

A Different Kind Of Healing

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1 - A horrible twist in fate!

It had been a little over a year since Shoutmon became the Digimon king by defeating Lord Bagramon along with the rest of the Xros Hearts and Blue Flare army. Everyone was certain that he wasted no time in re-shaping the entire digital world into something beautiful upon returning! Taiki gritted his teeth as silent, glassy tears flooded down his cheeks. He stared down angrily at the shaking fists upon his knees currently soaked in his own tears but that didn't matter to him. A sharp sigh came from his right as Zenjirou lightly placed a hand upon Taiki's shoulder wearing an almost empty expression. The bags under his own eyes matched the size and weight of Taiki's as he gently squeezed his shoulder. Taiki's eyes shifted towards Zenjirou as the spiky, straw headed boy spoke.

"We've had some good times, haven't we?"

The calm in his voice was incredibly forced, harboring traces of sadness and defeat. Unable to handle the horror that was suddenly pushed onto him, Taiki stood up abruptly and bolted out of the sliding doors connected to the hospital waiting room. Zenjirou gave another shaky sigh letting the hand that was suddenly left suspended by Taiki's abrupt absence drop heavily. He grabbed the blanket that was folded next to the set of chairs he was currently using as a make-shift bed and covered himself up. Even if the fabric of the chairs was incredibly scratchy and stiff, he attempted to get some sleep.

Taiki threw himself onto his bike he had conveniently parked outside and thrust each pedal down with such vigor, it sent him rocketing through the streets! The tears were quickly swept away as determination mixed with pain fueled every thunderous trust of pedals towards his destination! It wasn't long before he was home. He leapt from his bike to the front porch steps and threw open the door, not even stopping to remove his shoes, before bolting to his room and slamming the door. Luckily, the house was vacant as his family was either at the park or somewhere else. He jumped to his desk at the far corner of the room and viciously began trashing it, throwing off any unimportant item, ripping out drawers and forcefully dumping them on the floor. It wasn't long before he located his red Xros loader and began frantically screaming bloody murder into it calling out to his best, ruby red digital friend.

"SHOUTMON!!!"

It had been three years in the digital world since the battle with Lord Bagramon and the defeat of the Bagra empire but those three years had also meant more work for Shoutmon due to his newly appointed role as King of the digital world. Shoutmon sat at his usual desk in the center of his kingly chambers assigning new laws, rules, and regulations as well as keeping the peace. Unfortunately, that also meant keeping a certain small, purple, yellow winged dragon who accurately appointed itself "Wild child of the digital world" out of trouble. The newly digivolved Shoutmon threw his red and white arms over his head trying to silence the extreme boredom that was currently raging within him. "Uaaaaaaagh!!" a rather large groan belted its way through his open jagged mouth! He stood up from his desk letting the large yellow scarf delicately flow to the ground. He stretched his aching arms and legs, just how long had he been at it this time? Shoutmon was covered in nicks and scratches from stopping arguments that had gotten out of control amongst his digital subjects. Though he loved them all like family, sometimes knocking them out was the best method of getting the message across. He took a single step before

giving a startled shriek and clutched the small earphone pieces under the much larger 'V' shaped horns on his head. A familiar, yet incredibly pained voice seemed to be screaming frantically at the top of its lungs trying desperately to get his attention. Shoutmon bolted to the window and flung it open so forcefully, it shattered the beautifully pieced stained glass, but the voice quickly faded. Thinking quickly, he summoned his mic and shouted at the top of his lungs, "SANZOMOON! FIND WISEMON! WE'VE GOT PROBLEMS!" A few servants in the courtyard below nodded quickly and bolted off in different directions to find the monk Digimon! Shoutmon froze as an icy shiver sent chills down his spine!

"SHOUTMOOON!!"

Shoutmon began to shake as if the air around him had become ice cold upon finally recognizing the voice. A startled gasp escaped him! His eyes widened as a cold sweat began to form under the V!

"WAH! No, it couldn't be... TAIKI!!!"

'What was wrong? Was he hurt? Are there Digimon harming him and the rest of his human friends? If so, I'll OBLITERATE them... NOBODY TOUCHES MY FRIENDS AND GETS AWAY WITH IT... Where the heck is Sanzomon?? RRRR, this is taking too long!! Taiki could be hurt or worse!!' Shoutmon began to quickly pace the room folding his arms tightly against his chest while impatiently tapping his elbow with one rubberized black finger.' Suddenly, the door burst open as the few Piximon tossed in a familiar large, struggling, robed figure with a somewhat terrifying dark face and beady yellow eyes. The figure known as Wisemon, began picking himself up when he was suddenly grabbed by the angry red lizard before him and shaken. Before he could protest, Shoutmon roared. "WISEMON, TAIKI'S IN TROUBLE!! I NEED TO GET TO THE HUMAN WORLD NOW!!" Wisemon stopped himself upon noting the worry and sheer urgency within his voice.

"NOT FIVE SECONDS FRO-!!"

He quickly held a hand in front of Shoutmon to stop him. To which Shoutmon responded with a ferociously annoyed and slightly deafening growl, it was Shoutmon after all. "My king, I have been tinkering with portal technology for years as you know, my book has been drifting in between zones. While I cannot promise a full portal, I can try something else." Shoutmon narrowed his eyes returning his arms to their folded position and tapping his foot in annoyance. "FINE, JUST BE QUICK ABOUT IT!!" Wisemon was already half way out of the door before he stopped. "I-I'm sorry my king but it may take longer than five seconds..." Shoutmon's eyes widened as he fell to his knees on the floor leaving nothing but a massive groan in his wake. He then lowered his head to the floor and almost shouted as he desperately begged Wisemon. "Please.... Wisemon, our friend is in danger and I need to get to him soon... Before something terrible happens or something terrible may have already happened!" large tears began to well up in Shoutmon's eyes. Wisemon turned around completely stunned by this change in attitude. "A-Alright..." Wisemon said in a defeated sigh. "But I'll need probably three days to get it up, tested and running. You know time moves faster in the digital world so three more days wouldn't do any h-harm!" Wisemon's voice wavered a bit at the end giving off an air of uncertainty. Shoutmon had no choice but to sigh it off. He quickly picked himself up only to go back to pacing.

"Oh, Wisemon, you can have as many of my servants as you need to get this done quickly. ... And thank you... I do realize that I don't thank you enough for what you've done for this kingdom and me."

Wisemon nodded quickly as he raised his hand summoning his newly repaired and furnished book, thanks to the efforts of his new friends, then quickly vanished within the pages as the book teleported off. "Please... hurry..." Shoutmon whispered after him.

2 - Flying in on a roaring flame!

Those three days were absolute torture for Shoutmon because not only had the calls come more frequently, but they haunted his every waking activity! He couldn't eat, sleep, sign bills or preform any of his kingly tasks without dozing off and having Taiki's gradually fading voice pierce every fiber of his sanity! He didn't know how much more of this he could take!! Wisemon had better hurry with that machine or else he was going to drive himself completely crazy! He had to put his second in command, Balistamon, in charge in his stead.

"Hang on Taiki... just hang on a little longer... please!"

He begged knowing full well the boy couldn't hear him. He tossed and turned through the many sleepless nights completely engulfed by the fear of what was yet to come! Shoutmon lay in bed just shaking, trying hard to concentrate on something, or anything else to no avail! What worried him most was, on the third night, the calls stopped all together! By this time, they were already so weak and scratchy, he could even tell Taiki was starting to lose hope Shoutmon could even hear him! Shoutmon's wild and surprisingly vivid imagination took over shortly after the last call, he was sure he had finally lost it!

'Had he been ripped to shreds? Humans come back with the code crown, right? Don't they have that too? What if they don't?!?! ... I would have failed to save my best friend.'

Even the mighty Shoutmon, king of the digital world had begun to grow weak and weary due to the constant block of stress that grew larger and heavier by the hour! Though, his desire to transverse the gap to the human world began to fade upon imagining what awaited him on the other side.

'Would his room be covered in blood and organs?? They're organic... full of gross blood and guts and stuff... Digimon bleed and basic bone structures, but we don't have much in the way of human organs and stuff...'

Shoutmon cringed slightly upon imagining what human organs looked like. He remembered exactly what human blood looked like! The memory was as clear as day as he remembered seeing Taiki take on the young Yuu in a sword fight and getting himself a massive slash in the arm! Shoutmon suddenly felt incredibly sick, he quickly threw back the sheets and charged towards the nearest bathroom only to unleash the day's rations of DigiNoir into the toilet, quickly flushing it down. He then collapsed upon the ice cold, stone floor in a seated, crossed legged position.

'Humans only have one life right? That's why they're so afraid of getting hit by a single Digimon attack! Even something as small as a simple punch could mean the permanent end to them! Just like the very first day I met the three of them... Omnimon, quite forcibly, brought them to the digital world after Taiki had promised he'd rescue me. I ended up punching a rock thinking they were going home... but now, I'm glad the only thing that ended up getting smashed was the rock... Their data doesn't come back after they've been...'

Shoutmon shook his head violently, forcibly gulping back that large lump of fear, trying hard to come up with a new topic again, without much luck.

'They're gone... forever!'

He sighed upon remembering how Taiki kept telling him this over and over and over again, trying to explain just how big of a risk he was actually taking to aid the red, dragon type Digimon. He slowly made his way back to bed, using his mic as a crutch while hoisting himself onto it and settling back into the sheets once more. Shoutmon rolled onto his back letting himself get tangled within the silken sheets of his massive canopy bed, a small groan of pure misery escaped his parted jagged jaw. Just when he thought his nerves couldn't take any more, the heavy wooden door flew open slamming against the opposite wall with a thunderous "BOOM" causing the entire room to shake! "WAHH!" Shoutmon shrieked jumping about three feet from his bed letting out a startled yelp when Wisemon entered the room. He quickly threw the sheets off, glaring angrily at the brown robed Digimon! A terrifying roar ripped from his throat as he then shouted!

"HEY, WHAT'D YA DO THAT FOR?"

It took a second for Shoutmon to realize who it was standing at the door before bolting over to him completely leaving the yellow scarf on his bedside dresser. Wisemon then held up his hands hoping to stop the Digimon from completely crashing into him only to have Shoutmon again grab the top of his robe with a fierce snarl.

"WHERE IS IT!?!??"

Wisemon then slapped the angry red Digimon away only to brush himself off and gesture towards the door. His voice was glazed over with a calm malice. "This way SIR... It resides in the courtyard." Wisemon then turned to calmly lead the way hoping his calm would rub off on the fiery Digimon in his wake but unfortunately, that was not the case as Shoutmon pushed past him and zoomed towards courtyard as if carried by the wind. Eventually, both Shoutmon and Wisemon were in front of the massive teleportation machine in the courtyard. The machine was what you'd normally expect any teleportation machine to look like, it had one very tall antenna with a large electric orb on top sparking to life upon flipping a switch next to the main floating keyboard panel to the right. To the left was a small metallic transfer capsule. It needed so much digital energy that it slightly warped the sky above to form an incredibly tiny swirling funnel similar to the zone transferring ones. How Shoutmon didn't see this light show from outside of his window as they were working on it was a mystery to both! "So I just go in here, right?" Shoutmon asked curiously walking around the machine giving the it a once-over. Wisemon sighed and nodded while pressing a button on the console letting the capsule open with a loud hissing noise! Shoutmon quickly hopped inside as the glass door shut tightly locking him in with a hearty clack! Wisemon rapidly typed several different codes into the keyboard before punching a giant green button with enough force to slightly crack it.

"Oh, one more thing, my king... I only have enough memory to make four trips, hopefully, that won't be needed... It only needs to take you there and bring you back. NOTHING more... Do not overuse it or you may be stuck drifting between spaces for eternity... Oh, and good luck!~"

The last part was a bit too flowery and sweet for Shoutmon's taste but he begrudgingly nodded. Gritting

his razor sharp teeth, he mentally prepared himself for what he was about to see. He folded his arms and took a deep breath before being completely submerged in a deliciously warm light! His body rapidly melted into an energy-light based code then sucked through the tiny, straw sized funnel. The next thing he knew, he was being materialized within the fusion loader's inner white void, but this time it seemed more vast without everyone taking up space within it. He gulped knowing exactly what he had to do next and slowly walked towards the giant screen, completely shaking with both fear and worry.

Thirty minutes went by, still nothing from the fusion loader, then forty! The tears that had once flooded down his cheeks had since dried up. He then threw the fusion loader as hard as he could against the adjacent wall with a loud metallic "Bang"! He didn't know if Shoutmon could even use the fusion loader again or if he could even hear him at all... He knew for a fact that Shoutmon would never turn his back on him nor would he turn his back on anyone for that matter! They had been through so much together, there was absolutely no way he would ever ignore him... right? Those final thoughts haunted the boy before he collapsed in the corner of the room in a strange, unnatural position letting the sheer exhaustion from the many sleepless nights finally take him.

Suddenly, a bright light filled Taiki's room as the Xros loader's screen sparked to life. "HEY TAIKI!! RELOAD ME ALREADY WOULD YA?" The familiar scratchy tone of his once overly energetic friend filled the room. Taiki's eyes burst open upon recognizing who it was. "Shoutmon!" Taiki's voice was nothing more than a grating whisper. With a gasp, he leapt to his feet snatching the fusion loader at the other end of the room. Shoutmon smiled slightly letting out a small barely audible sigh in relief as Taiki shouted as loud as his voice would let him "Reload, Shoutmon!" Shoutmon chuckled feeling the familiar pull of the Xros loader quickly eject him into reality. Shoutmon's expression faded upon seeing Taiki's deplorable state. "It's good to see you again, Shoutmon!" Taiki strained with a half smile! His expression quickly faded upon remembering why he'd summoned Shoutmon all the way to the human world. He quickly slid the loader into his back pocket and took a deep, shaky breath as Shoutmon mentally braced himself.

"It's... Akari... I-I just thought you'd want to say goodbye..." His voice tapering off at the end. Shoutmon let out a frustrated growl, stomped over to the spiky brown headed boy and looked him straight in the eyes. "SO... You called me ALL THE WAY from the digital world, HAD ME WORRIED SICK FOR DAYS, only to send me back???" Taiki jumped back surprised at his friend's actions throwing up his arms in front of himself expecting to get punched. "N-No! Shoutmon, it isn't like that at all! Aka-" Shoutmon's nostrils flared, letting off streams of small smokey trails. "No, YOU listen to ME... Do you have ANY idea how important my job is back in the digital world or have you completely gone insane?!? I THOUGHT YOU'D BEEN MAULED BY A ROGUE DIGIMON OR SOMETHING AND ALL YOU WANT TO DO IS SEND ME BACK???" Shoutmon's grating voice now shook the room with each thunderous bellow forbidding taiki from getting a word in.

'Damn! If he's going to be like this, I won't get my point across... Well, I guess showing him is easier than telling him at this point...'

"GAH!" Taiki huffed through grated whispers. He threw his hands in the air and opened his mouth as if to make a strong rebuttal but instead dashed out of the house snagging his bike on the way. Shoutmon blinked out of confusion, it definitely wasn't like Taiki to run. The ruby dragon Digimon snarled and literally rocketed after him quickly gaining ground up until the boy reached his bike! "GET BACK HERE

OR I'LL GRILL YOU ALIVE!!" Taiki peddled as fast as he could to avoid Shoutmon to no avail. Shoutmon then jumped, flipping over the bike and landing with a harsh thud right in front of him. "WHOA!" Taiki whispered loudly as he swerved to avoid hitting him only to have Shoutmon catch the back tire! Taiki lurched forwards painfully colliding with the handle bars with a semi-loud "GAK"! Shoutmon's eyes widened as he let out a sharp gasp upon realization. He released the bike in an instant letting it clatter noisily to the ground and grasped the back of Taiki's shirt before he had a painful encounter with the cement below!

Shoutmon let out a small sigh upon setting Taiki upon the ground only to have him double over in pain. "Taiki! Are you ok?" The anger within him quickly shifted to concern as Taiki gave him a shaky thumbs up. He took a minute to recover before noticing the attention his ruby lizard friend was drawing. "Uh..." He panicked, rapidly digging through his mind trying to think of a solution that would either draw attention away or fix the situation somehow... 'I've got it!' He thought, quickly flicking his goggles and withdrew the Xros loader he'd earlier stashed in his pocket. He then turned to Shoutmon and pointed at it hoping he'd get the message and with a heavy sigh, Shoutmon vanished into it. Taiki then turned to the staring neighbors wearing a feigned smile.

"Thank you, thank you! I hope you've all enjoyed my little magic act! I'm training to be an amateur magician, heh... What you saw was no more than a mere illusion created by this holographic device!" A small bead of sweat began to slowly trickle down his brow as he showed off the loader silently hoping they'd believe it. A second later, thunderous applause filled the air as Taiki picked up his bike and remounted it. When they were far enough away, Shoutmon chuckled and said, "Nice save, Taiki... now, are you really going to tell me why you summoned me to the human world instead of just running away?" Taiki gritted his teeth as if he were holding back yet another wave of sadness. Even Shoutmon could sense the stress from deep within the loader. He decided to press his luck anyways,

"You said it had something to do with Akari? Is she ok? Is... she hurt?" He asked, his voice taking on a serious tone as it echoed out of the loader. Taiki only gritted his teeth and tightened his grip on the loader, his voice less than a raspy whisper. "You need to prepare yourself for what you're about to see..." With a heavy sigh, Shoutmon sat back against a far wall of the void as memories of her filled his mind. Memories of the sweet zone where he and Balistamon had accidentally eaten all of the bananas leaving nothing but the peels and a furious Akari! The time she'd been tricked by Laylamon's mirror reminding him of just how much she really did mean to his mission! The time when she and Zenjirou had to wear those ridiculous outfits and preform some love dance in the forest zone!

He closed his eyes as a smile played across his jagged jaw. He was suddenly ripped from his memories as Taiki's voice once again filled the loader along with the outside chatter of the hospital patients waiting to be seen. Among them was the sleeping Zenjirou, snoring away peacefully! "Which way is Akari Hinomoto's room?" There was a slight pause before an older woman with a very soothing mother-like tone answered. "Ah yes, she's in room 12B! Just make your way down the hall to the left, go up the stairs, and turn to your right. It should be right there!" Taiki nodded taking a deep breath before continuing forwards. Inside the loader, Shoutmon gritted his teeth as he slightly began to shake once more, mentally and physically preparing himself for what he was about to see.

His mind was engulfed in horrifically gruesome images surrounding Akari, this also made him angry on a low key scale as Shoutmon valued friendship over all. Suddenly, a bright blinding light engulfed the area within the loader temporarily blinding Shoutmon. He jumped up and away from the light snarling fiercely

only to have the light dissipate into the void. "What the..." Shoutmon blinked slightly confused as to what he had just witnessed. Usually a brilliant light carried the soul of a fallen comrade to heal in the loader's warmth but it was just him this time... right? Without hesitation, he summoned his mic out of thin air and shouted. "HEY YOU, COME OUT WHERE I CAN SEE YOU!" Shoutmon's jagged lips peeled away from his bright white daggers as a low, defensive growl rolled from the back of his throat. He was ready to pounce on whatever appeared until a loud, shrill tone filled the air as if an old computer was dialing up the internet. "GAHH!" Shoutmon roared clasp the headphones on the sides of his head as the tone grew louder and louder until it suddenly stopped!

3 - Misunderstanding

There was a long pause before an incredibly loud static filled voice belted through the air. You'd think for someone so used to shouting, it'd be easy for him to handle loud noises! Apparently, that wasn't the case for this shouting, red dragon! "What the hell?" Shoutmon took another step back staring at the burning bright light that now took over a section of the floor. Eventually, the voice became softer and easier to understand. Wisemon's voice then grew louder as it rang through the loader testing the communications between worlds. "Testing, testing... Ah, I think we've found the loader's frequency! My king, can you hear me?" Shoutmon sighed removing his hands from his headphones upon recognizing the voice of his wisest friend. "Yeah, I can hear you. What do you want?" There was a slight pause before Wisemon let out a long sigh. "I was just testing the two way communication. If you need anything, I'll be here. Contact me by doing what you do best, shouting!" There was a soft click as the light vanished. "Hmph." Shoutmon huffed again seating himself against the wall. He really was grateful for all of Wisemon's help so far even if he didn't show it. What kind of king reacted this way? He let out a long, defeated sigh letting his shoulders fall as he slumped against the wall.

~Meanwhile~

Taiki's feet felt like cinderblocks as he neared the room. It was as if the ground itself was trying to stop him from entering. He gulped down the lump in his throat, holding out a shaky hand towards the brass knob only to pause and take a deep breath. "Taiki?" Shoutmon's gruff, worried voice echoed statically through the loader snapping him almost instantly out of his sudden stupor. Taiki closed his eyes taking a deep, shaky breath before thrusting the door open and entering the small dimly lit hospital room letting the last bits of sunshine seep through as the day faded into night. It had a single vertical rectangular window with a long, Burgundy, heavy curtain tied open on the far left as it was a corner room. A small tv flickered on mute, appearing to be a bad cooking show. Her bed lie to the far right with a few chairs and a lounge sofa scattered around the room. Taiki quickly shut the door, untied and pulled the curtain over the window making sure no one could see the reload. With a shaky hand, he held up the loader and shouted the iconic words. "RELOAD, SHOUTMON!" A familiar bright flash filled the room as the red Digimon materialized in front of the bed. The smell of decay and death that invisibly permeated the room hit him almost instantly making him gag slightly. Shoutmon's eyes widened, filling with dread as he gazed over her deteriorated form. She was nothing more than skin and bones, fresh blood caked under her nose and eyes. Her eyes fluttered open upon the sudden bright light filling the room. Shoutmon stood there, frozen stiff for what seemed like 20 minutes solid, mouth agape at what lie before him refusing to believe that this living corpse was the remainder of one of his friends, his comrades! One of the humans that had helped him live his dream even if she didn't do much.

She smiled faintly attempting to sit up but only getting about half way before falling back to the pillow. The multitude of IV's clacked together noisily from the movements. On instinct, Shoutmon rushed to catch her before she hit the bed again but he was too late. "S-sorry, this is a-a-all I c-can do today..." She said quietly through strained breaths panting heavily. She then turned to Shoutmon as a faint smile attempted it's way across her lips. "I'm so glad I-I-I got to s... see you again!" She rasped quietly as the tears in Shoutmon's eyes, 'formed from the odor', took over beginning to pour down his face. "Y-you're definitely b-bigger than last time!" Shoutmon's lips instantly peeled away from his blade-like

teeth as he raised both arms and furiously slammed them hard onto the bed rail which completely smashed through the rail and rattled the bed a bit! He squeezed his eyes shut refusing to believe any of it, it was just too much! "DAMN IT ALL!" A quiet sigh sounded behind him as Taiki lay his hand on Shoutmon's shoulder giving it a light supportive squeeze Just as Zenjirou had before. Shoutmon then roughly pried Taiki's hand off of his shoulder and wheeled around quickly with a fierce growl. "I need to talk to you in private." He said in a fiercely flat tone while storming off to the nearby bathroom and propping himself up on the sink. With a heavy sigh, Taiki obliged holding up a single finger to Akari. "Just give us a minute please, it shouldn't take long." Akari gave a confused nod as she watched Taiki slowly dragging himself in after Shoutmon and quietly shut the door.

He turned around only to be face to face with a snarling Shoutmon! "W-Whoa! H-Hey, what's the big idea?!" Taiki asked reeling back from the sudden shock! Taiki could literally see flames in his icy blue irises. Shoutmon then took a deep breath letting his lips fall back into place. "T-that's not Akari... Tell me that's not her! Tell me this is all some practical joke!" Shoutmon pleaded desperately with his friend! "Tell me she's fine and we'll see her tomorrow or whatever!!" Taiki's expression fell even further than the lifelessness it already had as his eyes, once filled with light and warmth no longer held that spark. They were now just empty grey orbs that no longer held meaning. Shoutmon snarled again, this time it was deep and guttural, anger seeping out of every pore! No, Shoutmon knew it was her even if he didn't want to admit it. Taiki's own deplorable state was evident of that. His hair was unbrushed and matted on one side, his teeth went unbrushed, his food and sleep schedules appeared to be all askew! Shoutmon couldn't handle any more of this! He rubbed his eyes and massaged the bridge of his snout just sitting in silence for a while before hopping off of the sink and opening the door leaving Taiki to sit on the hamper in his corner of the bathroom as he rubbed his own tired eyes. His elbows rested firmly on his knees.

Shoutmon let out a rough, shaky sigh and with the back of his hand, he wiped his nose sniffing heavily. Akari's smile faded upon seeing one of the strongest Digimon she'd ever known shed tears. "I-I'm so... sorry... S-Shoutmon..." Icy hot tears mixed with blood began to flood down her own bony cheeks. "I-I'm not st-strong like y-you Digimon..." Shoutmon reached a hand forwards holding the side of her face while wiping away a few tears with a black, rubber finger. "No... you're one of the strongest humans I've... uh-wait... what did you say?" Shoutmon's head instantly jolted up as an idea began to form. He then turned back to Taiki with a cocky smile and said. "Hold that thought, I have an idea!" Shoutmon then flashed into energy disappearing into the loader. "WISEMON!! WISEMOON ARE YOU HERE?" The familiar dial-up sound belted through the loader yet again and Wisemon's voice came rattling through! "Y-yes Shoutmon, it's me! What do you need?" Shoutmon wiped his eyes quickly letting his confidence in his new idea take hold!

Wisemon blinked curiously focusing upon the screen in front of him. "GET READY FOR THE BEST IDEA EVER BECAUSE WE'RE GONNA NEED IT!" He shouted, his voice boomed full of confidence through the loader! "Let's turn Akari into a Digimon! Digimon are physically stronger than humans so maybe we can extend her life as well! Akari is on her death bed, and from the looks of it, she doesn't have long. Is something like that even possible?" Wisemon paused for a moment placing a long, thin hand upon his hidden chin and scratched it. "What happened to Miss Akari?" He asked curiously but Shoutmon shook his head quickly. "So, is it?" Wisemon let out a careful sigh, staring through the screen at the eager red lizard while placing his hands in a pyramid shape upon the interface. He then moved to type in a few things, though the impatient red dragon, frustration ringing clearly through his voice, again asked, "WELL??" Wisemon sighed. "Something like this is incredibly risky, if a human heart and soul

could even attach to and hold on to a digitized vessel it'd be a miracle... She could even die in the process or most of who she was could vanish into thin air making her personality or memories completely different! Though there could be a certain code she does cling to... I'd have to study her face to face in order to find it though as well as do some modifications to the transfer machine to allow such things to take place... We'd also need a heavy supply of DNA from other Digimon, spit wads, lose scales, hairs anything that could contain their information minus the personality that goes along with it. Though a Digimon with a human heart and soul would be incredibly powerful and a colossal handful... She may or may not learn any magic at all or have any special changes whatsoever. It is possible that digivolution, for her, wouldn't happen at all! You need to prepare for the worst, my king, In any case y-"

Shoutmon just stood there as Wisemon droned on about the consequences, none of it seeming to sink in. "Uh..." He interrupted. With a defeated sigh, the wise Digimon simply stated. "There are a lot of risks involved unless I can properly study her and see what code or codes her soul absorbs. You'll have to collect samples from each Digimon you meet. Hair, skin, scale, fin, whatever! Just do it quickly! I'll pull you back to the digital world when you're ready! We're going to try our best to save Miss Akari!" Shoutmon smiled holding up a thumbs up, "You're the best, Wisemon!" and vanished again appearing back in the human world as Taiki was dozing off on the fainting sofa. He turned to the skeletal remains of Akari and grabbed one of her boney hands. Akari jumped slightly but fell back against the pillow recognizing Shoutmon's warm rubber fingers gently holding the captive hand. He then knelt down and whispered, "Akari, I have a plan and we're gonna save you no matter what! I just need to do something really quick! Tell Taiki for me please! Do you think you can hold on a bit longer?" Akari blinked slowly giving Shoutmon a very confused look but nodded and let her eyes close again. Shoutmon then licked the back of her hand gingerly before placing it next to her. "You have my shouting promise!"

4 - A crazy plan and a shouting promise!

“Ugggh...” Wisemon groaned noisily as soon as the video call ended. These past few days have been nothing but constant work for him. He rubbed his tired, yellow eyes as a hand was placed delicately upon his shoulder. “AHH!” He shrieked spinning around as fast as possible only to come face to face with Sanzomon! “Oh... it’s just you... Ha... HA...HAHAHAAA!!” He laughed loudly, delirious from lack of sleep. “This stupid child king... every beck and call... every senseless whim I have to oblige because he beat Lord Bagramon! Even if he didn’t do it alone!” As he stared at Sanzomon, his yellow eyes began to form into spinning spirals eventually causing him to collapse. “I’ve got you!” Sanzomon cried as she reached forwards catching the falling Wisemon before he met a painful awakening. She then turned to glare angrily the screen as it now swirled with different colored codes. “My king, you have pushed him too far! Is saving this human’s life even worth the trouble?” As if on cue, the screen lit up in a bright red flash as the familiar straw-sized spiral spat out a bright white energy. Sanzomon gasped jumping back still clinging to Wisemon’s fainted form before the energy materialized into the king. She sighed in relief as King Shoutmon’s eyes met with hers, burning in their familiar blazing blue tone.

“OF COURSE IT’S NECESSARY! HOW COULD YOU EVEN SAY THAT? She was one of the original Xros Heart’s members! Even if she wasn’t a general or didn’t really do much, she still contributed by being the one that cared the most! Though, it didn’t look appetizing to me, she’s also the one who saved our hides in the bake-off! She was one of the ones that first helped me digivolve! She also provided bandages, icepacks and splints when even Cutemon’s abilities were drawing thin! AND ANOTHER THING-“ “MY KING...” Sanzomon curtly cut in receiving an angry snarl in reply. “Just... look at him!” Shoutmon glanced down at the tired, worn out state, Wisemon had worked himself into for his own sake and lowered his lips back over his teeth. “Fine, I’ll give him a few days to rest while I gather the Digital DNA. Oh by the way, can I have a-“ “NO!” She glared so menacingly at the red lizard Digimon, that it sent chills down his spine! She then relaxed her features gently setting Wisemon on the grass and took a bow. “Forgive me, my king, but sometimes you take your own mission too seriously overlooking what falls into the cracks along the way.” Shoutmon tilted his head in a confused fashion and folded his arms. Sanzomon sighed attempting to weave the simplest sentences possible within her mind. She took a deep breath and said, “Simply stating, you only see your own path before you. You fail to sense when others are hurting and that could become a problem in the long run.” Shoutmon snorted, letting the smoke billow from his nostrils. “I haven’t let anyone fall through the cracks... uh, until now!” He said quickly glancing at Wisemon. “It won’t happen again.” Sanzomon’s face fell in disbelief but she nodded anyways. Shoutmon then wheeled around and dashed off to prevent wasting any more time. ‘Wisemon, you HAVE to get better soon, our friend is counting on us!’ He thought narrowing his icy blue eyes.

He tore into the castle like a bat out of hell screeching to a halt upon hitting the cold stone floor! He then rapidly reached into the air summoning his mic and shouted at the top of his lungs. “HEY EVERYONE! I NEED HAIR, SCALE, CLAW, TOOTH ANYTHING AND MAKE IT QUICK! A FRIEND IS DYING AND NEEDS OUR HELP!” The Prairiemon servants in the area dove to the ground as the words echoed loudly through the corridors, covering their ears as the noisy dragon shouted. A single Prairiemon, much smaller than the others walked up to the king in a bow before speaking. “Um, King... Why would this help your friend?” Shoutmon sighed knowing something like this would come up. He knelt down and placed a

hand upon her head. "Look, I know it is a strange request but you have to trust me! I don't have much time to explain!" The young Prairiemon nodded quickly still not quite understanding and quickly plucked three short, greyish-brown hairs from her head quickly handing them over to the king. Shoutmon smiled patting her on the head and rapidly bolted upstairs. Luckily, the purple, yellow winged trouble maker was there chatting with a Prairiemon servant. "GUMDRAMON!" Shoutmon bellowed happily receiving a startled "WAAH!! I DIDN'T DO IT!" from the mischievous purple dragon! 'Crap! If the king finds out what I did, he's gonna be furious!!' He thought nervously letting multiple sweat drops form. "Gumdramon, I need a scale! Quick, don't question me!!" Gumdramon stared at the king for a minute dumbfounded before he blinked. "Whaaa?" He said taking a step back.

The Prairiemon quickly ducked into the nearest room to dust and tidy up hoping she wouldn't get caught in the probable shouting chaos that was about to erupt. "Just gimme a scale or claw tip! Maybe a tooth!!" Shoutmon said taking on a creepy tone. At least to Gumdramon, that is! "YOU'VE LOST YOUR MIND IN YOUR OLD AGE, KING! STAY BACK!" Gumdramon bolted as fast as he could through the main halls headed straight for the top while scanning the walls rapidly for an open window or any places to hide! "GUMDRAMON, GET BACK HERE!" Shoutmon shouted angrily as he attempted to dive onto the fleeing purple dragon Digimon but missed and crashed into the ground instead. "OWWW! YOU KNOW WHAT? FORGET YOU!" He shouted angrily, rubbing his now bruised snout. Gumdramon couldn't help but snicker as he darted into an empty delegate's room diving swiftly under the bed! It wasn't until a few seconds later that the purple dragon Digimon realized which way the king was headed! He gritted his teeth and flew out from under the bed as fast as his tiny feet could carry him. "K-KIING WAIT DON'T GO THAT-EEP!" He screeched beginning to bite his oversized front claws in fear of what was going to befall him. Shoutmon took a few steps towards the exit again, taking an alternate route only to trip a wire and SPLAT! A large pie fell from the ceiling directly on top of Shoutmon's giant V! "Heh... crap crap crap crap crap!" Gumdramon whispered silently to himself through clenched teeth as he began to slowly back away.

"Gum... Dra... Mon." Shoutmon said, in a low, chilling tone that paralyzed Gumdramon to his very core. The smaller purple dragon began to shake, his feet refusing to move. 'Oh no, this is it! I'm gonna die!!' He quickly shook his head, freeing him from the paralyzing fear and began to babble random excuses to hopefully cover himself! "I-i-it wasn't for you! No, King! Uh, it was for that stinky fish lady! The one that talks too much! Hehe, y-yeah! That one! What was her name? R-Ranamon or something like that? I WAS FRAMED!! I TOTALLY DIDN'T PLANT IT!! IT'S A LIE!! PRAIRIEMON DID IT!!" Shoutmon turned around and began walking slowly towards the terrified dragon child. He then lifted his hand wiping up a single stray piece of pie that was headed for his eye and tasted it. A wicked, toothy grin then curled its way across his face in a way that would give someone nightmares! His usual fiery, blue eyes, were now piercing right into Gumdramon's very soul, holding him in its icy death trap just like a hunter and its prey. He felt the spines on the back of his neck stand on end as Shoutmon then said in a very hushed, frigid tone, "RUN!"

5 - Quest for the Digital DNA!

Gumdramon tore through the halls diving past and maneuvering around the Prairiemon servants with the occasional "SORRY!" Shoutmon was quick on his heels, swiftly jumping over the Prairiemon servants in a single leap yet failing to stop the bolting purple dragon! "YOU'LL PAY FOR THAT GUMDRAMON!!" Shoutmon bellowed letting it reverberate off of the walls in the hallway. "YOU MESS WITH ANY OF THE OTHER DELEGATES AGAIN AND YOU'LL BE THE ONE ANSWERING FOR HIGH TREASON IN MY PLACE!!!" Gumdramon slammed his claws over his ears as hard as he could crying from the pain of the sudden blast! "GYAHHH!! I'M SORRY OK?! PLEASE DON'T KILL ME!!!" The Prairiemon, having been through the same about every week or so, merely jumped or stepped to the side knowingly. A few of them dashed after the chaotic duo with mops and brooms at the ready expecting the destruction that would fall in their wake. Gumdramon quickly glanced back to see how far back Shoutmon was only to smash head first into a door at the end of the hall with a loud "OOF!" Shoutmon smiled dangerously and pounced on him before he had time to get away again pinning him by the arms. "NO!! PLEASE!! DON'T KILL ME!! PLEEEASE JUST LET ME GOOOOOO! I'LL NEVER DO IT AGAINNN!" He sobbed loudly. Shoutmon growled angrily at the young Gumdramon picking off a few loose scales "YOU'D BETTER NOT OR ELSE THE CONSEQUENCES FOR NEXT TIME WILL BE SO MUCH WORSE!" Gumdramon closed his eyes as the blast of wind coming from the shouting Digimon's mouth blew back his spikes.

Gumdramon frantically shook his head and shouted "I WON'T! I WON'T! I SWEAR!!" Shoutmon smiled and let him up only to have Gumdramon bolt as soon as he was free. He glanced down at the tiny scales in his hands as a heavy sigh rushed out. 'If only you knew what this was for... maybe you'd be more on board with helping. But even still... would you fully understand the seriousness of the situation?' A serious expression washed over Shoutmon's face as he closed his hand over the three hairs and the newly acquired purple scales. He turned to leave the way he came in to avoid any more Gumdramon surprises. Once outside of the castle, Shoutmon quickly made his way to the east knowing there was a small sea-side village of Digimon a few miles away. He silently wondered if he'd make it there and back in time for the transfer before Akari... He shook his head, ridding himself of the horrible thought! 'Of course I have time, right? If I didn't, Taiki could just scream into the loader again! But what if he couldn't catch her before... 'GAH! I SERIOUSLY NEED TO HURRY!' This town is only three miles away, come on legs, don't fail me now! Omnimon give me strength!' With that, Shoutmon picked up speed, running as fast as he could, hoping he'd at least catch a few Digimon along the way. It wasn't long before he found himself hunched over, with his one hand resting firmly upon his knee completely out of breath! Luckily, the gates were within shouting distance. Once he had regained his energy, he quickly summoned his mic and shouted at the top of his lungs,

"HEY, THIS IS YOUR KING, I NEED uh..." He paused for a moment wondering if telling them the truth would be the best idea. What if they're against the idea? They could simply outright refuse! He didn't have time for refusals. He gritted his teeth and continued as a sweat drop began to form under his V. "I NEED HAIR, CLAW AND SCALE SAMPLES FROM EACH OF YOU! IT'S FOR uh... WISEMON'S STUDIES!" There, plain and simple! At least it wasn't a lie and a little more believable than the actual truth! Multiple Digimon peeked out of their huts then dove out of their doors upon realizing who it was and bolted towards the gate, tripping over each other to open it for their unexpected royal guest. "KING,

KING! OH WOW, IT'S THE KING!" The rookies, all mixed with Gomamon, Gabumon, Otamamon, Crabmon, and Gizamon shouted in excitement nearly climbing over each other to get a peek for themselves forming a massive circle around him! An older Leomon then walked forwards out of his cabin in the center of town and attempted to calm down the crowd. "One at a time, please, don't crowd the king! And where are your respective bows? We're in the presence of royalty!" He then turned towards Shoutmon and bowed as the crowd parted for their Noble leader bowing respectively. Shoutmon smiled and said, "At ease Leomon, children, you may rise!" The Leomon then stood with a patient smile as the children did the same, excitement and wonder filling their already wide eyes! "My King, what a surprising visit! Of course we'll help further Wisemon's studies!! Give each of us a minute!" Shoutmon smiled happily noting the happiness he'd brought to the small villager's faces! "One more thing, Leomon..." Shoutmon said in a terrifyingly grim tone. "DON'T include SEADRAMON DNA..." He said, spitting venom in each syllable. His eyes flashing their terrifying icy blue glare. Leomon froze, then nodded, his expression hardened into a more serious and stony one. "U-understood, my King. I don't think we have anyone from that line in our village." Every Digimon knew of the king's hatred for the species, yet nobody was brave enough to ask why.

Shoutmon let out a small sigh letting his features relax to their normal state. "Thank you... Leomon." The old Leomon nodded swiftly then changed the conversation. "Would you mind staying and reading to the children? I'm sure they'd love it!" He said with a sincere smile! Shoutmon gave another sigh and with a sad smile he shook his head. "No, I'd love to but I'm afraid I'm a bit short on time. If I could get the DNA quickly, it'd be helpful!" The Leomon nodded happily as he then returned to his hut retrieving a small burlap sack and walked back over to the crowd of youngsters. "Okay kids, I need you all to put hair, claw tips and any loose scales you may have in this bag for the king! This will help Wisemon get smarter! Can you do that for me?" He asked with a slight chuckle. "YES! ME FIRST! NO, ME FIRST! NAH UH! YOU WENT FIRST ON THE POLO GAME! DID NOT! DID TOO!" Leomon's smile faded as he then roared loudly over the crowd. "CHILDREN, TWO AT A TIME MAY COME TO THE BAG TO GIVE THEIR OFFERINGS!" The crowd instantly fell silent as they nodded happily and lined up. Shoutmon nervously glanced at the shadows on the ground noting the time slowly slipping away from him. 'Gah, I told Sanzomon I'd be a few days to let Wisemon rest but what if I don't have that long... Wisemon needs his rest but what about Akari?! Even I couldn't sleep when I heard Taiki's call...' Multiple sweat drops formed under the V that vanished the instant he heard Leomon's roar. Shoutmon smiled upon seeing the fatherly lion handle the uproar with such care! 'He really does have a way with those kids... I wonder what he could do with someone like Gumdramon...' His smile then turned mischievous as an image of a Leomon-tamed Gumdramon walked around in a waiter outfit serving everyone tea and biscuits at beck and call! It'd be the perfect payback! He sighed sadly knowing he'd never do such a thing to this kind Leomon. Someone like Gumdramon would probably beat everyone up and have burned down the town in a day.

~Meanwhile~

Wisemon bolted upright on the grass as if he'd seen death himself! "Oh no! How long was I out?!" Wisemon cried, quickly jumping to his feet! "AAH!" Sanzomon jumped at Wisemon's sudden calamity! "U-um you were out for a mere twenty minutes, Wisemon." She said trying to recompose herself as best she could. "No no no no no!!" Wisemon muttered as he walked in circles with his hands on his head. "Shoutmon said she didn't have long! Even if it's only been two seconds in the human world we could still be too late!!" He then rushed back to his machine whipping out his tool kit from his book's pocket dimension and hastily pulling apart certain areas then rapidly rewiring them. Sanzomon watched

in utter bemusement constantly trying to figure out what exactly this human girl did to get everyone in such a fuss. Even the king seemed worried and he still said she did almost nothing to deserve such a fuss! Was she really from the war as they'd said before? Wisemon's continual muttering to himself was as off-putting as the tangled web of concern and curiosity that continually wove itself within Sanzomon's mind! She couldn't take it anymore! She stomped on the ground getting Wisemon's attention almost instantly snapping him out of his constant muttering. "Is there something wrong, Sanzomon?" Wisemon said looking back at the monk Digimon. Sanzomon sighed quietly and said. "Forgive my outburst, Wisemon, but why is this human so important? Why work your data to it's breaking point for such an unimportant piece of the puzzle? I don't remember any stories of a female within the group other than Nene..." Wisemon's eyes smiled at Sanzomon as he went back rapidly working on the machine. "What?" She said, letting off an unintended whine. She quickly clasped her hands over her mouth. "Forgive me, Wisemon..." She said quietly bowing in an apologetic way.

"If I may be so bold, Sanzomon," Wisemon asked in a sort of giddy tone. "Do you have a crush on the king and are you jealous of his attention straying to Miss Akari?" Sanzomon blinked taking in what Wisemon said and took a single step back. "Oh no! No no no! I-It's just that... I worry for his and your health... is all!" Sanzomon said, her voice quickly dipping into a more concerned tone. "Ah." Wisemon said, his tone falling flat upon being wrong for even he didn't know everything when it came to the matters of the heart. "Well, you know our king, he must try to save everyone and Akari is a dear friend of my own as well. I'd hate to lose such a sweet little girl!" He then fitted the plate back over the machine and quickly returned to the control panel flipping two new switches that opened a much larger portal. "HAHA, IT WORKED!!" Wisemon shouted in triumph as he happily threw his hands into the air! He then pulled out a microphone from a secret hidden panel and quickly turned it on. "Taiki? Can you hear me?"

6 - Little town of rookies

“Uuuuaaahh!” Taiki yawned as the loader belted the familiar tone of Wisemon’s voice. “Yeah, Wisemon, I can hear you. Is there something you need?” He asked sleepily rubbing his eyes. The loader then blared with static as a bright white flash suddenly filled the area. “WHOA!” Taiki shouted shielding his eyes from the sudden light. ‘A little warning next time!’ He thought, blinking slightly to readjust his eyes to the light. When it dulled again, he gave a confused blink and questioned Wisemon. “What the heck was that??” Static again filled the loader as Wisemon said, “Shoutmon has an idea on how to save miss Akari, I need you to point the loader in a large empty area so my machine can fit. Please give the signal when you’ve done so!” Taiki gasped, his eyes widened as he slowly absorbed what Wisemon said. “WHAT, YOU CAN SAVE AKARI??!?” He shouted excitedly!! “HOW??” He pulled the loader close to his face as if trying to peer into the empty void that lie within. “Oh, it’s quite a complex system! We plan on altering her DNA so that it becomes binary coding to easily translate to a digital vessel! We are hoping with a stronger vessel, her life could be prolonged but there are a lot of risks involved, as you know, she doesn’t have a loader code so translating it won’t be as easy as the many times you’ve had to leave your body... I’m sending myself along with my machine to try and find a suitable way to study her and gather as much information as I can!” A huge grin stretched across Taiki’s face so wide, it made his cheeks hurt! “HA, I CAN’T BELIEVE IT! AKARI! YOU’RE GONNA... oh...” He glanced over at her only to find her turned slightly away from him unmoving. Taiki froze until the familiar steady beeping of the heart rate monitor broke through his worry, allowing him to relax slightly. He let out a quick sigh shaking his head at his own senseless worry. “Whenever you’re ready, Taiki.” Wisemon said calmly but with enough strength to hopefully snap Taiki out of his sudden stupor.

“Oh, uh, right! So how does this work?” Taiki asked curiously. “Oh, just point the loader in the empty space and shout “Reload Wisemon and Machine!” I’ve coded the machine to match the specifics of a very low level Digimon so there shouldn’t be any difficulties sending it through!” Wisemon’s voice was edging towards a more urgent tone though he tried to keep it as calm as possible. “Right...” Taiki said, his voice tapering off slightly with a bit of uncertainty. He then glanced back at Akari as concern then marred his features. ‘Is she gonna be ok with all of this?’ Wisemon’s voice then boomed with impatience from the loader causing Taiki to let out a shrill yelp! “AHH! Right, right ok!” He said quickly tossing the loader to the small fainting sofa he’d been previously using as a bed and began rapidly pushing chairs out of the way. He then rushed back to the loader and pointed it at the newly cleared area. “RELOAD WISEMON AND MACHINE!” Wisemon smiled veiled under his hood as both the machine and himself was sucked directly through the portal as Sanzomon simply blinked in confusion. Wisemon’s smile remained feeling the familiar warm embrace of the loader’s healing light around him. Without stopping, the loader spat him and the machine out into the open area. The massive machine towered over them, yet barely touched the ceiling. Taiki stared awestruck at the giant machine before him, letting a small “Whoa” slip through his lips! Multiple lights flashed several different colors along the keyboard as a giant metallic pod was fastened to the front with two huge metallic tubes. A large screen displaying several colored numbers flashed across the screen. A large, cushioned table lay to the right of the machine supported by two sturdy metallic legs. A large glowing mass of energy floated at the top of the singular antenna buzzed loudly in several different colors. “Gah!” Taiki quickly turned away rubbing his eyes as the light temporarily blinded him! Wisemon rushed over to Akari wasting no time in transporting her along with her several IV tubes over to the table upon the side of the machine.

Wisemon then flipped a switch on the control panel as the machine buzzed to life. A large green light began moving back and forth over her, scanning for any useable core code she may have to make the transition easier. Wisemon then pushed another button as several metallic cables with a flat coin-like sensor attached themselves to her forehead, arms and legs. Taiki noticed that Wisemon spent as little time as possible looking at the deteriorated state his friend had fallen into. Wisemon's eyes remained glued to the screen as the scan revealed several thousands of multi-colored codes that all flooded onto the screen at once. Wisemon's fingers sped across the keyboard faster than Taiki had ever seen anyone type before. "As soon as I find the code, it's all up to Shoutmon... Oh I pray that he hurries... he wasn't joking when he said she didn't have long... I've never seen anyone in such a state! From the looks alone, she appears to only have 2.4 to 4.3 or possibly even a single day, which is roughly two weeks or 3 days in Digimon time." He then turned to Taiki, though his face was shrouded, Taiki could feel tension of his stress levels rising. "I would notify him if I were you..." With that, Taiki quickly nodded pulling out the loader he'd previously stashed in his back pocket and gave one mighty shout hoping his emotions and determination to connect with the red dragon Digimon would carry his message across worlds! "SHOUTMON, HURRY! PLEASE, SHE DOESN'T HAVE LONG! I BEG OF YOU!!" "And Taiki..." Wisemon said as Taiki finished his message, his voice locked in a firm icy yet stern tone. "To be honest, you need to prepare to say goodbye. I don't know if this would work or not. If she had a cross loader code, it would be so much easier," A huge, defeated sigh then rushed out of the wise Digimon, "but as I've said before, she doesn't. It is up to her will alone if she is to survive. I'm pulling as much as I can with what little time is left but even I don't know if it'll be enough. I've tried to tell the king this, but his hard-headedness is almost impossible to convince when he's sure of something or desperate to save someone. Though I'm trying my best, please don't blame me if it doesn't work. I can't have this on my conscience too."

Taiki's face paled as sadness and stress yet again pooled up within him. His grey eyes went blank losing the small amount of life they'd gained from the previous news. His brow furrowed, the hand clutching the loader shook furiously as it became sweaty. "O-oh... I-I understand, Wisemon... Please t-try your best. T-this is her last chance at survival." His voice falling into the, now spilling over, well of sadness and stress he'd tried so hard to contain yet didn't have the energy to. Tears yet again, fell freely down his cheeks in quiet sobs. Hearing Taiki fall apart was so alien to the wise Digimon that it almost seemed unreal! His voice then took on a soft and gentle tone hoping to ease his friend's woes. "Taiki, I never do anything but my best!" Taiki looked up at Wisemon, though his eyes were glued intently to the screen before him, and smiled letting out a very weak, "Thanks Wisemon!" Suddenly, Taiki gasped loudly, his head popping up as an idea made it's way to the surface! "Could you use my code?" Wisemon's eyes narrowed as he shook his head, his eyes locked intently on the screen before him just in case he'd miss an important or hidden cross code. "No, I'm afraid that wouldn't work. Your code is specifically designed for you. If I were to extract it, not only would you die, but it would be incredibly incompatible with her systems. I've scanned your code before and was testing this theory as Shoutmon was, rather impatiently, giving me the idea. Wisemon's hidden brow furrowed angrily remembering the impatience the king had earlier that day, though he could forgive him 'this time' as the situation was dire. Taiki gave a defeated sigh and slumped back onto the fainting sofa holding the loader to his forehead silently praying for Shoutmon's hasty return.

7 - An empty promise and a new hope!

~Meanwhile, back in the digital world~

“GYAHHH!!!” Shoutmon roared in pain, tightly clutching his earphones as Taiki’s voice rang loudly through! ‘Taiki, we have got to find a better way to communicate...’ He thought, turning the dial of the black rims on his earphones down as he’d done many times before, often muting overly chatty delegates. Shoutmon’s face paled adopting an almost stony expression. “Leomon, I’m going to need that bag NOW!” Shoutmon said, his voice slipping into urgency! “I’m sorry, I don’t have time to explain! What Wisemon is doing is super time sensitive!” Leomon’s face twisted into a confused, slightly worried frown, but he nodded turning back to the children. “Sorry kids! The king has to go! Everyone say bye now!” Shoutmon waved nervously hoping they wouldn’t group around him like last time as a chorus of “BYE!” and “BYE KING!” Filled the air. Tying the burlap sack in a brown, leather string, Leomon quickly tossed it over to the silently panicking Shoutmon, still very curious about the whole situation yet wanting to conserve the king’s privacy. In one fluid motion, Shoutmon leapt high into the air, snagged the sack and tied it firmly onto his belt. With a quick “Thanks!” He rocketed off leaving the confused anthropomorphic Lion and a group of digital monster rookies to stare after him. ‘Hang on Akari, I’m coming! I won’t let you die, NOT TODAY!’ He snarled flashing his pearly white dagger-like teeth as his determination fueled every step!

As he ran, he noticed the foliage of a nearby forest, Lilamon and Stingmon’s forest to be precise, just to the left of him. His cocky smile widened “THE FOREST!! YES! Last time I cut around it thinking I had more time, but if I cut through it, it may save time! Time... I don’t have a moment to lose!” Without a second thought, he plunged directly into the thicket of the forest, rapidly, and quite noisily, tearing through without hesitation accidentally upsetting a small hive of Kuwagamon! Without warning, they began to flood from the massive opening completely surrounding Shoutmon! He screeched to a halt, “DAMNIT!” a fierce growl ripped from his throat! He quickly raised a hand summoning forth his mic “CRAP! I DO NOT NEED THIS RIGHT NOW! KUWAGAMON, GET OUT OF THE WAY!” He roared, his icy eyes narrowing dangerously. “I SERIOUSLY DON’T HAVE TIME TO PLAY WITH YOU RIGHT NOW!” The Kuwagamon screeched in unison and all rocketed towards the king! Shoutmon stepped back glancing in all directions looking for any possible escape route. Even he knew he couldn’t take on this many at once! ‘What is going on? Usually, the Kuwagamon are solitary creatures... they never build hives... Something’s wrong...’ A dangerously furious roar spilled from his desperate soul before he just dove forwards into the fray, completely giving up on the escape plan! His once cocky smile now marred with anger. “IF MY FRIEND DIES YOU’LL REGRET EVER CHALLENGING ME! ROWDY ROCKER!!!” He screamed into his mic leaping high into the air and bashing the nearest Kuwagamon squarely on the head with all his might! “SCREEEEEE!!!” It instant fell only to be replaced by another one.

“ROCK DAMA-OOF!!!” Three of them rammed into him into the ground so hard it formed a large crater, from behind and began piling on top of him. Shoutmon’s eyes widened in horror as Taiki’s voice again rang through Shoutmon’s earphones in a desperate cry! “SHOUTMON, WHERE ARE YOU!?! WE NEED YOU HERE NOW! CAN YOU HEAR ME??” Shoutmon squeezed his eyes shut and gritted his teeth from underneath the large pile of bug-type Digimon. “Akari... I’m so... so sorry...” two crystalline tears began to bead at the corners of Shoutmon’s eyes. “I’m so sorry... I failed you...” Shoutmon balled

his rubber fingers into a shaky fist, then slammed it into the ground creating another small crater! It was as if Taiki could sense Shoutmon's dire situation because the next thing he heard sent a jolt of hope rocketing through him! "SHOUTMON, DIGIVOLVE!" Shoutmon gasped! His eyes widened and his mouth dropped open as he was instantly enveloped within a bright golden light! His cocky smile quickly returned he then shouted, "OK! SHOUTMON, DIGIVOLVE TO.... OMNISHOUTMON!" The energy from the digivolution erupted in a massive explosion sending the pile of Kuwagamon flying in all directions. Omnishoutmon jumped into the air and pounded his chest. "ANYONE ELSE WANT SOME?!?" With a symphony of furious hisses, two of the remaining Kuwagamon charged him at once again only to be caught and bashed into one another.

He then rocketed towards the remaining few with a final "TWIN CANNON!" Strike sending them skyrocketing in a smokey trail! He then landed with a harsh thud as the digivolution wore off! He panted clutching his knees for a minute before dashing off towards the castle laughing at the sheer exhilaration and adrenaline that now flowed through him! He hadn't felt like that in years! His smile quickly faded as he neared the exit of the forest shortcut, the brilliantly white stone of his castle shimmered in the sunlight as a bright beacon of hope for any distressed Digimon! "Haha! YES!" He shouted happily! He was too busy staring at the castle in the distance to notice himself closing in upon a giant mud puddle! An unfortunately placed rock sent Shoutmon tumbling directly into the puddle with a sickening splat sending thick clumpy mud flying in all directions! "DAMMIT, JUST WHAT I NEED!" Shoutmon roared into the sky as he then pushed himself up, thick sticky mud clinging to his metallic hide like flies to a carcass. "Ugh..." a frustrated groan rolled from his throat as he crawled to the edge of the somewhat massive puddle letting loose a stream of furious curses as he shook himself off, similar to how a dog would. The bushes shook violently as if something just dove into them a few feet away from him. It gave a startled squeak as two bright, curious and somewhat terrified red eyes watched him carefully, veiled in the shadows. A thick trail of mud led from the puddle to the bushes as if something with a low belly quickly, and somewhat clumsily, judging by the footwork, scuttled into them. Shoutmon froze instinctively as his head quickly snapped towards the noise. He stared at the bush curiously flaring his nostrils trying to get a scent. 'Focus, you have a job to do!' He thought, growling at himself. He shook his head blocking out the curiosity that plagued him knowing he had no time to figure out who it was and sped off towards the castle! His mind now dead set upon reaching the portal. It wasn't long before he barreled through the castle gate colliding head-on with a two Digimon lugging a massive delivery of diginoir. "HEY!" They cried as several cans of his favorite, digital, ring-shaped cereal clattered noisily onto the dirt! "SORRY!" Shoutmon shouted back before diving through the portal! He relaxed letting out a heaving sigh as the portal instantly close up behind him! The familiar warm feeling of his body fading away into a white energy began hurdling through the small funnel and instantly ejected him into the loader.

The loader flashed in the familiar, blinding, bright white light that suddenly flooded the hospital room. Shoutmon landed with a harsh thud letting his claws hit the floor of the white void. Without giving himself a moment to breathe, he rushed towards the massive screen. "HEY TAIKI, RELOAD ME, I'M HERE NOW!" Taiki jumped up from the fainting sofa upon hearing the familiar raspy voice. "SHOUTMON! WHAT TOOK YOU?! Ugh, never mind, RELOAD SHOUTMON!" A blinding white light again filled the hospital room only dissipating when the form of his red dragon friend took its place still slightly covered in mud. A serious expression etched its way onto his face as looked over at Wisemon and Akari. "How is she?" He asked, concern washing over him. With a shaky sigh, Wisemon shook his head sadly, his fingers beginning to blister over from the relentless typing yet the monk Digimon refused to stop! BEEP! Taiki's head jerked up upon hearing the heart rate monitor drop in pace. "W-WISEMON, I DON'T MEAN TO RUSH YOU B-BUT..." "WH-WHAT?!? I THOUGHT WE HAD MORE TIME!" Wisemon

wheeled around glancing at the nearly flatlining heart rate monitor. Shoutmon then rushed to Akari's side! "WHAT DO THE BEEPS MEAN?? WHAT'S GOING ON??" He asked quickly, icy panic quickly climbing up his spine! "IT MEANS SHE'S GONNA DIE!! WISEMON!!" Taiki screamed, violently snatching the back of Wisemon's robe, roughly shaking the monk Digimon! "I KNOW, I KNOW! SHOUTMON! WE NEED THAT DNA NOW!!" BEEP! "R-right... Uh..." Shoutmon reached down to untie the burlap sack only to come up with nothing. His eyes widened in horror! 'C-crap! Noo! Did I lose it in the mud?? No no no!!' He thought searching his belt frantically for the missing sack. "SHOUTMON, NOW!!" Taiki then turned towards Shoutmon, his face scrunched in panic as he thrust out his hands hoping for the DNA! All Shoutmon could do is stare at the boy, utter terror was etched deeply into every inch of his face. Every fiber of his being froze in place, his eyes beginning to bead with tears. "I-I-I ... lost it..." He mumbled quietly, tears beginning to run down the side of his face. All he could do was watch Taiki's face slowly twist into one of pure agony. Taiki fell to his knees clutching his stomach tightly and gritting his teeth. Tears slid through his tightly shut eyes "BEEEEEP!"

"HA! GOT THE CODE! IT ISN'T A LOADER CODE, BUT IT'LL WORK! NOW ALL WE NEED IS THE DNA DATA AND WE'RE GOOD..." Wisemon shouted, full of excitement before turning to the tragic scene behind him. He first glanced at Taiki on the ground then at the devastated looking Shoutmon. "Please, my king, we don't have time for games!" Shoutmon turned his back towards the two refusing to look at them, tears now flooding down his cheeks. "I DROPPED IT! I DON'T HAVE THE DNA... I'M SO SORRY... I FAILED HER... I FAILED TAIKI! I FAILED YOU, WISEMON!" Shoutmon growled at himself, his fists shaking and sweaty at his sides. Wisemon then quickly placed one of his long hands upon Shoutmon's shoulder for a brief moment before instantly yanking it back with a loud gasp! "What is that??" He asked curiously glancing at his own hand now covered in both mud and something small, green and shiny! Shoutmon forced himself to peek at what had made Wisemon gasp and his mouth dropped open! "WISEMON, IS THAT??" Wisemon's eyes widened excitedly as he then threw his empty fist into the air. "Yes... YES, MY KING, IT IS!! No time to question where it came from! I'm imputing the data now!" Shoutmon then knelt down to the sobbing boy on the floor and said. "Taiki, everything is going to be ok now! Akari will be saved!" Shoutmon then stood and flicked his own tears away watching with renewed vigor! Taiki then wheezed out a barely audible chuckle as tears continued to flood down his cheeks. "Shoutmon, I don't know how much more of this emotional rollercoaster I can take, haha!" He wiped his eyes turning towards Wisemon as he punched a few more buttons letting a small tray pop out of the center of the keyboard.

He then began tossing the scales in one by one letting their data get absorbed. "BEEEEEEEEEEEP!" The corners of Taiki's lips curled downwards as he bit his lip, the flatlines were getting more and more frequent. He nervously glanced towards the door hoping the nurses were all busy or else they might try to stop them! Wisemon then said, "Don't worry about the human detail, Taiki, I've made absolutely sure this room and all of its noisy happenings were completely sealed off and a hologram was instantly installed as soon as the machine was sent through the loader!" Taiki breathed a small sigh of relief then jumped as Wisemon abruptly stood, his yellow eyes slowly dropping, yet again into a saddened expression. "BEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEP!" Taiki stood up looking nervously over at Wisemon. "We have five seconds but we don't have a core! WE NEED A CORE NOW!!" Taiki gritted his teeth as adrenaline fueled by fear now raced through him. "We don't have any more DNA do we?" He cried in a panicked tone, now grasping Wisemon's forearms!" A low growl rolled from Shoutmon's throat quietly, squeezing his eyes shut. "FOUR SECONDS!" CRICK! "THREE SECONDS!" SNAP! "TWO SECONDS!!" CRICK... TOK SNAP! Both Taiki and Wisemon quickly spun around and instantly froze in shock at what they saw! Shoutmon's brilliantly large V now broken in half and spilling blood! In his

mouth, he clutched his mic firmly between his teeth. "HERE!" He shouted quickly thrusting the bits of his broken horns towards Wisemon! Wisemon fumbled the horns but quickly nodded as the last second rapidly ticked by. Beads of nervous sweat dripped down Wisemon's hidden face as he furiously pounded the keys! Milliseconds flew by, then nanoseconds when suddenly! "BEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEE-" When the timer finally hit 0.00 it was as if everything around them froze. "NOOO!!" Wisemon wailed, viciously smashing the console, blood now trickling down his worn knuckles. "I'm sorry... I-I'm so sorry..."

8 - An uncertain outcome

“BEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEE-“ Was the last sound Akari heard before her eyes flew open! In one fluid motion, she bolted upright on the metallic panel Wisemon currently had her laying upon. As she looked around the room, she noticed the sound was incredibly muffled as if someone put the world on mute! Her vision also seemed incredibly hazy. “Hey guys, I’m o...kay?” She let out a sharp, exasperated gasp immediately followed by a wild, bloodcurdling scream! Fear gripped and clawed its way up her spine as glassy tears quickly beaded up and trickled down her cheeks! She gulped, feeling slightly queasy, and squeezed her eyes tightly closed in disbelief as she began to shake! After a few seconds, she slowly took a deep, shaky, raspy breath hoping it would calm herself to little avail. ‘Okay... 3... 2... 1!’ She thought, mentally preparing herself for what awaited her. As her eyelids flew open, she glanced down at her fingers and transparent body! The sheer impact of the sudden realization struck her hard! She then shook her head swinging her feet around and hopped off of the machine’s table refusing to believe what lie before her. “NO, NO NO NO NOOOO!!! I CAN’T BE DEAD!!” She glanced around the room, noticing Taiki resting upon the fainting sofa and attempted to run to him only to have each step uncontrollably lift her into the air! “NO NO NOOOOOO! PLEASE, I DON’T WANNA GO!!” She sobbed kicking and clawing violently against the air trying desperately to remain in the corporeal world, but it was no use. As she neared the ceiling of the hospital, she curled into a ball bracing herself for the impact that never came. “Wh-what?” She said carefully opening her eyes to the sudden bright white void that lay out before her. “Oh... no no no! I’m dreaming, I’m not dead, HAHAHA! I’ll wake up at any moment and see Taiki’s smiling face at the hospital! Haha yup! Any moment now...” She said squeezing her eyes shut yet again and opening them only to be disappointed by the endless white void she seemed to be floating in. “DAMN IT...” She shouted in frustration, defeat rang clearly in her tone. Tak, Tak, Tak. “YEEEEIIII!!!” She jumped letting loose a small scream as the sound of metallic soled shoes gently clicking against a hard floor drew ever closer to her. “Oh no... oh no oh no oh noooo!!” She screamed attempting to drift away from the sound by wildly flailing her arms and legs to no avail.

She bit her lip glancing towards the sound, hoping, praying, in desperation that this wasn’t the grim reaper coming to claim her soul! The figure soon appeared before her, a blank shadow shrouded by a thin white veil of mist. As it drew ever closer she quickly threw her arms over her face letting loose a tiny panicked squeal waiting for the worst. “There is no reason to fear me, Akari Hinomoto.” The voice was surprisingly deep and soothing! She released the lip as she gasped loudly forcing herself to glance back up at the massive figure now only a few feet from her. The voice was calming, comforting and vaguely familiar. The massive form stopped then knelt down slowly trying not to further scare the small, shaking girl. “O-O-Omnimon?” She asked curiously, still hoping, praying, and desperately begging that she was right. As the mist cleared, Omnimon’s form was kneeling brilliantly before her once more. “Wh-bu-Bu...But?” She stammered in a confused manner, a thousand questions buzzed furiously within her mind. The icy tears of fear that once fell down her pale, bony cheek were quickly swept away as she sighed in relief. Seeing Omnimon before her meant this had to do with the digital world! She wasn’t dying... was she? Did he really have the power to pull her from the grave?? “I know you must have a lot of questions, Miss Akari Hinomoto, but I assure you, you won’t die. Your existence is more important than you realize. Your new life begins now!” Akari gasped feeling herself rapidly pulled towards what appeared to be a large colorful egg below her. “No-no-no!! Wait!! I STILL HAVE SO MANY QUESTIONS! I - AHHHHHH!!!” An ear splitting scream echoed throughout the void as the egg snapped

enclosed around her, wrapping her in a warm, somewhat comfortable, pitch black void. Her mind quieted, lulling her into a gentle slumber.

~Back in the human world~

"I'm so, so sorry everyone... so damn sorry..." Wisemon clasped his face in his shaking, bloodied hands. His hidden face twisted in both morbid horror and guilt. "This is all my fault... I wasn't fast enough to save her..." Shoutmon turned away closing his eyes in ultimate defeat, refusing to look into Taiki's possibly empty grey orbs, not wanting to see the shattered soul within. It was HIS idea, HIS failed idea that ultimately ended a life! How could he ever face Taiki or Zenjirou again?? His entire body shook as he gritted his teeth attempting to suppress the steadily climbing horror of permanently losing a friend. Taiki walked numbly over to the fainting sofa and stiffly flopped down upon it. His eyes were hollow, his expression empty as he stared down at the ground over the edge. No matter how long he'd prepared himself for this, it was still too much to handle for the usually energetic boy. Suddenly, Wisemon's busted machine miraculously buzzed back to life sending out a flurry of green, angry sparks! Wisemon numbly tilted his head upwards to the monitor only to bolt, upright in his chair upon realization. "What the..." Wisemon said with a sharp gasp, turning his attention to the now lit screen as it was again scrolling with multi-colored code! Shoutmon turned his head towards Wisemon's sudden outburst giving the wise Digimon a strange look as he seared closed what was left of his horns, stopping the bleeding. "SHE'S ALIVE!! I DON'T KNOW HOW, BUT SHE'S ALIVE!! My king, come look!" Wisemon said gesturing to a certain navy blue colored code scrolling quickly down the center of the screen! "We did it! We saved her!" "TAIKI!" Shoutmon bellowed shaking the room slightly. The boy numbly turned his head to face Shoutmon. His eyes half lidded and pale, more empty and hollow than Shoutmon had ever seen. "She's alive, Taiki! We did it!" Taiki merely sighed rolling over on the fainting sofa refusing to get his hopes up once more only to be devastatingly crushed.

Wisemon did say this had a very low chance of success, yet he was never fully prepared believe that until now. He knew Wisemon wouldn't let him down! He never did, he had no reason to, all those times Wisemon came through in a pinch for the Xros Heart army burst from every corner of Taiki's mind! But now, the boy lay in total disbelief turned away from his fiery red friend. Shoutmon stood there, arms crossed, his face now marred in frustration. He snorted, "WELL FINE! LOOKS LIKE WE'RE DOING THIS THE HARD WAY!" He then lifted Taiki up over his head and walked back over towards the now flickering monitor! "H-HEY! WHAT'S THE BIG IDEA??" Taiki shouted now flailing his arms trying to keep from falling on his face as Shoutmon lifted him. "WHAT THE HELL!?! PUT ME DOWN!!" Shoutmon's cocky smile returned as he plopped him down in front of Wisemon's machine. Wisemon then excitedly ushered Taiki closer pointing to the blue line of code on the sparking monitor. "See this? It means she's alive, we've done it!" Taiki's eyes widened as they yet again filled with light! "WHAT?? NO WAY!!" Shoutmon again folded his arms, his cocky smile never leaving. "OH YES WAY! WE'VE SAVED HER!" Taiki gasped as tears of pure joy beaded up at the corners of his eyes! He threw his arms around both Shoutmon and Wisemon. "THANK YOU GUYS, THANKS SO MUCH!" Shoutmon and Wisemon gave a happy thumbs up. "No need to thank us! She's a friend, OF COURSE we'd save her! And you had your doubts, PFFT!" Shoutmon teased giving Taiki a rough noogie. "So, where is she now?" Taiki asked curiously, while trying to shove Shoutmon's arm away. "I mean, is she still in your machine or has she been sent somewhere?" Wisemon closed his yellow beady eyes as his face lit up with a strange yellow code. Two blue balls of energy formed in his hands spilling multiple lines of code into the machine.

The machine hummed and whirred in response, the damage seemed to vanish and the sparks ceased. "If my calculations are correct, she should be located at the northern part of the Digimon Daycare! Let me just..." Wisemon's fingers flew furiously across the keyboard, typing in several rows of code in under 5 seconds! Taiki's eyes grew wide as he watched with growing curiosity! Suddenly, the machine shuddered a bit as the metal doors to the teleportation pod screeched open spilling out a light so brilliant, Taiki threw his arms over his face to shield his eyes. When the light suddenly vanished, Taiki blinked, letting his eyes readjust and glanced around the now empty room looking around for the others only to find that they'd also vanished along with the damage. Akari's body lay motionless and pale in the same spot it'd previously been before the Digi-intervention! Taiki gasped rushing over to her! With the heart rate monitor flatline ringing loudly in his ears, Taiki grasped her now bony hand. He could feel the heat from her hand slowly fade. It would be bittersweet if it hadn't been for his digital friends though he couldn't help but let a small tear slide down his cheek. A small smile played sadly across his face as he began to gently rub the back of it knowing she was no longer there. "If what Wisemon said was true and you really are alive somewhere in the digital world, I hope I can see you again. For now, goodbye, my friend! I hope you'll have safe travels to the digital world!" He then gently placed her hand beside her once more. He then stood and walked towards the door wildly flinging it open in a feigned panic! "SOMEONE COME QUICK! SHE'S FLATLINING!!"

9 - A new life awaits!

Back in the digital world, a swirling vortex of pure white energy exploded with a massive 'BANG' high in the sky shooting out both the king and Wisemon along with the mangled parts of the machine's remains. Both Shoutmon and Wisemon instantly rematerialized only to find themselves 200 feet in the air! Wisemon glanced around instantly as he let out a soft chuckle and held up his index finger. "SLIIIIIGHT MISCALCULATION! THE MACHINE WAS OVERTAXED!" Wisemon shouted attempting to cut through the whipping winds as they rapidly descended towards the ground! Shoutmon let out a small sigh shaking his head at the wise Digimon and quickly summoned his mic. "DON'T WORRY, I'VE GOT THIS!" His cocky smile returned as he then took a deep breath as he unleashed a shout so massive, it sent shockwaves throughout the area, "HEY, WE NEED A BIT OF HELP HERE!" Wisemon instantly covered his ears as best he could upon the sudden blast but could not stop a small trickle of blood that slowly rolled out of his ears and down the side of his cheek. "GYAAAAHHHHH!!!" The wise Digimon let out an incredibly pained cry as the sheer shockwave that carried Shoutmon's deafening words crushed a small part of the right side of his skull feeling as if his head was splitting in two! Shoutmon quickly jerked his head towards the cry and a wave of panic and worry quickly overtook him! A single sweat drop began quickly forming under his V! He reached for his scarf to lend it to the bleeding Wisemon only to realize he'd left it on his bedside table this morning. He mentally cursed himself gritting his razor sharp teeth. He attempted to only shout loud enough for his words to cut through the whipping winds as they continued to fall. "OH CRAP, WISEMON! I'M SO SORRY! I FORGOT HOW STRONG MY SHOUTS CAN BE!!" The two guards stationed at the castle's gates instantly fell to the floor gripping their ears out of sheer pain then jolted their heads skywards upon recognizing their king's gruff voice!

"IT'S THE KING! EVERYONE, QUICK, GRAB THAT BANNER AND PULL IT TIGHT!" One of the Togemon guards cried instantly rushing off to grab the end of the hanging banner that humbly welcomed the king and his companion back to the digital world. "SIR, YES SIR!" Bellowed the rest of the guards, following quickly behind the first and grabbed the other end jerking it down in a loud 'SHHHHHPH!' They quickly angled it under the king and Wisemon following the wise leadership of the commanding Togemon gently catching the two before they met a painful end with the ground below! Shoutmon quickly leapt off the banner and darted inside, adrenaline and excitement racing through his veins! In one fluid motion, he lifted his mic and shouted at a much lower volume than last time, while making sure Wisemon was a good distance away. "PRAIRIEMON, LISTEN UP! WE'VE GOT A WAR FRIEND WHO'S GONNA BE STAYING WITH US! PREPARE A ROOM CLOSE TO MINE AND HAVE AN ELECMON MEET ME THERE ONCE I'M BACK! OH, AND GRAB CUTEMON! WISEMON NEEDS MEDICAL ATTENTION!" He then turned his gaze towards his bleeding companion only to instantly shift it towards the ground as waves of guilt and shame wash over him. Heaving a heavy sigh, Shoutmon instantly regretted his vocal mistake. He squeezed his eyes closed and shook his head to clear his mind flinging his mic high into the air and let it vanish in the wind. He tore through the open castle gates as fast as his legs could carry him and literally flew up the stairs towards his room! Adrenalin mixed with the excitement of introducing a friend he hadn't seen in a while to the new and improved digital world once again surged within him! It seemed as if nothing could stop him now!

The Prairiemon stared after him, waves of complete confusion melting into sheer dread washed over

their faces. Sure, the king had done some seriously crazy and sometimes utterly reckless things in the past but this one was new. Never before had they actually needed a room for a war guest. They sighed in unison silently praying that this one wouldn't be as rowdy as the last. It'd taken them ages to clean the chewed up diginoir off of the ceiling of the dining hall. The Prairiemon glanced around at the others as small whispers were quietly exchanged. They turned back towards the king with a deep bow and zoomed off down the hall and up the stairs. He threw open the door and darted over to his bedside table, viciously ripping out the drawer then proceeded to dump its contents all over the floor. The various contents clacked, clinked and pinged noisily onto the cold, stone floor. He carefully picked through them until he found what he'd been searching for! A map carefully drawn to the perfect specifications of the new digital world! "YESSS!" He shouted happily as an excited smile twisted its way across his face! He then dashed back into the courtyard and out the gates as fast as he could wanting to bring Wisemon but knowing full well that he'd probably make more headway himself. The wise Digimon had a tendency to babble on and on about how Digimon regeneration works, which Shoutmon totally didn't need. Sure, he could always mute Wisemon, but he may or may not have something important to say. The journey took him about long and grueling three hours of straight running to reach the quilted field before he collapsed onto the warm, plush ground letting his world instantly fade to black! "King?..." A muffled, strangely calming voice filled his head as he felt two clawed hands gently grab his arms attempting to shake him awake. His eyes flew as reality came crashing back into view! "WHA-HUH? ... Oh... Elecmon! Heh, sorry, I must've dozed off!" Shoutmon said as his vision became more clear by the passing second. He attempting to hoist himself up to a sitting position only to realize he had the excess weight of several newly hatched baby Digimon both clinging to and sitting on him. They stared down at the metallic, ruby red Digimon, wide eyes full of wonder and curiosity while the others encircled him. Elecmon panicked silently as he carefully plucked each baby Digimon off of the king silently, yet desperately praying he wouldn't get jailed or turned to digital dust for his misbehaving kids!

"AHH, NO CHILDREN!! OFF OFF OFF!! I'M SO SORRY, I'M SO SORRY I'M SO SORRY! MY KING PLEASE DON'T BLAME THEM!!" An apologetic flurry of bows flew from him. Shoutmon smiled warmly, a soft chuckle rolling from his throat. He gave the Elecmon a reassuring look and said. "Heh, it's alright! Children will be children after all! You've taken such good care of them, Elecmon!" He then turned to the surrounding digital hatchlings as Elecmon then relaxed a bit, a deep sigh flowed quietly through his teeth. Elecmon then turned his attention back to the king as curiosity bubbled its way to the surface. "Um, w-what brings you here, y-your majesty? You usually don't visit us. I-is there something you need?" Shoutmon's expression quickly fell causing icy waves of panic to again claim the Elecmon. "F-forgive me, my king!" He said with yet another quick bow. Shoutmon's expression remained but he lightly placed a hand upon the Elecmon's shoulder reassuringly. "Don't worry about it! I actually came because I was looking for a friend of mine. Have you noticed any strange eggs or any eggs with an unusual aura?" The Elecmon froze, his face quickly fell into one of pure horror which didn't sit too well with Shoutmon. "O-oh, you mean that egg... I did see an unusual one this morning but it's um..." Elecmon's deep purple eyes instantly darted from the king to the quilted ground in front of him. Several sweat drops began to form on his brow as he began to tap his front claws together nervously. "It's... it's u-um..." Shoutmon's expression quickly shifted to worry noticing how oddly the caring Digimon was acting. Wisemon's voice again filled his head. 'She may not be able to digivolve at all! She may have no powers! Her human soul may not accept the digital vessel and she could die anyways!' Shoutmon's heart sank as he bared his teeth squeezing his eyes shut while roughly shaking his head attempting to scatter those pesky thoughts! 'No way! I'm not letting this get the best of me! I'm Shoutmon! Savior of the digital world! Everything will be fine! ... Right?' His eyes then flew open as he rapidly grabbed the Elecmon's shaking wrist holding it tightly. "GYAH!!" The nervous Elecmon jumped at the sudden

movement letting out a loud yelp startling the Digimon babies! They all belted out several loud squeaks and whimpers quickly diving behind several of the large building block towers that lay scattered around the area! Shoutmon quickly glanced around noticing the surprising lack of infants and gave a heavy sigh, his features relaxing slightly also releasing the panicking Elecmon.

“I’m sorry, Elecmon, I know it must be hard dealing with all of these infants at once then having a surprise like this, but I need to know about that egg... it’s important that I do because she may be the friend I’ve been searching for.” Shoutmon’s words weighed heavy with worry. Elecmon locked eyes with the king almost giving him an ‘Are you sure’ look. Shoutmon’s expression again hardened into a stern, unrelenting one as if answering Elecmon’s unasked question. Elecmon heaved a defeated sigh and turned around waving for the king to follow him. “It’s this way, my king... Please follow me.”

10 - Digital Daycare Nightmare!

As they approached the egg, Shoutmon slowly took notice as the air grew heavier and more dense with each and every few steps as if gravity itself was preventing them from nearing it! "W-what is this??" He squeezed his eyes shut silently begging in desperation that they wouldn't walk up upon a malformed Akari! He opened them again, his fangs almost grinding into his gums out of sheer horror mentally preparing himself for what he was about to witness. His breathing became ragged and raspy as he forced himself further determined to rescue his friend! He was determined to save a life no matter the cost! 'Was this really Akari's doing? The air's so thick I can barely breathe!' He thought to himself cautiously his black rubber fingers balling firmly into fists to keep himself focused! He could feel the pressure thicken as if the air suddenly stopped being air and just turned into a dense suffocating veil of pure agony! Multiple beads of sweat began to form under his V shaped horns. His arms began to quiver violently by his sides out of worry and pressure. 'This is insane! This can't possibly be Akari's doing! If it is, we're not only in trouble, everyone in the general area would be effected... What the heck is going on?!' "Uuf..." Suddenly, out of nowhere, Elecmon collapsed! "ELECTMON!" Shoutmon cried seeing the kind, fatherly Digimon hit the ground like a rag-doll! Shoutmon instantly knelt down beside the fallen Digimon, his face finally expressing the worry he'd been somewhat concealing! "I-I'm so sorry, my-my king... I... I can't go further, i-it's too much!" Elecmon rasped out of short, ragged breaths. "It's fine, Elecmon, don't let the children come near until I've fixed the problem. It's going to be ok!" He said firmly yet held a confident smile and a thumbs up! Shoutmon quickly pushed himself back placing his hand on his knee for support. Elecmon nodded, sweat drenching his head and shoulders. "T-thank you, my king..." Elecmon then noticed Shoutmon's outstretched arm and gladly clasped on with his own oversized claws, more than thankful for the aid! He slowly pushed himself to his feet only to stumble a bit before bending over and clutching his knees. "Will you be alright?" Shoutmon asked, his tone firm but caring. Concern mixing with the crippling terror from before continued to overtake both. With ragged breaths and shaking limbs, Elecmon nodded panting a bit before giving himself a small breather before he was able to walk back towards the Digital slimes. Shoutmon watched him go carefully making sure he didn't pass out along the way knowing that if he did, the slimes would be without a caretaker for a while which Shoutmon definitely wouldn't have! Once he saw Elecmon calmly slide down the bark of a tree, taking yet another quick breather, Shoutmon nodded quickly turning around continuing carefully towards the strange aura hoping he'd make it in time to find out what was wrong. He took one large, shaky gulp of air, balling his hands tightly into fists once more and trudged on! It wasn't long before the aura was heavy enough to make him feel as if he was walking through an incredibly dense blizzard! He threw one arm in front of his face holding his breath before literally stumbling upon it falling flat upon the soft, quilted ground! The pressure was suffocating! It poured from the egg like a furious waterfall! "GAH!" Shoutmon groaned feeling the immense pressure literally binding him to the floor! He snarled, determination flowed through him like a raging river! He shoved his hands up under him pushing against the ground with all his might eventually forcing himself into a sitting position and glanced over at the egg. His mouth dropped open gasping desperately for air as his eyes widened imagining what kind of horrible things would come out of that egg! Being so close to the egg, Shoutmon noticed the air around it seemed to be enveloped in a light blue haze, he assumed it was the thick aura flowing from the egg.

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Upon closer inspection, the egg was about half the size of a normal digi-egg (About the size of a normal ostrich egg) and could easily fit in the palm of his hand! Through the light blue haze, he could easily make out a large flame emblem coating the egg's surface with a sunny, yellow background! Blue wave-like markings washed over the egg in a stripe-like pattern as it circled around leaving sharp blue ridges on each side. An uneasy sigh rushed out of Shoutmon as he strained with all his might to stay in this seated position. He raised one arm gently placing it upon the egg. "A..K, A-AKA... AKARI!" He shouted wildly, his voice cracking in growing worry! With one shaky hand, he scooped up the egg, turned up his earphone and gently placed it against his head silently praying that she was ok. He squeezed his eyes shut in focus only for them to fly open again as a sharp gasp slipped through his lips upon hearing a faint heartbeat! "Whew! Well, your core is pulsing so you're alive at least... Uuugh! I, hope you're ok in there." A massive relieved sigh washed away most of the concern thus lightening the ruby red Digimon! "Now, to get you back to the castle! I'm sure Dorulumon and Balistamon would be thrilled seeing you again!" He smiled down at the egg quickly tucking it under his arm. Though the pressure never let up, he was determined to get it back to the castle and go from there. He slowly forced himself back up through the intense gravitational pull of the aura as if he were trying to push and walk through thick, solid ice! He carefully began trudging back towards the castle, every step felt weighted, as if his feet had been collecting mounds and mounds of dirt with every passing second! He glanced down at the egg once more wondering how to stop Akari's egg from leaking this strange blue energy through its pores and what was causing such energy to spout? With a mighty groan, Shoutmon set the egg down as they neared the rim of the daycare where quilted lands met actual grass. The day care lands weren't that large, but he knew he had to come up with something! "Ugghhh!" He let out another massive groan jumping as far away from the egg as he possibly could, painting in sheer agony! This was almost too much for Shoutmon to bear! 'Just one breather... Just one small breather and I'm good.' He squeezed his eyes shut collapsing to the ground with a harsh thud! His breathing ragged as he fought desperately to stay conscious! Suddenly, a familiar yet very muffled voice echoed loudly through his nearly conscious head. It took him a while to make out what this voice was saying. He groaned once more opening an eye. His energy slowly rose to normal only to find a blurry Sanzomon kneeling over him, the egg's horrible energy seemingly nowhere to be found. "GAH!" Shoutmon's eyes widened as he frantically bolted upright, turning down his earphone from before. He began searching the area hoping the egg hadn't rolled off somewhere! He then turned to Sanzomon's worried face, fear and shock etched into every muscle. "MY KING! I HAVE BEEN CALLING AND SHAKING YOU FOR TWENTY MINUTES NOW!" She bowed deeply, as relief washed over her and offered him an outstretched hand.

Shoutmon ignored her hand jumping swiftly to his feet. Panic surged through his veins as he began frantically searching for the strange, colorful egg. "WHERE'S THE EGG? SANZOMON, WHERE IS THE EGG?!?" He shouted now digging through several nearby shrubs thinking it may have rolled off and had gotten stuck into one. "This isn't good... Not good at all! What if some Digimon found the egg by accident and is now in trouble because of the energy! SANZOMON, WE NEED TO-" he was soon silenced by a sudden rush of relief as he spotted the small, colorful egg wrapped tightly in Sanzomon's arms. Two shimmering, golden bands loosely wrapped around its middle. Shoutmon sank to the dirt below him sighing loudly in relief! "OH THANK OMNIMON! Let me see it!" He asked holding out his arms only for Sanzomon to glare down at him. "M-my king, forgive me but this egg almost erased your code! We need to smash it before my rings are not enough to stop the horrible energy that dwells within!" Shoutmon lowered his arms, his jagged lips peeling away from his dagger-like teeth, his eyes narrowing dangerously. "YOU WILL DO NO SUCH THING! That is a precious friend from the war who, might I remind you, ALLOWED YOU TO LIVE FREE HOWEVER YOU WANTED!! I REFUSE to let you harm her!" Shock and betrayal marred every inch of Sanzomon's face! She almost stumbled for words

as she gasped, stepping back a bit. "M-my king! Please! This thing almost deleted you! If I had not arrived with my rings-" Shoutmon instantly cut her off as his mic fell from the sky landing perfectly into his outstretched hand. "Don't make me fight you, Sanzomon... She is my friend just like you, and I've got Taiki back in the human world counting on me to keep her alive!" Sanzomon froze letting off a small, sharp gasp! She never before had Shoutmon yell at her with such disdain! It frightened her. "M-my king please... Please reconsider! If this egg was allowed within the castle walls and my binds were to fail... then what?" Shoutmon stood slowly, his cold blue eyes bored to Sanzomon's as he began walking towards her. "Then, I'll deal with it as I've said many times before. She is MY responsibility! If anything were to befall anyone around her, I'll take care of it." She stared at Shoutmon with a look of bewilderment almost as if he'd grown a second head! Her eyes then drifted down to the small egg wrapped tightly within her arms imagining the sleeping creature nestled safely within. She lowered her head with a defeated sigh closing her eyes as she then handed the egg back down to the king who swiped the egg giving her a stern look. Who was she to deny a creature the king was so fond of life even if it were to cause massive chaos later on. She hated more than anything to see the king in such a state, but there was no stopping him at this point. Her bottom lip quivered as Shoutmon walked past the much larger Sanzomon, his stern expression never leaving her until he was at least a few feet in front of her.

11 - Stubborn red dragon!

Shoutmon snorted angrily allowing two small towers of smoke to billow from his ruby red nostrils as the previous events replayed like an old horror movie within his mind. He let out a small sigh gently shaking his head. 'How could she say such things!? She wasn't even there when Akari helped pull everyone out of countless messes. At times, she'd been the burning light the team needed to move forwards when even Taiki had almost lost faith!' A warm, gentle smile played across his jagged jaw as he stared off into the distance, the long dirt road back to his castle slowly melting into a river of stars. Memories lined every angle of the celestial plane within his mind. He eventually shook his head allowing himself to gently return to reality, his claws kicking up the dust and dirt with each step. He had been so lost in thought that he didn't even notice the castle in the distance slowly growing taller. "Heh, alright Akari! Are you ready to see your new home? I can't wait to show you how much the digital world has changed! When you hatch, I'll have all of our old friends lining the walls to greet you, heh, you could be hailed as a hero!" He glanced down at the egg in his hands, it vibrated slowly as if replying to his warmth. Though, to Shoutmon's horror, the egg drastically dropped in temperature then shot back up erupting in a blue blaze! "Wh-WHAT??" *TSSST!* Shoutmon gasped in terror as the bands Sanzomon had placed upon the egg slowly began to singe off unleashing an explosive burst of light blue aura into the digital world! "ARRGH!!" He was suddenly flung backwards as one of the rings of energy connected with his stomach sending him and the egg flying! Like a rag-doll, he flipped and skidded across the dusty ground a few yards away from the castle losing his grip on the egg in the process. "MY KING!" One of the Togemon guards screamed frantically upon witnessing the king being thrown. They bolted towards Shoutmon as if they were one massive speeding bullet train only to stop dead in their tracks as the energy pulsating from the egg was too much. The pressure around the area heavily increased rendering close contact with either of them nearly impossible! Shoutmon gritted his dagger-like teeth as pain erupted from his stomach knocking the wind out of him! He wheezed as his vision began to quickly drop into darkness. His only concern rested with the egg that was now sitting about twenty feet away! "UURRAHH!!" He grunted trying his best to fight through the immense pressure, his body pancaking itself against the ground as he thrust a three pronged, rubbery hand up towards the angry pulsating egg, his deep blue eyes narrowing with determination! "A-Ak-kar..." he wheezed before forcibly plummeting into darkness.

"AKA-*HACK!*" Shoutmon wheezed loudly bolting upright as he began to frantically search the area only to realize that he was back inside of his room in the castle. Shoutmon blinked as he tore the covers off of himself in an attempt to dash out of the room only to be stopped by a wave of pain erupting from his freshly bandaged and blood soaked stomach. "AAACK...!" He wheezed once more coughing up a familiar dark, oily, red substance then collapsing on the floor! His mic clattering noisily against the cold stone floor. "GHHNNN!!" He gritted his teeth, clenching his eyes tightly shut as he endured the pain! His metallic body now glistening with a new layer of sweat as he shakily summoned his mic and forced himself into a standing position. "Shoutmon..." A small, familiar voice cut sharply through his groans and heavy hyperventilation. Shoutmon's pupils shrank as he slowly turned his head upwards staring at a familiar bright pink, anthropomorphic rabbit wearing headphones and a single scarf. "C-cute... M..." He attempted before he was brutally silenced by another wave of heavy coughing. The small rabbit sighed deeply shaking his head, as he knelt down grasping one of Shoutmon's arms in an attempt to help pull him back up. His years of training with Dorulumon made him quite the formidable adversary and quite strong despite still being such a little guy. Shoutmon attempted to weakly shake him off to no avail. He

was in no shape to argue, even he knew that but his brutish stubbornness always found a way to push through. “N-no.. C-*cough* Cutemo-*cough* I-I hav...” Cutemon abruptly cut him off as he forced his friend back into bed. “No Shoutmon, you have to rest. Your kingly duties will be taken care of until you can return. Doctor’s orders. Doctors overrule kings when necessary!” Cutemon flashed him a cocky smile equipped with a small, side wink. Shoutmon narrowed his eyes at the small, pink rabbit as his lips began to peel away from his teeth once more. A low, grainy growl rolled through his clenched teeth as two, very small, streams of smoke fluttered gently out of his nostrils. The corners of Cutemon’s mouth twitched slightly as he folded his tiny arms giving Shoutmon a stern look. “What could be so important that even ****you**** would risk your life...” Cutemon paused puffing up his tiny cheeks then expelling the captive air within them as he continued. “Well, you know, outside of your usual stubbornness. Was it another town that needed saving? A thief stealing someone’s sack of digicoins?” Cutemon teased playfully only to jump as Shoutmon pounded the sides of his mattress in frustration causing yet another wave of pain to erupt from his stomach and another fresh coat of blood to soak through his bandages. Cutemon’s ears drooped slightly as he noticed the fresh pool of blood collecting behind them. “You do need to stop moving around so much. I just closed that wound!” He said, mildly annoyed. With a scoff, Cutemon knelt under the bed pulling out a hidden supply of gauze, thick bandages, ointments and salves he’d concocted upon learning a thing or two from his folks so he wouldn’t waste so much of his energy whenever his services were needed. He quickly got to work undressing the bandaging from the wounds, resealing the wounds with a bit of energy and again, bandaging up the rest, this time with extra padding. Heaven only knows when he’ll need it once more. Cutemon rolled his eyes at the thought as the memory of Shoutmon with half of his stomach region melted away and bleeding profusely was rushed in by a half destroyed Togemon! Luckily the cactus mons don’t need much medical attention as they’ll just grow back anyways. The guard was still temporarily relieved from duty by Dorulumon.

Shoutmon snorted in annoyance knowing Cutemon was right, he really did need to rest but there was one thing he needed to check on first and that was the egg currently holding Akari. He nervously glanced towards the door allowing Cutemon to push him back into a laying position. “Nah-uh. Whatever’s out there can wait! You rest now please!” Cutemon said with a gentle mask hiding the growing annoyance within. He shoved the contents of the box back into their container and gently slid them back under the bed. “If you need anything, just shout or bellow or... whatever you do!” He said turning towards the door waving his hand behind his head in a nonchalant sort of fashion. Shoutmon watched him go still glaring at the young medic. “W-wait...” Cutemon stopped dead in his tracks right before his hand touched the doorknob. “Yes? What is it?” He said, curiously turning around to the bedridden, bandaged, red, metallic, wingless dragon. Shoutmon’s expression softened as he carefully lifted a hand to his face giving the bridge of his nose a soft rub as he then carefully sat up, not wanting to do too much damage to what Cutemon already fixed. At this, Cutemon’s annoyance was already starting to break its internal cage. He let out a long sigh knowing his friend wasn’t just going to give up. “Okay, what is it, Shoutmon?” Cutemon asked in a defeated tone. Shoutmon then barely wheezed a single word causing Cutemon to grow uneasy. “Egg?” Sweat drops began to form upon Cutemon’s brow as his pupils drastically decreased. “O-oh um... I-I think Wisemon is taking care of it in the room you had assigned. U-um... Are you sure that’s an egg?” Cutemon asked almost under his breath. The unease literally causing the small pink lagomorph to wish he was doing something else entirely. Shoutmon narrowed his eyes at the small monster’s reaction and gave a firm nod. “O-oh! Um... good! I’ll uh, just get going now!” Cutemon threw on a nervous smile as shoutmon watched the rabbit Digimon indeed follow up on his desires and bolted from the room without further explanation. Shoutmon sighed watching the door slam shut in his haste. He gently and very slowly slid himself back onto his bed staring at the purple and gold canopy draped over top of his bed pulling into a fascinating point in the

middle. His room was plain, stone floor with purples, golds and blues to accent his own coloration. An oriental throw rug took over most of the room save for the small table and chairs at the end of his bed. There was a small dresser with a circular, ornamental mirror next to his bathroom. Gold vines weaving their way from the floor of the dark blue dresser to wrap around the small mirror. It wasn't his style but it was a gift. Despite him not having many clothes, he kept important documents, ink pens and ink wells tucked safely within. One was a drawer, of course, saved for his favorite scarf. A small bedside table with the same accents as the dresser tucked neatly up against the wall on his right side before the door. He was still a small Digimon so there was still plenty of room between the table and wall leading to the massive stained glass window that he found had been completely re-done in his absence. It was a mural of him holding up the code crown on top of a mountain, golden beams shooting upwards from the master code crown and him smiling happily up at it! In his 'wise' opinion, that alone would accent any room perfectly, thus he had demanded murals of the army generals as well as Digimon in every guest bedroom much to the dismay of the artisan Bucchimon! He chuckled lightly to himself before his smile quickly faded as his mind shifted back to Akari's egg hoping she was alright in there. Shoutmon glanced towards the door one last time before letting his eyes close for the final time that day. He knew that she'd be safe with Wisemon... He trusted that Digimon with his life. He knew for sure that he would find a way around this mess. He gave himself an internal nod as he promised to check on Akari tomorrow... for now. It's sleep time!