

Another Generation

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Kapitel 7: Another Father

A small figure was standing beneath the trees. It was a small boy, but he was wearing the uniform of Obelisk Blue, the most prestigious of the Academy's dorms. He was smiling.

"Edo Phoenix... duel me."

Edo glanced at Amon, who was still moving and had apparently not noticed about his encounter.

If he could stop the enemy here, the others would be safe, right? And even if he could not he would be buying time for Amon, Jim or Johann to find the *Rainbow Dragon*.

"I guess it's time to play hero", he muttered, then got his Duel Disk ready and turned to the boy.

"Alright, let us duel!"

The boy started to advance in Edo's direction. His movements were eerily smooth and he made almost no sound moving about the dense forest. His lips were twisted into a wretched smile that looked out of place on that small, round face.

"You think you have chances to win, don't you?" the boy asked.

Edo retreated a few steps. He was not one to be easily intimidated by an opponent, but the sound of the kid's voice made the hair on his neck stand up.

"I don't *think I have chances*. I *know* I can win," he said nevertheless.

The boy slowly shook his head. "You cannot win, you just don't know it yet," he said.

Before Edo's eyes, the figure of the small student burst into what seemed to be a bunch of duel monsters cards, except they were all pitch black on either side. They dispersed and set themselves back together in the shape of a much taller, lanky man. He was still coming closer, causing Edo to move further backwards.

"You are Darkness?" Edo surmised.

The man smirked. "I am merely a messenger. There is no need for master Darkness to face you himself. If you need a name, call me Trueman - because I speak the truth. The one that you are running away from."

Edo frowned. "I do not care what you call yourself. I will beat you."

Pushed back by the advance of the other man Edo reached a small clearing in the woods. It was barely large enough to fit a playing field, but it would do for a holographic duel.

He moved to the opposite side of the clearing, focused on his opponent and put his deck into the Duel Disk. Trueman smirked and drew a deck and duel disk out of his left arm. The sight of it made Edo uneasy but he kept his pokerface.

"Duel!" they announced.

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The fact that Edo had fallen behind and cornered by the enemy had not escaped Amon. But Edo had not called out to him so Amon had judged to not try to help him, either. A duel was, as the latin origin of the word expressed, a confrontation between two individuals. He had no right to interfere anyway, so it was the smarter course of action to continue searching for the *Rainbow Dragon*.

When he pushed through the underwood the next time, he saw something. Tangled up in the vines of a tree there was the entrance hatch of the helicopter. It was largely intact, except for the glass of the window in its middle which was thoroughly burst. One edge touched the ground, the rest was still hanging in the air. And there, half hidden by the door and partly obscured by the plants around it, glinted something made of a more silvery metal.

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"Please go first," Trueman said to Edo.

It was entirely welcome. His starting hand had been amazing already, with some immensely useful cards, but the one he drew at the beginning of the turn made the setup perfect. He used *D-Spirit* to special summon *Destiny Hero - Disk Commander* as his first monster, which he then tributed for the normal summon of the *Destiny Hero - Dasher* he'd just drawn.

To round it off perfectly and establish his dominance over the playing field, he activated his field spell:

"*Clock Tower Prison!* When the time has passed it will reveal its power!" he announced. Virtual walls and towers rose around them. Having this card on his field in the first turn was a huge asset. Being a professional duelist meant that most of his opponents knew its effect - but if anything that made them even more prone to feel the pressure of having to find a way to win, or to remove this card from the field, before it gained its full power after four turns.

Trueman, however, was very unimpressed. "You think you will still be alive when the time has passed?"

Edo maintained his poker face. "Let's see if I even need this to keep you in check," he taunted back. "I set a card and end my turn."

Trueman drew.

"At this time, the hands of the *Clock Tower* advance!" Edo announced. The minute hand sprang to the next quarter.

Trueman acted as if it did not concern him at all. "I summon *Dark Archetype* in attack mode."

The monster appeared, a behemoth whose head, torso, tail and extremities seemed to come from entirely different life forms. Edo had never encountered this card before. With 1400 attack points it was much weaker than Edo's *Dasher* and that was a clear sign it had some effect that would be useful for Trueman.

"*Dark Archetype*, attack *Dasher*," Trueman ordered.

Edo rose his arm. "I activate my trap *D-chain* and equip it to *Dasher*. It gains 500 attack points so it now has 2600!"

There was a chance that this was somehow playing into Trueman's hands, but it was too good a chance to reduce his life points to not do it.

The hologram *Dasher* evaded the clumsy attack of the gooey *Archetype* and lunged at it with the hook that was attached to the chain it had just been equipped with. Trueman's Life Points dropped to 2800, but he smirked as if that was a good thing. Edo did not let that get to him: "The additional effect of *D-chain*! When the equipped monster destroys another monster and sends it to the cemetery, it inflicts another 500 life points of damage!"

Trueman's life was down to 2300 now. "Well done," he lauded, but his tone was still entirely unimpressed. "Now let me tell you about the effect of *Dark Archetype*. If it's destroyed by battle, I can choose a monster from my deck with attack points equal to the battle damage I just took. The damage is 1200, so I choose *Enigma the Creator*."

Edo caught his breath when Trueman pulled the card from his deck and presented it. This was one he knew all too well, and it did not exactly invoke good memories.

Trueman continued: "Now I send monsters whose total level equal the level of *Enigma* from my hand to the graveyard in order to special summon it. I choose another *Enigma*, which I already had in my hand."

He put the card from his hand into the graveyard and placed the one from the deck on a card slot. The monster appeared, a masked creature in a wide robe and a monstrous left arm which was wrapped in bandages. The hologram's appearance was accompanied with a low growl.

A shudder ran down Edo's spine. He would admit it to no-one, but he had seen this monster way too often in his nightmares. It almost felt like the ground below him was starting to sway like that of a boat.

"I see you like that one," Trueman grinned.

He knew, Edo realized. By some sinister means, Trueman was completely aware what seeing this monster did to him. That was why it was in his deck.

"Let me see how you will go against this one. I set a card and end my turn."

Edo swallowed against the feeling of nausea that was building in his throat. He had been aware that this was not an ordinary opponent, right? It had to be expected that he would try to exploit his weakest points. But he must not falter.

"I draw!" he announced and immediately checked the card.

"I activate *Destiny Draw*! By sending a "Destiny Hero" to the cemetery, I can draw two cards!"

The cards this brought into his hands were useful enough.

"I activate *Doctor D*. I remove from play a "Destiny Hero" from my cemetery to special summon another Level 4 or lower "Destiny Hero" from there. I remove the *Destiny Hero - Celestial* which I just discarded from play to bring back *Destiny Hero - Disk Commander*."

He tucked away the removed card in an inner pocket of his suit and placed the monster on the field that he had tributed in his first turn, this time in defense position.

"The effect of *Disk Commander*! When it is special summoned from the cemetery, I can draw two cards!"

Edo drew once more and a smirk appeared on his face. Sure he had had to help it quite a bit, but now all pieces were there to summon his ultimate monster.

"Looks like you are out of luck, Mr. Trueman. One of the cards I just drew is this! I activate *Fusion Sage*. It allows me to draw *Polymerization* from my deck!"

He sought out the card and shuffled his deck before he put it back. "It probably won't surprise you when I activate the *Polymerization* I just drew. I combine *Destiny Hero - Dogma* and *Destiny Hero - Plasma* from my hand to fusion summon the ultimate

Destiny: *Destiny End Dragoon!*"

On the field, the holograms of the two selected monsters appeared briefly, only to disappear in a whirl and make place for the announced *Dragoon*, a sinister humanoid creature with the wings and tail of a dragon. The monster, which displayed 3000 attack points, was the most recent but also the most powerful addition to Edo's deck. "I use the effect of *Dragoon!* I can destroy one of your monsters and you receive damage equal to its attack points."

Edo pointed at *Enigma*: "Begone!"

Destiny End Dragoon raised its left arm which ended in a cannon in the shape of a dragon head and pointed it at the opponent monster. A laser blast shot out of it and pierced *Enigma* which burst into light particles, then Trueman himself. The opponent's life point counter dropped to 1100.

"Because it was destroyed by an effect, you cannot activate *Enigma's* effect that lets you summon a token in its stead," Edo pointed out. With this monster gone he felt much better. Trueman had tried to exploit his darkest memories, but in the end it was the better duelist that would prevail.

Trueman was left without a defense now, but having used *Destiny End Dragoon's* effect Edo could not battle this turn. For a brief moment he wondered if he should have just attacked with the three monsters that were now on his field. Even considering *Enigma's* effect, that should cause enough damage - but there was the unknown factor of that face-down trap card on Trueman's field. In a professional duel he would surely have chosen the flashier option of an all-out attack, but the stakes were so much higher now. Even if *Dragoon* could not be destroyed by card effects, there was just no telling in what way that trap could bite him back if he let go of all caution.

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Amon slowly approached the helicopter door from the side. There was no telling how well it was held by the tree's branches, and he certainly did not want to be buried beneath it. The object that he had spotted earlier became more clearly visible when he got closer. It was a metal suitcase, the kind that was often used to transport valuable objects and cash. He was almost sure that he had found what he was looking for.

With a cautious glance to the helicopter door he extended his arm and touched the handle of the case, which was also made of metal. He had been concerned that it would be hot from the earlier explosion, but it was only warm by now and could be touched without fear. He grabbed the handle and quickly moved to safety, pulling the case with him. It was heavy for its size, a sign that someone had wanted to make really sure that the content would not be damaged.

On closer examination, the case was dented on one side in spite of the thick walls. That made it difficult to open it, but Amon had enough muscular strength to yank the lid off completely. The content seemed undamaged at first glance. He caught his breath when he saw it.

The case was filled with padding that had a rectangular cutout in the middle. Inside of it lay one of the rarest and most powerful Duel Monsters cards aside from the rumoured Egyptian Gods.

When he reached for it, he realised that the card was still enclosed in another container. It was slightly translucent, almost like glass. Amon frowned. The card was

trapped in it and there were no handles to open it. Was one supposed to break the glass to get the card out?

He was still examining the object when he heard a rustle in the trees behind him. He turned around warily.

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Trueman drew.

"Oh, this is too bad," he said when he saw the card. "You should have attacked me when you had the chance."

Edo knew that kind of statement. Opponents always tried to make you think that they had already won when it was actually the opposite. He still had all of his life points, too. So he kept his cool.

"First of all, the clock advances," he announced sternly. The hand on the clock tower moved to the half hour.

Trueman shook his head. "It's the end for you, you just don't know yet," he said calmly. "The clock will never make the full round."

Edo crossed his arms. "You have no monsters and I have *Dasher*, *Disk Commander* and *Destiny End Dragoon*. What are you saying you can do?"

Trueman's lips curled into a mean smile. "First I activate the spell card *Claret Note*. You know this card, don't you?"

Edo nodded as he watched the hologram of a book appear in midair. The nausea and the feeling of standing on insecure ground came creeping back. This card had been used against him only once, but that one time was what haunted him ever since.

Trueman felt obliged to explain the effect of the card anyway: "I select one of your face-up monsters. For every four levels it has I can special summon a Plasma Token. I choose *Destiny End Dragoon* which is Level 10 - so I can summon two tokens."

The book opened and a drawn image of *Destiny End Dragoon* appeared on one of the open pages. The drawing melted into blood that fell to the ground where it bubbled up into the shape of two vaguely humanoid creatures. The tokens' attack points were shown as zero.

Edo covered his hand with his mouth. He felt like he was back on that boat, swaying in the waves, facing *that person*. But it's not him! he desperately tried to tell himself. It did not really help.

"Next I activate my spell card *The Unchosen One*. I can only activate it when you control two or more monsters. You must select one of your monsters and destroy all other cards you control."

Edo grit his teeth, but despite his uneasiness he was still up to the game. "I select *Dasher*," he announced.

Trueman stuck forward his right arm and clenched it into a fist. "All your other cards are destroyed!" he announced. The clock tower behind Edo burst into flames, as did *Disk Commander*, *Destiny End Dragoon* and the *D-Chain* that was still equipped to *Dasher*. The flames were just a solid vision hologram, but Edo felt the need to shield his face with his arms and he could almost feel the heat of fire on his skin. Or was it the fire from the boat in his memories?

When the smoke cleared, *Dasher* and *Destiny End Dragoon* were still on the field.

"Too bad - *Destiny End Dragoon* cannot be destroyed by card effects," Edo explained grimly.

Trueman smiled. "That would have been a pity, anyway," he remarked.

"I can special summon one of the monsters that was destroyed by *The Unchosen One's* effect to my field. I choose *Disk Commander*. Just like you I can draw two cards when it is special summoned from the graveyard."

Trueman drew, but he shrugged when he had checked what cards they were.

"Next I normal summon *Dark Psycho Eye*," he announced and played a card that had already been in his hand. The monster looked similarly gruesome as the earlier *Dark Archetype*. "It doesn't stay long. Because now I special summon *Destiny Hero - Plasma* which requires 3 tributes. I tribute the two *Plasma Tokens* and *Dark Psycho Eye*."

Edo felt like it was becoming hard to breathe. He watched the three monsters disappear and make way for the dreadful "Destiny Hero" which appeared and spread its wings wide.

"If you want to win you will have to kill me once again," his opponent said. When Edo focused on him, it was not Trueman, it was the man known as the Destiny Duelist, short DD, whom he had admired and trusted for such a long time. But also, as he had found out way too late, the one whom he had sought to punish since that one fateful night - the murderer of his father.

Edo blinked. Surely it must be an illusion. But it did not go away. "You're dead!" he said.

"Yes. Because you killed me."

"Like you killed us," another voice said. Edo looked up. It was just like in his recurring nightmares. On the folds of *Plasma's* wings, faces were forming. Faces that showed nothing but agony and fear. One of them was that of his father. It was him who had spoken.

"I didn't! I laid you to rest!" Edo protested. "I... I said goodbye!"

DD spoke again: "And me? I was just a poor soul who was manipulated by the Will of Light. And you left me to die."

Everything seemed to turn before Edo's eyes. "You... you were scum! You told me! You broke into our apartment just to obtain a powerful card and had no qualms killing my father to get it!"

"And you are saying that that makes it okay to kill me? Did the ten years we spent together mean nothing to you? I raised you! I taught you how to use the Destiny Hero deck! I got you into the Pro League!"

Edo held his head. He closed his eyes. "Stop playing with me, Trueman. Just continue this duel!"

But it was still the voice of DD when his opponent spoke again: "I use the effect of *Plasma* to equip one of your monsters to it. Of course I choose *Destiny End Dragoon*. *Plasma* gains half of its attack points."

Plasma roared and spread its wings even further. Edo watched in horror how his *Dragoon* was sucked into them. He had always seen it as a symbol of a new start, the physical proof that he was moving on, leaving *Plasma* and the pain surrounding it behind while honoring the memories. But now it was eaten up by the exact monster that had caused the death of his real father, and in a way also that of DD, his adoptive father.

The attack points of the dreadful monster rose to 3400.

Edo's legs were shaking, but there was still hope. He had been able to keep *Dasher*. He would survive this turn and then a new chance would come. He had beaten *Plasma* before and he would do so again. He had to.

"I don't have to explain this to you but I will do it anyway, my *dearest Edo*," DD said.

" *Plasma* also steals the effect of the monster it absorbed. So I can use *Destiny End Dragoon's* effect to destroy your monster and inflict its life points as damage to you." Edo nodded slowly. It just made sense. It was more effective than to attack him for 1300 points of battle damage. The upper body of *Dragoon* emerged from *Plasma's* left wing and took a shot that went right through *Dasher*, then Edo.

He had to remind himself that it was a hologram, because he could swear he felt the pain of his chest being pierced. He struggled to keep himself on his feet as his life points fell to 1900. The nausea was almost unbearable now. And was the sun already sinking, or why did it seem to him like the edges of his vision were growing darker every second?

"But according to *Dragoon's* effect you cannot attack anymore," Edo said. It came out hushed and he wondered why. He was safe for now. He just needed to hold out until next turn and then his deck would surely...

His opponent's twisted into a mad grin. Edo's legs finally gave way and he fell to his knees. He had been glad at the time that DD had shown him his true face, that of a villain who would mercilessly kill to get what he wanted... but in the time that came after, it was what made him suffer the most. It had tainted all his memories of that man. He could not remember his words of advice, consolation or encouragement, nor the face he had made while speaking them. It had all been a lie. Ten years of his life. Nobody could even start to understand what that meant. And if the counseling had made one thing very clear to him then that he would never, ever, be completely free of that feeling again.

"I activate my face-down card. *Skill Drain* negates the effects of all face-up effect monsters, including the one that says I cannot attack anymore. I just have to pay 1000 Life Points to activate this card," DD explained.

The life point counter of his opponent plunged from 1100 to a mere 100. But however little it was, it meant he was still in play, able to finish him.

"*Skill Drain* also nullifies the absorption effect of *Plasma* that boosts its attack points, but its original 1900 attack points are just enough to wipe you out now," DD's voice said.

Edo was not looking at him anymore. The black was closing in on him. "Please just... just let me forget..." he begged.

"You will forget. That is what Darkness is," a voice said. It was not DD this time but Trueman again.

Edo raised his head to see the figure of *Destiny Hero - Plasma* one last time as it jabbed at him for the direct attack. He did not feel the impact anymore. His consciousness was already gone.

And with it, the pain.

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The person who stepped out from among the underwood in front of Amon was not Edo Phoenix. It was a student of Duel Academy, dressed in the uniform of the Obelisk Blue dorm.

Amon quickly got to his feet and hid the *Rainbow Dragon* behind his torso. "Who are you?"

The student smiled. He was at least a full head smaller than him, but somehow Amon could feel that he was dangerous. Was it the enemy they had been warned of?

"Amon Garam. It had to be you who finds this card, hadn't it?"

Amon stood his ground although he felt a strong urge to retreat. "What do you mean?"

The small student smiled. It was not a friendly expression. "You are here to retrieve the *Rainbow Dragon*. But not for the sake of Johann Andersen or saving the world - only your own personal advantage."