, “I’ll need the Carriers to
“What about the rest of us?” Davis interrupted. “Are we supposed to just sit around and wait for the vaccine?”

“It seems that way,” Matt said. Gennai confirmed it with a nod.

Davis let out a frustrated growl and clenched his fists, trying not to cry. “Look, I don’t like sitting around either, but-” Tai began, only to be cut off.

“Every second we laze around here is a second our friends are being controlled by the Domino Army!” Davis roared.

Tai gulped nervously, seeing himself from long ago, reflected in front of him. Perhaps this made him more aggressive. He stood up and said sternly, “Look, Davis. There’s nothing we can do right now.” “If we try to fight the Generals as we are, it would be suicide,” Matt added. “Our Digimon need to recover.”

“Maybe Koromon and Tsunomon need to, but Veemon doesn’t!” Davis snapped.

“Davis-” Veemon began, but he, too, was cut off.

“I’m leaving!” Davis roared, taking Veemon by the hand and dragging him off. “And I’m not coming back without Ken! Hell, even Yolei and Cody! They’re my friends. I have to save them!”

“Davis!” Kari cried out. “Don’t! You and Veemon might get hurt!”

“C’mon, Davis. We need to have more patience,” TK added.

Davis paid no heed to the other DigiDestined and continued his charge towards the door, a reluctant Veemon trailing along behind him. Tai and TK got up and ran in front of Davis, blocking his path. “Get out of the way!” Davis growled.

“No,” Tai said. His voice was just as aggressive, if lower in volume.

Davis glanced at them, then noticed a small opening between the two. He pushed through it forcefully without a word and headed back for the staircase. Tai and TK gave chase, their partner Digimon keeping up as best they could.

Matt sighed. “So I guess Kari and I are the only ones sticking to the plan?” he asked.

“It may seem that way, but Tai and TK are just trying to get Davis to come back,” Kari said.

“Yea,” Salamon agreed. “They are sticking with the plan. Even Veemon is for it. At least, that’s how it looked. It’s only Davis who has other ideas.”

“I hope they come back soon,” Wormmon said sadly.

Davis didn’t know what direction he dragged Veemon in, but even his athletic body was starting to tire. He stopped under a gnarled tree to rest, still grasping Veemon’s arm. Two pairs of wild eyes scanned the forest, but all they could see were more trees.

“Maybe we should go back, Davis,” Veemon suggested.
“I’m not waiting around,” Davis muttered. “I need to help them. I need to help Yolei, Cody and Ken. They need help now.”

He hadn’t been present for Cody’s transformation, but memories of the other two were flickering through his mind like lightning bugs, only each flash was painful. Yolei, growing to giant size and giving in to that dark energy without a fight. Ken, screaming as his body melted and reformed into something inhuman- maybe not even solid. Cody’s transformation was probably just as bad- a cloud of red and black.

Red and black like the anger Davis now felt.

It was easy to keep it under control at first. Gennai had the solution- some kind of power-up maybe. This thought gave him hope and prevented the anger from taking over. Hearing the actual solution dampened his spirits. It might take days, maybe weeks to get a cure. Meanwhile, his friends were being controlled by that Dominomon creature, like they were just puppets.

He remembered when the Digimon Emperor did this to Agumon and how much pain Tai felt. Perhaps this was it, multiplied by several thousand.

“Davis!” TK called through the underbrush.

Two humans and two Digimon popped out of the woods. Davis wanted to run, but he was too tired to run. He stood his ground. He didn’t want to, but he would have to fight them off.

“Veemon! Digivolve!” Davis roared.

“What?” Veemon asked.

Tai’s eyes widened as he backed away slightly, an exhausted Koromon in his arms. “Davis,” he said, his voice suddenly trembling. “Don’t do this!”

Davis ignored him. All of his adventures with his friends were playing on repeat, punctuated by their conversions. All he heard were three horrible screams. “Drive them off, Veemon! Digivolve!” Davis ordered again.

“I don’t think-” Veemon began, but he suddenly stopped speaking.

Veemon’s pupils narrowed to pinpricks as he stared zombie-like- at Tai, TK and their Digimon. Koromon whimpered and turned away as dark energy radiated from both Davis’s D3 and Veemon’s body. Koromon’s reaction caused Tai to retreat somewhat too as he muttered, “This isn’t happening. This can’t be happening. Not again. Not to Davis and Veemon.”

This left only TK to step up as Veemon shot up in height and exploded into a whorl of black flames. All three humans were knocked down by the explosion. When they rose to their feet, it wasn’t ExVeemon standing in place of the friendly blue Digimon.

This creature was dark flame itself, vaguely in the shape of a dinosaur. The only material things on its body were its golden claws and helmet. Red eyes shown with evil intent as the beast snorted smoke from its nostrils. Two jets of flame- almost like ears- grew from the back of its head.

“Flarerizamon?” Davis asked, remembering the Digimon from his time in America.


DarkLizardmon let out a roar and charged towards Tai and TK, accidentally flinging Davis into the
He was sitting under. The blow wasn’t enough to knock him out—just leave him panting as Patamon quickly became Angemon and raced towards his opponent. Koromon was not only too weak to digivolve, but was frozen completely with fear by this point.

DarkLizardmon screeched and fired off a wave of black flames at his opponent. Angemon was blasted back, but barely took any damage. Rising to his feet, he soared behind the dark fire Digimon, hovering in the air.

“Hand of Fate!” Angemon cried, preparing to attack.

But—when he cried out his attack name—the illusion of stealth was broken. DarkLizardmon dodged the attack, then tried to bite Angemon. The angel Digimon merely rose higher and higher into the sky, using his flight abilities to his advantage.

Frustrated, DarkLizardmon sent off wave after wave of flames, setting the surrounding trees on fire. The vulnerable humans and Koromon tried to run for cover, eventually settling for behind a log that escaped the onslaught. DarkLizardmon belched smoke and stood perfectly still, seeming to charge up for some kind of super attack.

Angemon never let him use it.

“Hand of Fate!” Angemon roared, striking DarkLizardmon with all his might.

DarkLizardmon roared and reverted to DemiVeemon in a blast of flames. The little blue Digimon was unconscious in the center of a newly-made clearing, the remains of DarkLizardmon’s fiery rampage dancing all around him.

Davis screamed, “DemiVeemon!” and grabbed his Digimon, holding him close. “Wake up, DemiVeemon! DemiVeemon! Oh no! What happened?”

Angemon returned to his original form and hopped on TK’s head, unharmed save for a slight burn from the one attack that did strike him. Tai let out a breath he didn’t know he’d been holding, then walked up to Davis, who was huddling over DemiVeemon.

“You didn’t have to do that, Davis,” Tai said seriously.

“Wha—” Davis began.

“This! All of this! All you did was hurt your partner!” Tai roared, suddenly getting furious himself.

Tai put Koromon under his arm and made a move to grab Davis, only to find TK standing between the two. “That’s enough,” he said. “We’re done here. I think Davis learned his lesson.”

“What do you mean?” Davis asked in a shaky voice.

“Remember SkullGreymon?” Tai asked, the name alone causing Koromon to shake. “The Dark Rings and Spirals aren’t the only way to make him show up.” He sighed deeply and added, “A long time ago, I made a really awful mistake.”

Davis rose to his feet, DemiVeemon in his arms. “Mistake?” he echoed.

“I can tell you on the way back,” Tai said.

The aura of anger seemed to dissolve as the three DigiDestined walked back to Gennai’s lake carrying their partners. They walked away from the burning clearing—the only sign left of
DarkLizardmon’s rampage and destruction.
This is Matimon, and I’m honestly very worried right now. We finally reached Gennai’s place on the continent of Server. But once we got there, we learned there was only one way to beat the Domino Army. Gennai needs some of Taimon’s and my own data to create a vaccine to turn the Generals back into humans. He says it won’t kill us, and we agreed. Taimon agreed a bit too quickly. It seems Taimon is willing to do anything to stop the Domino Army, and he assured me it would be okay. But one of the Digimon got angry and stomped out of Gennai’s house. Two of the other kids followed him. They haven’t come back yet. All I hope is that the cure can revive our fellow Carriers.

Chapter 9- Lullaby of the Damned

The colosseum was familiar.

Tai knew he’d been here before. He was standing on a dusty field, facing down a Greymon. But this Greymon was not his friend. It wore a black collar, which Tai knew was part of the Dark Network. Upon making this realization, he knew where he was. He was at Etemon’s colosseum. This was SkullGreymon’s birthplace.

Greymon’s massive foot came down, nearly crushing Tai, who nimbly dodged. He looked around, trying to find help as Greymon tried to stomp on him again. There was no-one in sight at first, but then another person ran in front of the beast.

“Davis?” Tai asked.

“You have to digivolve!” Davis roared. “Drive it off! Digivolve now!”

Digivolve? There were no Digimon in sight, sans the rogue Greymon. But Tai suddenly felt ill as Taimon appeared from nowhere. The little Digimon clasped Tai’s hands and sobbed, “I’m sorry,” as he disappeared.

Tai groaned and began to glow black and red. His bones began to stretch uncomfortably as he grew, shredding his human clothes like tissue paper. Davis smiled triumphantly, only to back away in fear as Tai’s skin gave way, exposing white bone in a relatively agonizing process.

Tai’s now skeletal body continued to morph. His hands and feet grew and twisted, fingers becoming long, black claws. A bone tail grew slowly and painfully- segment by segment- and was quickly adorned with black spikes. A red, torn cape settled around his shoulders as the final changes came to his head.

These were the most painful of all. Tai roared to the heavens as his jaw stretched, growing razor-sharp fangs and a long horn. Two more horns curled threateningly behind his head. A crown of bone appeared on his now bald head. This crown was fused to him. It was a part of him. Red eyes narrowed as his heart- the one piece of flesh he had left- pulsed and twitched inhumanly.

He was no longer Tai. He was now CzarGreymon.

No thought existed in CzarGreymon’s head except to serve Lord Dominomon. But first, he had to destroy this weak Digimon before him. He impaled the Greymon with his long horn, causing it to roar in pain before shattering into data.

Pain. CzarGreymon remembered feeling plenty of pain upon reaching this magnificent form. Now, he would never feel pain again.

Davis was off and running, screaming for help. But help never came. It would never come.

CzarGreymon reached down and grabbed the boy in his large, clawed hand. He studied his victim carefully, like a scientist might do to a butterfly before pinning it to a display.

As much as he wanted to off Davis then and there, he must serve Lord Dominomon. This boy was part of the mission. He needed this small pink creature alive.

“Stop! I didn’t mean for this to happen! Stop!” Davis cried as CzarGreymon stomped off, not caring to listen.

Only one thing existed, and that was Lord Dominomon.

“Stop!” Tai roared, flying up in a hurry.
The DigiDestined’s leader gasped and looked down at his hands to find them human-shaped and covered with flesh, then ran a hand through his wild brown hair. Everything seemed to be in working order. He sighed in relief.

“So it was all just a dream,” he said.

Tai looked around to find himself still in the forest. He, TK, Davis and their Digimon managed to get themselves lost, trying to dodge dangerous Digimon as they searched once more for Gennai’s house. They settled into a hiding tree for the night, its blue, gridded surface the only thing Tai could see. Outside, something stomped around and made a great deal of noise, but it either couldn’t detect them or just didn’t care.

Tai waited as patiently as he could for the loud creature to move on before looking outside to find it was morning. He then went about waking TK, Davis and their three Digimon friends.

“Wha, wha?” Davis muttered. “That thing outside woke me up.”

“Sorry,” Tai said. “The sun just came up. We should get on the road.”

“Okay,” Davis said, collecting DemiVeemon in his arms.

DemiVeemon did not wake up after becoming DarkLizardmon. Tai told Davis the horrible truth about SkullGreymon- a truth which may have effected his dreams that night- which only made him feel worse. They all hoped someone could help rouse DemiVeemon from his slumber.

Tai, TK, Davis and their Digimon wandered about the forest for a bit longer. After finding a river, they caught some fish for breakfast, which gifted Koromon with the strength to digivolve back to his Rookie form. They followed the river north for about a half-hour without any incident before Gennai’s lake came into view. The waters parted almost as soon as they found it, admitting them entrance.

“Help!” Davis cried as he raced down the stairs, nearly slipping on the wet stone. “It’s DemiVeemon! He won’t wake up!”

Matt, Kari and their Digimon were waiting for them at the bottom of the stairs, their eyes widening upon hearing of DemiVeemon’s condition. Tsunomon and Salamon long since digivolved to Gabumon and Gatomon. Taimon, Matimon and Gennai were nowhere to be seen, but the chosen Digimon could be found milling around outside. When they heard about DemiVeemon, they all stopped what they were doing and ran or flew over.

“What happened?” Gatomon asked.

His voice shaking, Tai relayed the entire story. The faces of the two humans and the Digimon darkened the further on he went.

“You’ve got to be kidding,” Matt said as Tai finished his story. “Davis would never let that happen to his partner.”

“It’s true,” Davis admitted sadly. “I was so worried about Yolei, Cody and Ken that I lost control.”

“Poor DemiVeemon,” Kari said softly, causing Davis to visibly wince.

“I’ll go get Gennai,” Matt said. “He’ll know what to do.”

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Taimon and Matimon woke up around this time. They were in a dark room underneath Gennai’s house. Blue lines of code danced along the walls, providing some light. Across from them were two wide glowing tubes- each about six inches high- filled with a blue fluid that wasn’t there last night. Wires connected them to the tubes from the outside, each ending in a sticky pad.

The night before- as Gennai explained to them- these wires drew from their data. They became exhausted within ten minutes and fell asleep. Now, the strange machine seemed to have stopped working. Taimon noticed the words “Data Extraction Complete” above each tube in blue, so he tried to carefully remove a wire from under his shirt.

“Let me help,” Gennai said as he entered the room through its single door.

The dark room flooded with light briefly, making Taimon and Matimon squint before the door closed behind Gennai. It sealed shut tightly. Only a glowing blue seam was the only indication it was there at all. Gennai faced the tubes, nodded, then removed the wires from the two Rookies one by one.

“Is that stuff the cure?” Taimon asked.

“We can only hope,” Gennai replied. “This cure hasn’t been tested, and the only way to really test it
is to use it on one of the Generals. After all, it was made specifically for them.”
“What will happen when the cure is used?” Matimon asked as he sat up.
“What I hope will happen is the virus that stabilizes the General will cease to be, turning them back
into an ordinary human,” Gennai replied.
“What about the Carriers?” Matimon asked. “You told me it would revive them.”
“I did not say that,” Gennai said as Matimon’s face fell. “I said I couldn’t answer the question at that
time. The only thing I could think of to cure the Generals would be to destroy the virus. The virus is
stored in your DigiCores, so reviving your friends outright would be difficult.
“I tried my best to incorporate your wishes. If I succeeded, they’ll be reborn as normal Digimon. If
not, they won’t be reborn at all. Keep in mind that my main priority was saving the DigiDestined,
so.”
“So what? So you don’t know if it’ll bring my friends back?” Matimon growled.
“We don’t even know if the Generals will be effected!” Taimon tried to assure his friend. “It could
do nothing. Then, we’re back to Square One.”
Matimon growled again but said nothing more as he held his head in his hands. If the cure really did
prioritize the DigiDestined over the Carriers, it meant that Yoleimon, Kodimon, Soramon, Izimon,
Jyoumon, Kennimon and Meimimon were gone forever. But there was no way to know that for sure.
Who knew if their plan would even work? If they went back to Square One, what would that mean?
For the Carriers? For the DigiDestined? Hell, even for the whole Digital World?
Gennai re-opened the door- making both Carriers shield their eyes- and said, “You’re probably
hungry after last night. Follow me. There’s some breakfast waiting for you.”
This renewed Taimon’s strength, and he ran right out the door. However, he slammed right into Matt
and fell down. Matt helped him up, then looked at Gennai seriously.
“Gennai,” he said. “There’s a problem with Veemon- no. DemiVeemon. There’s a problem with
DemiVeemon.”

There were only two Gladimon outside the cell at the moment. Palmon, Upamon and Bukamon were
all asleep, but Palmon was the first to awaken to notice the Gladimon weren’t paying any attention to
the cell at all. In fact, they were in the same place as Bukamon and Upamon- the land of slumbers.
Each Gladimon wielded two swords, one in each hand. They were currently hanging limply at their
sides. Seeing the shining weapons and the inattentive state of their captors gave Palmon the idea
she’d been seeking.
“Poison Ivy,” she whispered, her vines extending between the stalagmite bars of the cell.
Carefully, she grabbed the hilt of one of the blades and tried to wrench it away from the Gladimon
that held it. Gladimon suddenly yawned, causing Palmon to jump and recall her vines. Watching for
another opening, Palmon witnessed her target mumble something about Digi-Meat and fall asleep
again.
With the Gladimon asleep once more, Palmon dared to try again. This time, she was able to grip the
sword without any problems and- just as cautiously as she retrieved it- pulled it into the cell. She now
had one of the blades with her, but her idea was evolving. She couldn’t have just one sword in the
cell. She had to have all four of them, totally disarming the guards.
Palmon repeated the process of snatching the swords from her captors, careful not to wake them. Her
breath was hitched, as she feared that she’d drop a weapon or wake a Gladimon at any second.
Fortunately for her, the second and third sword were stolen without any issues.
The fourth and final sword was held by its owner quite firmly. It took a bit of goading to get the
Gladimon to release it. Said goading included an extra dose of paralyzing powder, which weakened
the Gladimon’s grip and let him surrender the sword to Palmon. She carefully pulled it through the
bars of her cage when a Gladimon sneezed. Startled, Palmon dropped the sword, which proceeded to
clang loudly against the other swords.
Every single sleeping soul- Bukamon and Upamon included- woke up immediately. Palmon did the
only thing she could think of doing- grab one sword in each hand, step in front of the In-Training
Digimon and hold her breath. She never used a sword before, but she could not let the Gladimon get
these weapons back. If she did, she might never see Mimi or the others again. “Wha- how did you get those?” one of the Gladimon demanded. “Who cares? Let’s get them back!” the other Gladimon snapped. “But if we do that, they’ll escape!” the first Gladimon pointed out. “Call for backup, then!” the second Gladimon ordered.

As the first Gladimon ran off, Palmon’s heart sank. She hadn’t anticipated this. If she was going to escape, she had to do it now. Gripping both swords, she stared down the Gladimon that remained. “What’re you gonna do with those, anyway?” Gladimon taunted. “I’m out here, and you’re still in there! It’s not like you have a key like I do or anything. What were you thinking?”

To be honest, Palmon wasn’t thinking. She was making this up as she went along. However, this new information gave her both new courage and the next step of her plan. “Poison Ivy!” Palmon cried, thrusting both swords full strength out of the cell, sending them flying to the other side of the room with a clatter.

As the Gladimon panicked and turned to grab them, Palmon noticed a golden key attached to his belt. She quickly snatched the more valuable item while his back was turned and reeled it into the cell. Palmon had little time to feel proud of her accomplishment. She unlocked the cell quickly by sticking the key in what was clearly a keyhole in the side of the rock that made up her cell. The “bars” dissolved into data, allowing Palmon to grab both Bukamon and Upamon and run for it.

As the newly armed Gladimon turned around to find only his comrade’s swords in the cell. As his friend returned with two more Gladimon, he blabbered, “Help! They got out! I don’t know how, but they got out!”

“Search for them! Hurry!” the Gladimon all shouted amongst themselves before breaking off to hunt down the runaway Digimon.

In the room where the cure was stored, DemiVeemon lay still. The remaining DigiDestined, their Digimon friends and Gennai gathered around him. The cure was explained to the DigiDestined and their partners by Gennai long ago, so each and every person and digital monster was up to speed. Now, all they had to do was rouse DemiVeemon and they could return to File Island to fight the Domino Army.

Gennai carefully observed the little Digimon before him while Davis cursed silently. If only Joe wasn’t converted! Then he could help DemiVeemon recover faster.

“Will he be okay?” Davis asked with uncharacteristic nervousness. “He will be fine, but he’ll have to sleep for a few days,” Gennai replied. “A few days? But-” Davis began. “Davis, your impatience is what caused DemiVeemon to enter this state in the first place,” Gennai said sternly.

With this reminder, Davis fell silent again, kneeling beside his partner. “I’m sorry, buddy,” he said quietly. “I’m sorry I made you into that thing.” “I’m sure he’ll forgive you,” Agumon assured. “He’s your partner Digimon, after all. You’re friends for life, no matter what happens!”

“Thank you, Agumon,” Davis said, his gaze not leaving DemiVeemon’s prone form. There was a sudden, loud rumble as the earth shook with violent force. “What’s going on?” Hawkmon asked.

“It must be some kind of earthquake!” Tentomon shouted. “Obviously. But what’s causing it?” Gatomon asked.

Gatomon got her answer, but it was an answer nobody wanted. An enormous foot crashed through the roof, knocking Gennai out cold. The foot covered in brown fur belonged to a familiar behemoth. Looking down on them was none other than BerserkVikemon. HackerKabuterimon flew in the sky not too far away.

“We still know of this place,” HackerKabuterimon replied. “I retained all of my memories from when I was a weak human— including the location of Gennai’s house and how to enter. Now, turn the Carriers over and come with us.”

“No way!” Tai spat.

“You asked for it, then,” BerserkVikemon said. “Bone Hammer!”

As BerserkVikemon began to swing his massive arms into the air, HackerKabuterimon sneered. Tai was about to give the order to digivolve, but his eyes widened in horror and he grabbed Kari instead. Matt—knowing resistance would be futile at this point and that he only had a few seconds to act—quickly grabbed both vials of the cure and stuffed them in his pockets before BerserkVikemon’s great fists came down.

Dust flew everywhere as the kids and their Digimon allies were knocked to the ground. The room was smashed to smithereens, the walls crumbling like cookies. As he hurdled through space, Matt silently prayed the Domino Army wouldn’t notice his precious cargo. Then, everything went dark.
Sorry for the long wait. I had this chapter up on dA for a while, then noticed someone left kudos on this work. So I decided to upload it here. Fear not- the last few chapters will be uploaded to dA and a03 simultaneously. I hope.

Hi, this is Taimon! Guess what- Gennai was able to complete the cure! We don’t know if it works yet, but we have it! Unfortunately, DemiVeemon- Davis’s partner- is sleeping, and we can’t wake him. Gennai said it would take a few days. Just when we thought we’d get to spend those few days peacefully, two of the Generals attacked! I can’t really remember anything that happened after BerserkVikemon his us with his Bone Hammer attack. Where are we? I hope we’re not...

It took a day for HackerKabuterimon and BerserkVikemon to return to Infinity Mountain. In that time, the Domino Army’s base was turned upside down as they attempted to find Palmon, Upamon and Bukamon. Fortunately, Palmon and the babies proved to be very good at hiding and running. The occasional Fangmon or Gladimon did stumble upon them, but they always escaped, leading to accusations of crying wolf all around and punishments handed out by stronger Digimon.

When the Generals returned with the DigiDestined, the search was put on hold. The kids and Digimon were all still unconscious, which made it easier to place them in a cell while Dominomon prepared for the final transformations. They would occur in a ceremony, followed by an unopposed takeover of the Digital World. The Real World would fall quickly afterwards.

Taimon and Matimon were summoned to Dominomon’s chambers within the hour of their capture. The two Porcupamon that brought them there knew the reason- punishment. Thank King Drasil it wasn’t them! The Porcupamon were on the receiving end of Dominomon’s attacks more than once, and they did not envy the Carriers one bit.

Taimon and Matimon were both dumped in Dominomon’s chambers like pieces of garbage. The Porcupamon scurried out of the room before Dominomon could say anything. The great bone dragon growled and looked down at the rogues he ordered Reevemon to create. What terrible creatures to rebel against him, he thought. Still, he would need them tonight to claim the DigiDestined of Courage and Friendship. Therefore, they would live.

But punishment was still in order.

By the time Taimon and Matimon woke up, the Generals, Reevemon and Baronessmon all gathered. Taimon leapt to his feet and stared down Dominomon, while Matimon remained on the ground, eyes half-open.

“Do you recognize this room?” Dominomon asked. “This is the chamber where Reevemon left your DigiEggs to incubate. I watched over them- day in and day out- and this is how you repay me?”
The last two words emerged in a snarl that made even Taimon jump, but did little to change the Rookies’ minds. “We’re not afraid of you!” Taimon shouted. “So just use kill me and get it over-with. I’m the one who started all this, after all. Just let Matimon go.”

“That’s an odd request,” MasterAnkylomon said thoughtfully. “Why would you offer your life in exchange for Matimon’s?”

“Because I did what I set out to do,” Taimon said seriously. “I warned the Digimon. They’re going to destroy you, Dominomon.”

“With all of us here?” SaberPheonixmon said with a laugh. “I seriously doubt it, lizard.”

Turning to face the General, Taimon softly said, “There’s a cure that can turn you back to normal, Sora. You can be with Biyomon again. Then, you can all fight-”

“A cure?” Reevemon interrupted. “There is no cure!”

“There wasn’t before, but now there is!” Taimon said proudly. “Gennai made it!”

“Shut up,” Matimon hissed from the floor. “Shut up.”

The assembled Digimon- save Matimon- all laughed heartily at Taimon’s babbling. “Well, you certainly are confident about this ‘cure’, little one,” Baronessmon said. “Tell me- does it actually work?”

All of Taimon’s bravado drained from him. “I don’t know,” he said sadly.

“Well, any cure is a threat to my plans,” Dominomon said. “After tonight’s ceremony, we will go to this Gennai and destroy him and this cure.”

“Destroy Gennai?” HackerKabuterimon said. “Why destroy him? We might be able to use hi-”

“I said we shall destroy him!” Dominomon roared.

HackerKabuterimon blinked. “As you command, Lord Dominomon,” he said, bowing his head.

“Hail Lord Dominomon,” the other Generals said, all in a single chorus.

Dominomon smirked as best as a skeleton could. “Do you see?” he asked. “The Generals will retain their loyalty to me until death. Every word I say is their law. I am their god!”

“Not if we can get the cure here!” Taimon said.

“Oh, do be quiet about the cure,” Baronessmon said. “It counteracts your very reason for being.”

“That’s not-” Taimon said, but Dominomon was already inhaling, dark smog surrounding his mouth.

“Baronessmon, that’s Ashes Ashes,” Matimon said.

“Hm. So it is,” Baronessmon said indifferently.

“Help us, Baronessmon,” Matimon begged. “You’re our parent. You’re the only one who has a heart in the entire Domino Army. If you can’t stop this-”

“I don’t want to stop this,” Baronessmon said. “Bad little Digimon deserve to be punished.”
“Wha-” Matimon began, but- with a cry of the attack’s name from Dominomon- the fog of death itself began to leak into the room.

However, this wasn’t a blast as usual. It leaked slowly, gradually building in power. The Digimon all backed up with smirks on their faces. The only exceptions were Taimon- who stood to face the attack dead-on- and Matimon, who crawled towards Baronessmon.

“You’re the closest thing we Carriers have to a mother,” Matimon whispered.

“Oh? I was?” Baronessmon asked, putting a finger to her chin. “I didn’t know any of you rats felt that way about me. Well, you’ll be nothing but raw data inside of powerful Generals by tonight. That was always your fate. Why should I care?”

“Wait. You knew we’d disappear this entire time and you never told us?” Matimon asked.

His question was only answered by a knowing smile. His eyes widened as Dominomon’s attack reached its peak. It wouldn’t affect the higher-level Digimon (save for having to deal with a nasty smell), but it was all too much for the two Rookies. They fell to their knees and coughed and vomited, but Dominomon showed them no mercy. He used the attack until both of them were on the floor, completely unconscious once more.

“DeathRosemon!” Dominomon barked. “Go to the dungeon and deposit these two traitors. And- while you are there- check to see if any of the kids or Digimon in the cell have this cure. One of them might have smuggled it in. Don’t think this means Gennai is safe either. We will deal with him after the ceremony.”

“Yes, Lord Dominomon,” DeathRosemon said cheerfully as she left the room.

BerserkVikemon was about to say something, but a look from his master silenced him. After all, Dominomon’s word was law. He was their god.

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“Hey Palmon, Palmon!” chirped Bukamon. “Guess what?”

“We need to be quiet, Bukamon,” Palmon cautioned as a Fangmon passed their hiding place- a crevasse in the wall big enough to fit them, but too small for most Champions to squeeze through..

“I’m hungry,” Bukamon said with a serious expression.

“Me too,” Upamon added. “I could go for a leg of DigiMeat right about now.”

Palmon sighed and held the baby Digimon closer to her. Since their escape, they’d done nothing but complain about food. Each and every exit was heavily guarded, so just walking out wasn’t an option. Palmon had to find DeathRosemon- no, Mimi. Mimi would be able to help them.

Palmon led Bukamon and Upamon out of the crevasse once the Fangmon was gone. Together, they crossed the hallway in silence, traveling in a line with Palmon at the head. Palmon kept an eye out for food. Maybe it would help the babies stop complaining and possibly giving away their position. Even better, it might help them digivolve.

Palmon’s mind drifted back to that horrible night when Mimi transformed. With their partners in these twisted forms, they couldn’t digivolve. But Boogiemon said that smaller Digimon would digivolve easily. Perhaps there was hope she could restore them to their Rookie forms with some food.
As Palmon wandered around, lost in her thoughts, she couldn’t see where she was going and bumped into another Digimon. Both of them fell down, with Palmon falling into the babies trailing behind her. Palmon jumped back up, ready to fight, but the other Digimon just groaned.

Now that Palmon could see him better, he looked a lot like a taller Veemon wearing a flame jacket that was the splitting image of Davis’s. Short spiky hair grew from his head. This was clearly one of the Carriers. Palmon gulped and looked around, but she couldn’t see any other Carriers around.

The Carrier recovered from the crash and looked at her. He sighed in relief and stood up. “You guys aren’t guards,” he said. “Good. Hey, I heard the DigiDestined just got caught. Any idea where they might be?”

“Oh no!” Upamon cried. “I mean, oh, we don’t know.”

“We’re just as clueless as you,” Bukamon added.

This new information sent Palmon spiraling into hopelessness. She wasn’t sure how many DigiDestined were caught or if some of her friends escaped. If they were all caught, then it was all over. The Digital World and Real World were both in danger of falling to the Domino Army.

Shaking her head to recover from the shock, she asked, “Who are you? Why do you want to know where the DigiDestined are?”

“Name’s Daevimon,” the Carrier said, pointing to himself and smiling confidently, exposing tiny fangs. “I want to find the DigiDestined meant for me. I want to fulfill my purpose and I just. Can’t. Wait!”

There was something innocent and charming about Daevimon’s actions, but Palmon knew that he could not find the DigiDestined under any circumstances. Still, she had no clue where they were. However, she could stall for time the best she could. In fact, she might also be able to solve the hunger problem at the same time.

“We’ll help you look, but only if you feed Upamon and Bukamon,” Palmon said.

“What? But Davis-” Bukamon began.

“That’s his name? Davis?” Daevimon said eagerly.

“Uh, no,” Bukamon said.

“Wait,” Daevimon said, dropping his excited act. “How do you know his name?”

“Uh, we’re new to the Domino Army and we work for a guy way high up!” Upamon said, adding to the story.

“That’s awful,” Daevimon said sadly. “I’ll show you where the food is. C’mon, follow me. But we have to be quick. The Fangmon like hanging out there.”
Daevimon led the three Chosen Digimon to a large crevasse filled to the brim with DigiMeat. The two babies jumped on the pile and ate at top speed, while Palmon took one leg for herself and nibbled carefully. She was forming the final part of her plan- paralyzing Daevimon with her Poison Ivy so the three of them could flee. Before she did this, however, she wanted to finish eating and ask one question.

“Where is DeathRosemon?” Palmon asked.

“Dunno,” Daevimon replied. “The Generals are usually super busy. I mean, it sucks that I don’t get to see Meimimon anymore. She disappeared when DeathRosemon was created. Baronessmon assured me that she achieved a higher state of existence and that she’s okay, but I still miss her.”

Palmon stared at her DigiMeat. Suddenly, it tasted rancid. She felt bad for the Carriers, who were obviously tools in all of this. She really didn’t want to hurt Daevimon- who didn’t seem malicious- but her programming to protect Mimi was stronger. Mimi was her friend, and Palmon would do anything for her.

Anything.

Palmon whistled to the two babies, who looked up from their meal. At some point- quickly and silently- they had returned to their Rookie forms of Gomamon and Armadillomon. Turning back to Daevimon, she said, “I’m sorry,” with all the sincerity she could muster. After all, she was truly sorry for what she had to do next.

“Sorry for what?” Daevimon asked.

“Poison Ivy!” Palmon cried.

The attack struck like a whip. Before Daevimon could react, he was on the floor, unable to move a muscle. The vines themselves barely hit him, but the paralyzing powder in them did, and it was working to full effect.

“Run!” Palmon cried.

Gomamon and Armadillomon ran- each carrying a leg of DigiMeat- and left an angry Daevimon in the dust. His vocal chords were not paralyzed, allowing him to fire off a string of angry curses.

His words did nothing to stop them.

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The other Digimon were long gone by the time Daevimon could move again- something he figured was planned from the start.

His little plot was delayed, but it wasn’t stopped. Rising shakily to his feet, he dusted himself off and went off in the direction the three Rookies ran. Maybe they did know where the DigiDestined were and were hiding it. Maybe not. One thing, however, was sure as day.

He wanted revenge, and he was going to get it.

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Tai was the first to wake up. He looked around at the stalagmites rising from the floor, forming a
cage around his friends and himself. In that instant, he knew he was captured. The others rose one by one on their own not long afterwards, reacting in various mixtures of shock, fear and anger. Several Fangmon passed by their prison, and Tai knew- almost instinctually- that he was in the Domino Army’s territory.

The only one who didn’t awaken was DemiVeemon, who still remained in the mysterious sleep he fell into after dark digivolving. Davis clutched the little Digimon tightly as the flutter of wings got the group’s attention. A fairy Digimon with a bone motif floated towards their cell.

“Mimi,” TK said. It was all he could say.

“Wait. That’s Mimi?” Gabumon asked.

Giving the cell a second look-around, Tai noticed the Carriers were missing. “Mimi!” he cried out, “Where’s Taimon and Matimon?”

The Digimon once known as Mimi let out a huff. “I am DeathRosemon, one of the great Generals of Lord Dominomon,” she insisted. “One of your friends told us about the cure. Now hand it over.”

“What are you talking about? There’s no cure! We don’t-” Davis babbled.

As Davis fumbled for an excuse, four more Digimon entered, screaming and running top speed. Palmon, Gomamon and Armadillomon entered first, followed by a humanoid Veemon. The Veemon-creature seemed furious, but his presence made DeathRosemon smile sweetly.

“If you won’t tell me where the cure is, I will add another of you to our ranks,” DeathRosemon said, grabbing the Veemon-esque Digimon by the head as he ran by. He grumbled, but made no other move to protest. “Lord Dominomon told me which Carrier matches which DigiDestined- although it’s fairly obvious. Do you want to ascend, Davis?”

The last sentence was a growled threat. The humans shrunk away, except for Tai and Davis. “Davis won’t surrender to the likes of you!” Tai spat.

“Shut up and let him decide!” DeathRosemon snapped back.

“I’ll do it,” Davis said, the three Rookie Digimon outside the prison skidding to a halt.

“What?” the heroic DigiDestined and Digimon all cried at once.

“Davis, why?” TK asked.

“They know about the cure,” Davis said. “There’s no getting around that. Besides-” Here, he whispered to Tai. “While I keep her occupied, you guys can make a run for it.”

The older DigiDestined’s eyes widened. “Are you serious?” he asked.

“Super-serious,” Davis replied in a whisper, his voice betraying no shakiness or anxiety. “It’s a gamble, but it’s our best bet.” Turning to DeathRosemon, he added, “Open the gates so I can get to the Carrier.”

Tai crouched down, ready to run. The others followed his example, despite not knowing the full details of the plot. The only exception was Matt, who had a different plan. The DigiDestined of Friendship stalked to the edge of the bars. He fished a single blue vial out of his pocket.

“This is the cure,” Matt said. “You want it? Come and get it.”
“Matt!” Tai snapped.

“Matt,” Kari repeated, her tone much softer.

DeathRosemon smirked and reached for the cure. Matt responded by backing further into the cage.

“Mimi! Stop!” Palmon cried out.

DeathRosemon turned to face Palmon, a look of recognition softening her features. Her face soon turned steel-hard again, but it was too late. Matt hurled the cure at DeathRosemon. The vial exploded into a giant cloud of blue smoke, which filed up the whole dungeon. The General let out a scream as her wings dissolved. In her agony, she released Daevimon, who rushed up to the bars and squeezed his hand through, grabbing Davis by the arm. He smirked as he dissolved and Davis glowed black and red.

“Davis! No!” Tai shouted, but it was too late.

Davis groaned, dropping DemiVeemon on the floor. DeathRosemon groaned as well. Two transformations then occurred near simultaneously. The bone dress of DeathRosemon became fabric once more, her body turning from data to flesh. Her staff vanished as her hair fell down from its former elaborate style. She lost a few inches in height and gasped, turning to look at Palmon.

“Mimi?” Palmon asked hesitantly.

“Palmon? Palmon!” Mimi cried out.

Palmon rushed over to Mimi with tears in her eyes, leaping into her arms for a hug. There she stayed as a more tragic transformation occurred across the way, causing Davis’s body to shift and change. Palmon looked down and found a green DigiEgg covered with tiny pink flowers in Mimi’s lap. She took it and was about to tell the others about it, but they had more pressing matters to deal with.

Davis groaned as he fell to all fours, his hands and feet morphing into three-clawed feet. At the same time, his neck stretched to the ceiling uncomfortably. A muzzle formed in time to this change, along with a bone helmet splattered with red markings that resembled blood. Davis’s hair remained, sticking out from under the helmet.

As Davis increased in size, his goggles snapped off. Tai caught them as Davis’s increasing bulk shattered the stalagmite cage. He used a powerful claw to push his way free and roared, exposing sharp, drooling fangs. His squishy human flesh became coated in plates of bone, taking on a familiar pattern.

“Imperialdramon,” TK whispered.

It was true. Davis was becoming a form of Imperialdramon. This creature lacked the real Imperialdramon’s long, golden claws on its forelegs. He did, however, have tattered wings erupt from his back, along with a tail made of spiked, segmented bone come from his rear. A small bump formed on his back, rapidly growing into a fully-formed Positron Laser covered with blood-red spikes.

“Davis-” TK began, but he was greeted by a pair of uncaring blood-red eyes.

“I am LordVeedramon,” the new General said in a deep voice. Turning to Mimi, he added, “What has become of DeathRosemon?”

“We cured her, and we’ll cure you too, Davis!” Tai vowed, pocketing the goggles and scooping up
the fallen DemiVeemon.

“I only have one vial of the cure left, Tai,” Matt pointed out. “I took both vials from Gennai just before the Generals brought us here.”

“Good thinking,” TK said.

“Plus, now we know it works,” Kari added.

LordVeedramon snarled at the small army of Digimon standing before him. He blocked the way out of the dungeons with his massive body.

“Davis! Move!” TK demanded.


“We have no choice,” Gabumon said. “We have to digivolve and fight our way past him.”

“But Davis is our friend!” Gatomon objected.

“Wait a second,” Tai said. “TK! Didn’t they have some kind of ceremony the last time they changed a bunch of us?”

TK nodded, while Tentomon confirmed, “They gathered everyone in a big room. I can show you the way!”

“Okay then. Let’s lure Davis to that room,” Tai suggested. “Our friends have to be there.”

“Good luck with that! Bone Crusher!” LordVeedramon roared, charging the Positron Laser on his back.

But the long charge time allowed some of the heroic Digimon to digivolve as high as they could go. Agumon became WarGreymon and blocked the shot from reaching the kids and the Digimon who could not digivolve. Meanwhile, the newly-digivolved MetalGarurumon, Seraphimon and Magnadramon all rose up at once and dashed down the hall, following the comparatively tiny form of Tentomon.

“What the- where are you going? I can’t let you harm Lord Dominomon!” LordVeedramon roared as he followed the three heroic Digimon out of sight.

All that was left in the room was rubble and some disoriented kids and Digimon. After a while, Matt said, “So much for not letting himself get lured away.”

“Let’s go after them,” Tai said seriously. “Hopefully, we find our friends. All of them.”

Palmon nodded, holding the DigiEgg tightly. Hawkmon noticed the object and said, “Palmon? What is that? Where did you find it?”
Our Final Hour

This is Matimon, and I have bad news. We’re back in the Domino Army’s headquarters- the place where Taimon and I grew up. Dominomon knows about the cure, Baronessmon- our so-called “mother” is against us, and the DigiDestined are totally enslaved to Dominomon’s will. This situation is totally hopeless! What will we do? I hope Taimon gets an idea soon. He always knows what to do...

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The grand procession was led by Dominomon himself, followed closely by his most valuable minions- Baronessmon and Reevemon. Each of them held an unconscious Carrier. The Carriers had their hands tied behind their back and their feet tied together with sturdy rope. Reevemon grumbled as he carried Taimon- who was apparently heavier than Matimon by a small margin. Ironically, it was Baronessmon who carried the unconscious form of Matimon, cooing sweet nothings to him that mattered little.

Behind the leaders were the Generals. SaberPhoenixmon, BerserkVikemon, HackerKabuterimon, BossAquilamon, MasterAnkylomon and KaiserKuwagamon walked in two rows of three. At the very back of this group were a nervous but excited Tiikeimon and Karimon, along with five Fangmon.

Dominomon waited for DeathRosemon to return, but she never did. He also couldn’t find Daevimon. The Fangmon were looking around to find out what happened to them, along with retrieve the DigiDestined from the dungeon. The skilled hunters would make sure that everything was in place for the ceremony.

As Dominomon arrived in the central chamber, he smiled as his minions chanted his name. From Fangmon to Porcupamon to Armormon and more, his minions worshipped the ground he walked upon. The Fangmon in the procession slunk off to the dungeons as the other Digimon entered the room. Taimon and Matimon were thrown onto the stone platform in the room’s center, waking them up. They immediately realized they were bound and tried to squirm their way to freedom to no avail.

The chanting died down as a few Digimon realized that DeathRosemon wasn’t there. Dominomon coughed to get their attention. It was best to get the children and begin right away- even without Daevimon or DeathRosemon present. The longer the DigiDestined were left unattended, the longer they had a chance to use the cure. A seed of doubt sprouted in the back of his mind. Had DeathRosemon really been cured of the virus?

No. That was foolish. She was just preoccupied with the DigiDestined. That was all.

“Attention!” Dominomon roared. “Tonight is a joyous night for all! In just a few minutes, the last of the DigiDestined will fall to our temptation. They will join us, and both the Digital and Real Worlds will belong to us!”

The room was filled with cheers as this short but rousing speech chased away all doubts. As the cheering died down, a Boogiemon looked up and pointed, shouting, “The hell is that?”

Everyone looked up to find Tentomon buzzing in. The Tentomon was no threat, but three unfamiliar and clearly aggressive Megas were following it. Behind these enemies was a Digimon that was clearly a General, but this was a new one.
“Lord Dominomon!” the General cried. “I am Lord Veedramon! I will not let these pests destroy you!”

Dominomon smirked for a moment. So that was what became of Daevimon- he fused with his chosen DigiDestined. That didn’t solve the DeathRosemon problem, but the Fangmon would bring the answer to that pickle back soon enough. That’s what Dominomon figured until one of the Digimon- a MetalGarurumon- decided to speak.

“It’s over, Dominomon,” said MetalGarurumon. “We’ve managed to save Mimi, and we’ll free all of the other DigiDestined from your wicked rule as well.”

The possibility of the cure changing DeathRosemon back into a human was becoming more and more real. Dominomon knew in his bones that these three powerful Megas had to go. He noticed the great Seraphimon amongst their ranks, but that didn’t faze him.

Not on the outside, anyway.

“Not a chance!” Dominomon shouted, trying to hide his unease. “Destroy them, my Generals!”

The seven Generals turned on the three intruders, but they didn’t run away. In fact, they were joined by a fourth Digimon- this one a WarGreymon. The four of them shook as they tried to plan how to stall their friends. It was clear they did not wish to hurt the Generals.

Dominomon felt confident once more. He would use that weakness to turn them to data.

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Shortly before this, Tai sent WarGreymon ahead to join the other Megas. Meanwhile, the DigiEgg in Palmon’s arms became the center of attention.

“Did the cure make that somehow?” Biyomon asked.

“I don’t know,” Mimi replied. “We just found it.”

Hawkmon studied the egg carefully. “It’s not a special DigiEgg like the DigiEgg of Love,” he concluded after a bit. “It seems to be the kind of DigiEgg with a baby Digimon inside.”

“But why would that be?” Tai asked. “Unless- no. What if DeathRosemon is in there somehow?”

This caused most of the group to fly into a panic. Palmon shrunk back as they all freaked out over the egg’s potential contents.

“We don’t want her to come back!” Wormmon cried.

“Yea! What if something happens to Mimi or even Joe when it hatches?” Gomamon added.

“I don’t think it’s DeathRosemon,” Palmon said. “At least, I hope not,” she added in a mutter.

“That’s enough!” Mimi cried. “Even if that is DeathRosemon’s DigiEgg, she’ll just be reborn as a baby Digimon. She wouldn’t be a threat to us. Who knows if she’d even remember who we were?”

“Patamon and Wormmon had their memories when they were reborn,” TK pointed out.

“I think we should have Gennai look at it first, before we do something rash,” Mimi said.

“Agreed,” Matt added.
“Or we could just make scrambled eggs right now and not worry about it later,” Tai suggested.

“But what if that’s not DeathRosemon?” Matt challenged. “You’d really kill a potentially innocent Digimon-”

“What if we knew for sure someone like Piedmon or Myotismon was in there?” Tai shot back, stepping forward to challenge Matt.

“Okay, that’s enough of that,” TK said, getting between the two, arms spread wide. “Mimi is right. We don’t know what’s in this DigiEgg, and—even if it is the General—they’ll just hatch as a baby, and we can figure it out from there. We should let Gennai examine it.”

“But—” Tai began.

“It’s not important right now,” TK said. “What is important is getting the cure to our friends.”

Tai made a small, growling noise in his throat, but backed off. “Fine,” he said. “But I don’t think Matt should hold the cure. He might throw it impulsively again.”

“That wasn’t impulsively—” Matt began, but he was cut off.

“I’ll take it if it bothers you so much, Tai,” Kari volunteered.

“Kari?” Tai asked. “But—”

“It’s either me or your sister, Tai,” Matt challenged. “Take your pick, ‘fearless leader’.”

Tai took a deep breath. “Fine,” he said, still clearly mad at Matt. “Give it to Kari.”

Matt grumbled but did as he was told, taking the remaining blue vial out of his pocket and giving it to Kari. Kari put it in her pocket, then shook her head at the two silly boys. Even now— with the final battle looming close—it seemed they always find something to argue over.

“I’ll hold the DigiEgg for now,” Mimi said. “That way, you can fight it you need to, Palmon.”

Palmon handed the DigiEgg to Mimi without hesitation with a smile. “It’s good to see you again, Mimi,” she said.

Before anyone could say anything else, five Fangmon bounded into the dungeon. They snarled and growled as they got closer to the DigiDestined. Entering a triangle formation, the one in the center—the clear leader—barked, “So this is what happened! They escaped!”

“But where’s DeathRosemon?” asked one of the followers.

“Who cares? Capture them! Bring them to the ceremony!” the leader ordered.

Four Fangmon jumped towards the kids, but Palmon stood between them and their attackers. A flash of light later, Togemon stood in her place, ready to fight the wolf Digimon.

“Blast Coffin!” the Fangmon cried at once, each preparing a dark energy blast.

“Needle Spray!” Togemon retaliated, firing a burst of needles at the creatures. They stopped charging and ran behind their leader with their tails between their legs, whimpering the whole while.

“The hell are you scared of? That’s just another Champion!” the lead Fangmon growled. “Finish it off!”
With renewed vigor, the flunky Fangmon leapt at Togemon again. “Blast Coffin!” they alls shouted, this time releasing their attacks quicker.

All of the energy blasts hit Togemon dead on, making her fly over the kids’ heads and into a nearby wall. With Togemon out of the way, the Fangmon recovered their confidence. They licked their lips and began to advance on the DigiDestined, not noticing Togemon rising and digivolving one more time.

“Flower Cannon!” the freshly digivolved Lillymon announced, taking out two of the Fangmon in one blow.

The remaining flunkies took one look at the Ultimate level and- whining- ran out of the room before they joined their friends as piles of data. The lead Fangmon stuck around, shouting, “Cowards? You’re scared of a mere fairy? Pathetic!” Turning back to Lillymon, he made the first attack of the fight. With a cry of “Blast Coffin!”, he charged.

This proved to be a foolish mistake. Lillymon gracefully dodged while the Rookies- feeling braver now that there was just one enemy- joined the fight. The Fangmon tried to dodge the barrage of attacks that came from the Rookies- a Diamond Shell here, a Spiral Twister there- but all that accomplished was tangling his long limbs. He fell to the ground and was a sitting duck for Wormmon.

“Sticky Net!” Wormmon said as he used his attack.

A thin but tough silk string flew from Wormmon’s mouth, tying up the collapsed Fangmon. Fangmon snarled and tried to get up, but he couldn’t move. He looked at the incoming attacks- Feather Strike, Marching Fishes and Flower Cannon. There was nothing he could do but howl as he shattered into data.

The Digimon and DigiDestined all let out a sigh of relief. “That was awesome!” Gomamon finally said. “Did you see that? I sent them packing!”

“But isn’t it odd that they didn’t notice Mimi?” Hawkmon asked. “They just noticed DeathRosemon wasn’t here.”

“Weird, but I guess they’re not paid for being smart,” Tai figured. “Let’s go to the ceremony- um, where is it?”

“I’ll lead the way,” TK said.

With TK at the head of their group, the DigiDestined and their Digimon all raced out, like fish downstream. Lillymon didn’t bother to de-digivolve. She knew there would be a tough fight ahead.

“Hacking Lightning! Hacking Lightning! Hacking Lightning!”

Magnadramon proved to be too agile for HackerKabuterimon, dodging his special, de-digivolving attack with expert skill. However, this kept her tied up and basically out of the fight.

Several Armormon charged Seraphimon, trying to hit him with their Justice Strike attacks. Little did they know, it would be their last and most foolish mistake.

“Strike of the Seven Stars!” cried Seraphimon as he created seven spheres of light and pelted the Armormon. Not a single one was left standing.
“Lord Dominomon!” howled two Fangmon as they stumbled into the room. “DeathRosemon is missing and the kids escaped!”

This was not news Dominomon wanted to hear, and it showed in his smoldering eye sockets. “Where is DeathRosemon?” he demanded.

“We don’t know! A Lillymon killed two of our group, and now—” one of the Fangmon said.

“Lillymon?” Dominomon asked. If he wasn’t made of bone, he would have paled. That was Palmon’s Ultimate form, and Palmon should not have been able to digivolve.

Unless...

“Um, yea,” the other Fangmon replied nervously. “They were a Palmon, then a Togemon, then a Lillymon. I saw them digivolve rapidly with my own eyes!”

The Fangmon’s report confirmed that the cure was real, and it could rob him of his Generals. This enraged Dominomon so much that his head fell from his body. His entire body collapsed into a pile of bones. The invading Megas blinked and stopped attacking, save for Magnadramon, who was still technically in HackerKabuterimon’s grip. They put their guard up again immediately as two large bones flew towards the Fangmon.

“Bone Spears!” came the echoing, disembodied voice of Dominomon as both Fangmon were instantly annihilated. The bones returned to Dominomon’s body, which quickly reassembled itself.

“He’s pretty strong,” WarGreymon noted.

“Indeed,” Dominomon replied. “But I have no need to fight you! I have my Generals! Attack!”

“I’m trying!” HackerKabuterimon snapped.

WarGreymon, Seraphimon and MetalGarurumon got closer, trying to get behind the Generals and reach Dominomon himself. As they moved to do so, they were blasted back with SaberPhoenixmon’s Crimson-Light Explosion. The beam was spread out so it could hit all the Megas, but it did not kill them instantly. It did, however, leave them gasping for breath.

“Bone Hammer!” BerserkVikemon cried, jumping into the air and creating a huge shockwave that knocked over most of the Domino Army’s minions, who wailed as the fell over.

Seraphimon was unaffected by the attack and WarGreymon jumped into the air to dodge, but MetalGarurumon was sent flying into the wall. Still, it would take more than that to fell the Mega-level, and he struggled back to his feet.

“Bone Crusher!” LordVeedramon roared, unleashing a shot he’d been charging. WarGreymon was struck and fell to earth, but rose quickly.

“What should we do?” Seraphimon asked.

“We might have to attack the Generals,” WarGreymon said gravely. “Otherwise, we’ll never reach Dominomon.”

“But I could never— oh, what if that was Matt?” MetalGarurumon growled.

As all of this was going on, Tentomon landed on the platform where Taimon and Matimon were bound. With a quick slice of his claws, the ropes were torn and the Carriers were freed. This made
Dominomon even more outraged. Reevemon muttered and retreated, while Baronessmon turned to her boss and said, “I know, I know. Things aren’t going our way, and it’s making you angry. But do not kill the Carriers. It would destroy your plan.”

“You’re right,” Dominomon admitted. “But nothing’s stopping me from crushing that bug! HackerKabuterimon! After him!”

“Tentomon! Run!” Taimon cried.

HackerKabuterimon abandoned his prey and chased his former partner. Tentomon stopped to face him.

“Run!” Matimon cried.

“Izzy? Izzy! It’s me! Tentomon!” Tentomon cried out.

“I don’t care! Hacking Lightning!” HackerKabuterimon roared.

Before the attack could even fire off, a new voice called out, “That’s enough!”

Everyone turned to face the newcomers- the remnants of the DigiDestined. Dominomon could clearly see Mimi amongst them, in place of his General, DeathRosemon. This made his data burn with fury. How could they have found a cure?

No matter. It was only one General, and he was hiding behind seven of them, plus Baronessmon, who stepped up to join the fight with a hiss. If only he could count of Reevemon as well, but that fool always claimed he “wasn’t a fighter”. Today was no different as he was currently fleeing from the room, screaming all the way.

Oh well. He’d deal with the coward later. In the meantime, there were children to convert and Digimon to destroy. Dominomon turned and found Karimon and Tiikeimon emerging from the crowd, ready to go, ready to change, ready to sacrifice their lives for him.

“Karimon. Tiikeimon,” Dominomon ordered. “Go to your DigiDestined and add them to my army of Generals.”

“What about us?” Matimon asked.

“You will follow them,” Baronessmon replied. “You have no choice.”

“No way!” Taimon spat. “We don’t listen to you guys anymore!”

Dominomon was about to say something else when a low rumbling came from the western wall and-for the second time since this whole thing began- it crumbled apart.
Taimon here! Great news! The DigiDestined escaped, and it looks like everything is ready for the final battle! Sure, we’re outnumbered around seven Generals to five Chosen Digimon, but it’ll be okay in the end! I’m sure of it! Dominomon is still trying to boss us around, but we’re not gonna take that anymore. In fact, I just declared I wouldn’t follow him- again- when the wall crumbled for no reason at all! Wait a second. The smoke is clearing, and I can see...

The crumbled wall spat heavy rocks onto the Domino Army’s minions, deleting some instantly. The stronger Digimon dodged or shrugged them off. Taimon, Matimon and the Chosen Digimon all surrounded the DigiDestined to protect them.

“What the- who was that?” Dominomon demanded.

The dust settled to reveal a Mammothmon. At the feet of this behemoth were several smaller Digimon, all ready to fight. From Drimogemon to Apemon to FlameWizardmon, it seemed like there wasn’t a single Champion-level that wasn’t present. Leading the charge was a purple rabbit Digimon with two claw-like weapons on each arm. Upon seeing the DigiDestined, he waved cheerfully.

“Do I know you?” Tai asked.

“My name is Turuiemon!” the purple rabbit chirped. “I digivolved a long time ago, but I used to be a Lopmon. You saved me from DarkTyrannomon, remember?”

The DigiDestined all nodded. Yes, they had indeed saved a Lopmon from one of the Domino Army’s brutes, but that felt like a million years ago. In that time, Monzaemon died, Taimon and Matimon joined them and seven of their friends- eight, if Mimi was counted- became evil Digimon. A lot had happened.

“Why are you here?” TK asked.

“The Domino Army took too many Digimon,” Turuiemon explained. “We lost many of our friends to them. We’ve come here to get them back.”

“Do you mean the Digimon we used to bait the DigiDestined into coming here in the first place or the ones we used to create the viruses?” Dominomon asked. “Because- either way- I gave them all to Reevemon for him to use as his lab rats. Not a scrap of data is left of them, I’m afraid.”

“What?” Turuiemon cried. “That can’t be true!”

“It is! It is!” Reevemon’s voice called out from the depths of the hallway behind Dominomon. “Oh, I’m sorry! I cannot stay! I don’t fight! Good bye!”

With that, Reevemon retreated fully into the bowels of the hideout, leaving a very angry Turuiemon in his wake. He let out a cry of grief that doubled as a signal to attack, and his small army began to strike the minions around them.
“BossAquilamon! Take out the Mammothmon!” Dominomon ordered.

“With pleasure!” BossAquilamon replied, smirking as best she could.

As the large bird Digimon flew up and approached him, Mammothmon swung his trunk, ready to fight back. “Freezing Breath!” he cried, shortly before breathing a stream of ice at the other Digimon.

BossAquilamon winced as one of her wings was frozen, causing her to lose altitude and crash to the ground. She shook the frozen wing as Mammothmon advanced on her.

“Tusk Crusher!” Mammothmon roared, ready to finish off BossAquilamon with a powerful charge.

“Yolei!” Kari cried out.

Kari’s concern was unneeded. MasterAnkylomon rushed to BossAquilamon’s rescue. Waving his tail, he cried out, “Crusher Tail!” and collided with Mammothmon’s skull. With a roar, the mammoth Digimon was instantly deleted.

BossAquilamon didn’t even bother to thank her teammate. She simply spread her wings as wide as they could go, shattering the ice that held them captive. This made Turuiemon’s army cower in fear. Mammothmon was the strongest of the lot, and now he was not only data on the way to Primary Village, but he failed to do anything significant in battle.

“What’s wrong, Turuiemon?” Mimi asked.

“I- we can’t beat them,” Turuiemon replied.

“We don’t have to beat them,” Kari said seriously. “We just have to cure them.”

“I’m afraid that’s not going to happen,” Baronessmon purred. “Hell Spinner!”

Baronessmon began to spin at high speeds, firing off red energy blades that struck everything in their path- including a few Fangmon, Monitamon and Boogiemon that happened to be in the way. The DigiDestined- fragile humans that they were- took cover behind a fallen rock. Magnadramon and Seraphimon roared in pain as a blade struck them, but managed to rise once more.

“Flower Cannon!” Lillymon cried, aiming a shot at Dominomon.

BerserkVikemon- who was fighting with three Drimogemon that Turuiemon brought in- stopped what he was doing to jump in front of the shot. The bullet deflected off of his armor and hit the nearby wall, where it fizzled into nothingness.

“You will not touch Lord Dominomon,” BerserkVikemon warned.

A switch suddenly flipped in Tai’s head as he realized that the Generals would do anything to protect Dominomon- even if it meant dying for him. Perhaps there was a way to take advantage of that. Seconds later, he had a plan.

“WarGreymon!” Tai shouted.

“What is it, Tai?” WarGreymon asked, floating towards his partner.

“Can you carry me and Kari on your back?” Tai asked.

“Why me?” Kari questioned.
“You have the cure,” Tai replied. “All we have to do is make all the Generals go to one spot and then dump it on them from above.”

“What do you mean?” TK asked.

“Let’s make everyone crowd around Dominomon,” Tai explained. “MetalGarurumon, Seraphimon, Magnadramon and Lillymon should all try to attack him, which will make the Generals move to protect him. When they’re all together, we can cure them!”

“Are you sure that will work?” Matt asked.

“It’s better than attacking our friends,” Mimi said. “I think we should try it.”

By this point, Taimon and Matimon managed to sneak through the crowd and to the DigiDestined’s hiding place. “Guys! Tiikeimon and Karimon are looking for you!” Taimon shouted. “They’re gonna try and turn two more of you into Generals!”

“Don’t worry. We can fight them, even without digivolving,” Armadillomon said confidently.

Matimon’s face scrunched up, like he’d just been struck. “But they’re our friends,” he said sadly.

A wave of empathy washed over the DigiDestined and their Digimon friends. “Okay then. We won’t fight them,” Biyomon assured. “We’ll just run if they get close.”

With that, Tai handed DemiVeemon to Mimi and put Davis’s goggles around his own forehead. He was amazed that they still fit him well, even after all these years. Tai and Kari boarded WarGreymon and took off, while TK cried, “Seraphimon! Did you hear that? Try and attack Dominomon!”

“You too, MetalGarurumon!” Matt added.

“Lillymon, Magnadramon, you help out as well!” Kari finished.

WarGreymon took to the skies as Baronessmon began to spin again, with all the grace of a ballerina and the deadly intent of a viper. “Hell Spinner!” she roared, barely missing WarGreymon.

“Uh oh. I forgot about her,” Tai admitted.

“Don’t worry about Baronessmon. I’ll keep her distracted,” Taimon assured.

“I’ll help,” Matimon added.

“What should we do?” Turuiemon asked as Taimon and Matimon rushed towards Baronessmon.

“Deal with the minions,” Matt replied. “They’ll just be in WarGreymon’s way.”

“Right,” Turuiemon said.

The purple rabbit Digimon turned to an advancing Fangmon. “Gauntlet Claw!” he cried as he charged the other Digimon, slicing him to ribbons with his claws.

Turuiemon managed to barely dodge a Porcupamon as he looked in the direction Reevemon fled in. As soon as the Domino Army was defeated, the next order of business would be tracking down Reevemon. Because of the cait sith Digimon, Turuiemon’s friends were gone forever, and he desired revenge.

“Everyone! Don’t go after Dominomon, the Generals or Baronessmon!” Turuiemon cried. “The
DigiDestined have a plan to defeat them! Go after the minions!”

A round of cries of acknowledgment filled the air as the Digimon clashed. Despite their earlier concerns, Turuiemon’s army proved to be stronger than they initially believed, and the Domino Army’s soldiers shattered into data left and right.

Taimon and Matimon reached the stone platform, where Baronessmon still stood. Dominomon and the Generals were behind her. Due to the relentless barrage from MetalGarurumon, Seraphimon, Magnadramon and Lillymon, the Generals were starting to crowd around Dominomon. They weren’t attacking so much as gathering. Ignoring them, she was about to use Hell Spinner once more when Taimon shouted, “Baronessmon!”

Baronessmon looked down at Taimon and Matimon and wrinkled her nose, like they were carrying some kind of disgusting disease. “Baronessmon,” Matimon begged. “Please stop this.”

“I told you my affection for you was a sham!” Baronessmon snapped. “Now stand down!”

“You cared for us since we hatched from our DigiEggs,” Taimon said. “So I’ll give you one more chance. Stand down or I’ll fight you.”

“Taimon!” Matimon shouted. “Are you crazy?”

Taimon took a deep, shuddering breath as SaberPhoenixmon began to attack, scattering the Chosen Digimon. “I’ll fight you,” he repeated, sounding somewhat unsure. “I’ll fight you so the DigiDestined can succeed.”

“Fine then,” Baronessmon said with a fanged grin and saccharine sweetness. “I’ll let you make the first move, dear Taimon.”

Matimon gulped. For a minute, she sounded like the Baronessmon he knew. But that Baronessmon was just a role, played by a twisted actress. He knew it now. So did Taimon, who leapt in the air. His feet became surrounded in an aura of flames. With a graceful spin, he cried out the attack’s name.

“Dragon Kick!” Taimon roared, delivering a punishing kick to Baronessmon’s face.

As Taimon landed in front of Matimon, he looked up with a smile. Baronessmon- for her part- was entirely unharmed. She loomed over the two Carriers like a goddess. Four words escaped her red lips that made both Rookies fearful, though Taimon refused to show it.

“My turn,” Baronessmon hissed. “Demon Shriek!”

The last word rose in pitch and rapidly melted into static. A shockwave sent both Taimon and Matimon flying off the platform and made the Generals groan as the last of them- KaiserKuwagamon- got into position. The sound still rung in everyone’s ears as Baronessmon advanced on the Carriers.

“Goodbye, my dears,” Baronessmon said. “Hell Spinner!”

Those horrific red knives filled the air again. One was aimed directly for Matimon, but Taimon leapt in front of the blade. He didn’t cry. He didn’t scream. He was simply impaled through the chest and dissolved into data before he could experience any pain. His data shimmered in the air briefly before reforming into an orange DigiEgg covered with little yellow suns. The DigiEgg rolled to Matimon’s feet as he struggled to stand.

Matimon- who was unharmed- stared at the DigiEgg with a dumfounded expression. He picked up
the DigiEgg and stared at it thoughtfully.

“Taimon?” Matimon whispered. There was no answer. “Taimon! Taimon!”

Matimon clutched the DigiEgg to his chest and sobbed. First, Baronessmon lied to the Carriers outright, then she tried to kill them both in cold blood. Although Matimon survived, Taimon was deleted as a result of his challenge. She knew she was stronger than him. She could have refused his offer to fight. But she didn’t, and now he was gone. Was there any line she wouldn’t cross?

“Stupid, stupid Taimon,” Matimon sobbed. “You should’ve left her alone! You should’ve let me die!”

Matimon’s wailing alerted Tiikeimon and Karimon, who stopped advancing on the DigiDestined and raced over to him. They weren’t the only ones. Dominomon was witness to the entire thing. He lifted his head and stared at Baronessmon.

“My- my lord!” Baronessmon said. “I can explain! He-

“I heard the whole thing,” Dominomon said from behind his wall of Generals. “You don’t need to explain. In fact, I don’t really care what happened, except for the fact that you’ve killed one of the Carriers. The Carriers are key to our plans to control both worlds. Do you understand what you’ve done?”

The last word was a feral snarl. Baronessmon backed away, fear distorting her features for perhaps the first time in her life. “But Taimon challenged me!” she cried.

“No excuses,” Dominomon said darkly.

Opening his mouth, Dominomon fired a thin, red laser through the wall of Generals that surrounded him. “We. All. Fall. Down!” he roared as the beam struck Baronessmon dead on.

Baronessmon shrieked in horror as her very existence was undone. Her DigiCore exploded and she disappeared without much fanfare. Dominomon stared at the spot where she stood, feeling not a pang of regret. Tiikeimon and Karimon- who did not know of Baronessmon’s true nature- stood stock-still with wide eyes.

“Wh- why did you kill her, Lord Dominomon?” Tiikeimon asked.

Dominomon was about to speak, but there was one thing he’d neglected- WarGreymon. In the middle of all the drama, Tai, Kari and WarGreymon were floating right above him and the Generals. Kari held the beaker that held the cure high, then dropped it, releasing a cloud of blue smoke that filled the whole area.

“What is this?” Dominomon managed to cough.

“This is the end for you, Dominomon,” Tai said triumphantly.

It was in that moment that Matimon realized something important. Though Taimon was gone, his distraction- the challenge- had worked. As the Generals all shook with the raw power of transformation, Matimon knew that Tai was right.

This was the end.
Well, you now have two choices, reader. You can keep going. Or you can go to the bad end, which contains slightly-above-canon violence and canon character death. If that's your thing, go to this link- https://archiveofourown.org/works/13881432 and have fun.
This is Matimon. Just Matimon. Taimon thought up the stupidest distraction in the history of the entire Digital World, and now he’s just a DigiEgg again. I thought we Carriers couldn’t become DigiEggs. I thought we’d just vanish when we got deleted. It feels like he’s vanished. It hurts in my chest. I miss him already. Not once did he give up on the DigiDestined or me, and now, it looks like he won’t be around to see our victory.

Chapter 13- Now or Never

The Generals coughed and spluttered as the blue cloud settled over them. This strange attack didn’t seem to be hurting them, but it could hurt their lord and master! Turning to Dominomon, they found him alright, save for a cough. They turned their attention back to the attacking Digimon, aiming for WarGreymon, who was currently hovering over them.

“Hacking Li-” HackerKabuterimon began, only to notice Tentomon flying around.

“Izzy! Izzy!” Tentomon cried out as he dodged miscellaneous attacks from Turuiemon’s army and the remnants of the Domino Army.


“What are you-” MasterAnkylomon began, but he began to feel lightheaded.

Seven DigiEggs with seven different patterns flew out of the Generals and through the air, landing on the stone platform without sustaining any damage. Meanwhile, each and every General began to shrink. Upon seeing this, their partners- save for DemiVeemon- ran or flew over to them.

It began with cracks in the bone armor of the various Generals. Suddenly, the armor shattered into data all at the same time, which left the Generals exposed and open to attack. However, their adversaries had no intentions of hurting them. Instead, they stood and watched. Even Dominomon could do nothing but view the changes in horror as everything he worked so hard for crashed to the ground.

“Ten-Tentomon,” HackerKabuterimon repeated, his voice sounding more like Izzy’s by the second.

HackerKabuterimon and KaiserKuwagamon felt a sudden firmness in their bodies as they went from invertebrates to vertebrates once more. They shrunk to human size as the chitin that once supported them became unnecessary. Their eyes widened as they returned to the identities of Izzy and Ken, pushing against their former exoskeletons like baby Digimon ready to hatch from their DigiEggs.

At first, it was hard to move the tough exoskeletons, but the coverings grew softer and softer. Soon enough, they melted into goo and slid to the floor, exposing the clothed, human bodies of Izzy and Ken. Wormmon and Tentomon responded by scuttling or flying over to their partners and leaping into their arms.

“Wormmon,” Ken said softly. “What happened? What have I done? Don’t tell me I hurt anyone again.”

Wormmon wasn’t really sure what Ken had done as a General, but he wanted to assure him. “No-one was hurt,” he said assuringly. “It’s all over, Ken. You’re back to normal now.”
If Dominomon had eyes, they would be twitching in nervousness. However, the show wasn’t over yet. It was now the avian Digimon’s turn to change. Feathers pressed in on their shrinking bodies, turning into the clothing Sora and Yolei were wearing when they entered the Digital World on the fateful day that started it all.

“My lord! Lord Dominomon!” BossAquilamon managed to shriek as her beak flattened into a human mouth once more.

The feathers along BossAquilamon and SaberPhoenixmon’s wings fell out, exposing human arms with human hands attached. Their feet morphed from wicked claws to a primate’s feet and toes, covered in the shoes they first wore. Horns and spikes all fell to the floor like a snake’s discarded skin. Soon, Sora and Yolei were standing in place of the evil Generals.

Hawkmon and Biyomon reached their partners relatively quickly. Sora began crying as she was finally reunited with Biyomon after so long.

“Biyomon! Biyomon!” Sora sobbed. “You’re alright.”

“It’s good to see you again, Sora,” Biyomon said. “I thought those Generals had you for good. I was really scared. But it’ll be okay.”

Yolei was less emotional. “Hawkmon?” she asked. “What happened? I feel like I’ve been out for a while.”

“It’s a lot to explain,” Hawkmon said.

“I can help!” a female voice cried out.

Mimi approached the two girls, DemiVeemon still sleeping in her arms. As Mimi helped Hawkmon explain things to Yolei and Sora, she recalled that she couldn’t remember what happened during her time as a General either, but it was deemed unimportant when the DigiEgg took up the conversation shortly after she was cured. She never mentioned it to anyone. What kinds of atrocities had she committed?

It didn’t matter now. She would never commit any more.

Dominomon let out a roar of pure agony, as if he was wounded. Despite this, he hadn’t been struck once. “MasterAnkylomon! BerserkVikemon! LordVeedramon! Kill them! Kill all of them!” he roared. “Human, Digimon, Carrier. It doesn’t matter. I want everyone dead!”

MasterAnkylomon moved to follow the order. “Crusher Ta- what the hell?”

As the General swung his tail, it fell off like a lizard’s and disappeared. His whole posture changed, forcing him upright as he shrunk down to Cody’s original, short height. Meanwhile, BerserkVikemon’s tusks retreated, becoming human canines. Scales, spikes and fur drifted to the floor, exposing Cody and Joe. Gomamon smiled widely as he and Armadillomon were reunited with their human friends after so long.

“What happened?” Joe asked.

“What happened?” Joe asked.

“Where are we?” Cody added. “The last thing I remember was being in that foggy clearing.”

As Gomamon and Armadillomon explained to the best of their ability, LordVeedramon set his sights on Mimi. He was about to attack her when he noticed the bundle of blue fur in her arms. His muzzle began to retreat and the weapon on his back vanished into thin air. His claws twisted into human
hands, which took DemiVeemon from Mimi.

“Hey-” Mimi cried, but her sentence died there.

“Demi-Vee-mon,” LordVeedramon said slowly as his memories returned to him. He remembered dark digivolving this very Digimon, and was horrified to see he was still sleeping. Sure, there was a bit of a gap in his memory, but DemiVeemon was more important now.

LordVeedramon snapped upright as he regained human legs. With a roar, his scales and spikes vanished. All that was left was a distraught Davis, who held DemiVeemon close to him.

“DemiVeemon!” Davis begged. “Wake up! DemiVeemon! I’m sorry about what happened! I really am! I’ll never-”

“Hmmm,” muttered a familiar voice.

DemiVeemon began to glow, reforming into the much larger Veemon. Davis dropped him due to his increased weight, but this didn’t hurt Veemon at all. It did, however, wake him up at long last.

“We having breakfast now?” Veemon asked.

“Veemon! You’re back, buddy!” Davis said, happy and relieved beyond words.

Unlike the Generals, Veemon could remember what happened as DarkLizardmon. “Davis,” he said. “I’m sorry I attacked you and the other DigiDestined.”

“What are you saying?” Davis asked. “You dark digivolved because of me. But that doesn’t matter now. All that matters is you’re back to normal. I’m not gonna let that happen to you ever again.”

Dominomon was beyond furious to see his last General gone. Before he could do a thing, a red cloud of gas hit Davis in the face. Everyone looked in the direction of the gas to find Reevemon standing in the entryway of a tunnel with an odd machine.

“Oh,” Reevemon said. “I thought for sure my anti-cure would work.”

“They’ve already been cured, you moronic fool!” Dominomon roared. “Die! Bone Spears!”

Reevemon squealed and ran out of the room from the rain of bones that followed him down the tunnel. There was a loud crash before the bones returned, reforming into a very angry Dominomon.

“He got away!” Dominomon snarled. “But you won’t! Ashes Ashes!”

“This is it! Everyone ready?” Tai shouted from atop WarGreymon.

The other DigiDestined nodded or grunted in approval. The un-digivolved Digimon prepared to digivolve, but then were surrounded with blinding rainbow-colored light. Even Lillymon was affected.

“What’s going on?” Sora asked.

“He won’t take you away, Sora! Not ever again!” Biyomon shouted.

“We’ll protect you!” Tentomon added.

“Mimi!” Lillymon cried out.
“Guys,” Izzy said. “It looks like they’re warp digivolving.”

He was right. The Digimon flashed through their Champion and Ultimate forms until they arrived on something even better and stronger- the bodies of Mega level Digimon.

“Gomamon warp digivolve to- Vikemon!” Gomamon cried, being the first to complete his digivoltuion. His battle cry was followed by others.

“Tentomon warp digivolve to- HerculesKabuterimon!”

“Biyomon warp digivolve to- Phoenixmon!”

“Veemon warp digivolve to- UlforceVeedramon!”

“Hawkmon warp digivolve to- Ornismon!”

“Wormmon warp digivolve to- GranKuwagamon!”

“Armadillomon warp digivolve to- Cannondramon!”

“Lillymon digivolve to- Rosemon!”

Despite being the closest to her final form, Lillymon was the last one to get there. Dominomon was now up against twelve Megas, all of whom were unaffected by his Ashes Ashes attack. Since his army was being thinned out by Turiemon’s forces and Matimon was against him, there would be no saving him from oblivion.

Oblivion. How he feared it. It was a Digimon’s fate to eventually die and be reborn, and Dominomon had been reborn several times. He couldn’t really remember his past lives so clearly. Only a few Digimon could, like those belonging to the blasted children before him. When he reached his current form and gained his ambitions to rule both worlds, he knew that oblivion in the form of the DigiDestined would come knocking on his door.

That was the whole point of transforming the DigiDestined- to prevent the situation he was now faced with. He reasoned that maybe his plans would succeed if they saw things his way. Instead, those kids managed to turn things in their favor, and oblivion had arrived.

Dominomon backed up to the wall, but growled, not willing to go down without a fight. “We- All-Fall-” he began, but the Megas did not let him finish.

“The Ray of Victory!” UlforceVeedramon cried, making the first attack and blasting Dominomon with a ray of light.

“Cosmic Ray!” Ornismon added, following up with a colorful beam of his own.

“Dyna Cannon!” Cannondramon roared, firing not one, not two, but three laser beams from the cannons that now adorned his back.

“Dimension Scissor!” GranKuwagamon cried, firing off a pink energy burst.

Dominomon roared as the attacks connected and the world around hime exploded, but he was far from out yet. He still hid in the corner like a rat. He was so used to others doing things for him- fighting for him, protecting him- that he somewhat forgot how to do it himself. That foolish weakness was going to destroy him.

“Thorn Whipping!” Rosemon cried, attacking multiple times with thorny vines. Dominomon could
practically feel her anguish, even though the mild altering effects of the vines weren’t kicking in due to his high level.

MetalGarurumon and Vikemon got in close before attacking. “Metal Wolf Claw!” MetalGarurumon howled. Being the quicker of the two let him attack first.

“Arctic Blizzard!” Vikemon added.

The ice combined into a massive snowstorm and was so cold and quick that it froze Dominomon’s feet to the floor and encased a great deal of his body. He tried to use Bone Spears, but could not collapse, leaving him at the mercy of the Chosen Digimon.

“Strike of the Seven Stars!” Seraphimon intoned.

“Fire Tornado!” Magnadramon added.

The two of them created a storm of light and fire, trapping Dominomon at its center. It melted some- but not all- of the ice. There were, however, more attacks heading the bone dragon’s way.

“Star-Light Explosion!” Pheonixmon cried out, attacking with all of her own fury.

This just left a single Digimon who hadn’t attacked- WarGreymon. That Digimon was approaching now, slow and steady, with the DigiDestined still on his back. Matimon managed to climb up on top of the stone platform and stood a safe distance away from the action. He collected the seven DigiEggs that fell earlier and began to walk away.

“Matimon,” Dominomon begged. “Please! Help me!”

Matimon’s nose wrinkled in disgust. He kept walking, leaving Dominomon to his fate.

“Terra Force!” WarGreymon roared, blasting Dominomon with a giant fireball.

The heat charred Dominomon’s bones until they were black. The evil Digimon let out a final scream before oblivion- which had been waiting so patiently- finally claimed him.
The DigiDestined were totally exhausted.

The night before, Turuiemon and his army- who managed to destroy all of the Domino Army’s minions- decided to celebrate Dominomon’s defeat. They invited the DigiDestined and their Digimon to stay as guests of honor. Together, they raided the Domino Army’s old food stores and partied late into the night. While the Chosen Digimon- who de-digivolved from their mighty Mega forms into babies- were able to get back up to Rookie level fast, they were still tired, as were their human companions.

Turuiemon and his friends were long gone, and the DigiDestined were looking for Matimon. At some point during the party, he disappeared. They assumed he left to mourn Taimon, but they hadn’t seen him since Dominomon’s last moments.

“Matimon!” Tai called out as they wandered Infinity Mountain. “Where are you? Matimon!”

“Here,” a soft voice replied.

“I’m here too!” added another voice with a bit more energy.

“We’re all here,” came a third voice, this time female.

Matimon, Tiikeimon and Karimon all emerged from behind a rock, each carrying a DigiEgg. Joe began to panic. “Wait a second!” he shouted. “Some of the bad Carriers are still alive?”

“We won’t hurt you,” Karimon assured. “After Dominomon died, Matimon found us. He was juggling all these DigiEggs. He told us everything, about how we’d disappear and such. He even told us the truth about Dominomon. After what he did to Baronessmon, how could we not believe him?”

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“At first, I thought to take these DigiEggs to Primary Village,” Matimon explained. “But I couldn’t. My mere existence threatens the safety of the Digital World. So I decided to hide up here with them. Tiikeimon and Karimon helped me carry the eggs to a small cave not too far from here. Hopefully, they won’t hatch into evil Digimon.”

“They won’t,” said a voice from behind Matimon.

Turning around, the whole group saw a rainbow-colored light shining out of the ground, in the middle of which was a hologram of Gennai. Everyone- human and Digimon alike- focused
exclusively on it.

“Gennai!” Tai said. “If these eggs won’t become evil Digimon, what will happen to them? What will they hatch into?”

“The cure seemed to work as intended, so those DigiEggs should become the Carriers again,” Gennai explained. “However, the virus will be purged from them. They’ll become ordinary Digimon.”

This made Matimon smile. That meant that Taimon would be reborn. That smile vanished as another thought occurred to him.

“What about us?” Matimon asked. “Will Tiikeimon, Karimon and I-

“The virus is unfortunately bound to your DigiCores,” Gennai said gravely. “The only way to remove it is to delete you and hope you can be reborn without the cure.”

“Then we’ll have to live away from other Digimon,” Matimon decided, holding Tiikeimon close to him.

“Why?” Tiikeimon asked.

“As long as we have the virus, we don’t belong in this world,” Matimon said sadly. “We should go to Gennai and raise the eggs that hold our friends. We’ll go there because it’s safe, and we can live in peace. Then, we can control our lives. It’s what Taimon would have wanted.”

“That’s fine by me,” Karimon said, looking down at the DigiEgg in her arms.

“Are you sure?” Tai asked. “I mean, I understand if you want to control your own destiny, but don’t you want to explore the Digital World?”

“It’s safer this way,” Matimon insisted. “Not just for us, but for our friends. We can’t take them to Primary Village without there being too many questions. They need to hatch and grow with those who understand them.”

“I see,” Tai said, having learned from frequent fighting with the person Matimon was based on that there was no changing his mind.

“I’ll send Whamon to pick the Carriers up and send them to Server,” Gennai said. “What about you, DigiDestined? What are you going to do?”

“We should really get home,” Joe said. “We’ve been here so long that our parents are probably worried about us.”

“Jeez, we aren’t kids anymore!” Tai said with a laugh. “We can stay and hang out a bit before we go back.”

“What about Reevemon?” Matimon asked. “I mean, we Carriers can’t do a thing about him, but he’s still alive. He created the virus, and he might make a similar one.”

This unnerved the group. But they were confident in their previous victory. “I dare him to come back!” Davis said. “We’ll send him running!”

“Looks like we have more work to do,” Yolei said.

“We have time, though,” Tai assured her. “He chose to run, rather than fight us. So I’m guessing
he’s either not that strong or a total wimp. In the meantime, we can get ready for him.”

“Sounds like a good plan to me. Good luck,” Gennai said, smiling before his hologram disappeared.

There was a brief silence before Sora asked, “Do you need help carrying the eggs, Matimon?”


With that, the DigiDestined, Chosen Digimon and Carriers all began to collect the eggs to transport them to the place where they’d grow up all over again.

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Failure! He hated failure!

Reevemon was no longer on Infinity Mountain. He was no longer in this version of the Digital World or even the Real World. He used one of his devices to escape to a place between worlds, carrying absolutely nothing with him but the controls to this device. Reevemon didn’t feel like getting torn to pieces by the DigiDestined or their friends, thank you very much.

What went wrong? He did everything the way Lord Dominomon- no. It was Dominomon. Just Dominomon. His old master was but a mortal fool who could not properly appreciate Reevemon’s genius.

So Reevemon decided to try again on his own. Many worlds lay before him, each with their own test subjects for new experiments. Which world should he try? Which group of heroes should he bring down? There were so many possibilities lying in wait for him.

He decided to choose the closest one. With a laugh, Reevemon activated his device and disappeared.

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There were eight DigiEggs in the cool blue room. In one life, they were looked after by Dominomon. But now, the beast was dead, and Matimon served as their new guardian. Each one glowed green- just as before. Of course, Matimon couldn’t remember that. After all, he was- at the time- a DigiEgg himself.

One egg suddenly began to wiggle. It was orange in color, covered by yellow suns. Matimon jumped as cracks began to form along its smooth surface, steadily growing bigger and bigger. A small Digimon emerged, blue eyes wide with curiosity. He used a tiny, clawed paw to move the weakened eggshell surrounding him out of his path and shook his entire body. Brown hair waved about as he moved.

“Tainimon?” Matimon whispered, using a name he hadn’t used since they were both young.

The little creature turned to face him. For a while, there was silence and dread. What if Tainimon did not remember his friend? He was, after all, a newborn Digimon. Gennai warned him that memory loss was a possibility. If it happened, that truly meant Taimon was gone forever.

Tainimon waddled up to Matimon slowly, stumbling over his tiny paws like he never used them before. He looked right up at the Rookie-level, blue eyes shining.

“Ma-Matimon!” Tainimon chirped.

Matimon smiled as a huge weight seemed to be lifted from his shoulders. He felt in his heart now that
the other seven eggs would remember him when they hatched. Even if they could not remember their old mission, that was fine. Recalling his name was more than enough.

Of course, the Digimon would grow up. This time, however, they would not have a preordained destiny. They were free to be themselves.

*The End*

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