

Another Generation

Von Jitsch

Kapitel 11: Another Tag

Fujiwara's grin became wider. "Do you understand now? I am Darkness, and I can manipulate your memories. Without memories you are nothing. You cannot even duel!"

"That's unfair!" Jūdai shouted.

"He's not here to play fair. He's here to win," *Crystal Keeper* said grimly. "Expect him to have more tricks like that up his sleeve."

Jim swallowed. He looked at Fujiwara with his healthy eye, then back at the card that he had placed in his Duel Disk.

"What is it, can you not use your *Fossil Fusion*? I guess you just wasted it if you cannot tell the monsters that you want to fuse," Fujiwara taunted.

Caren growled again and started to crawl across the ground in Fujiwara's direction. "Caren, stop it," Jim called and looked at Fujiwara again, more focused again. "You might be able to manipulate memories, but you haven't been able to take the one about that old man, and my destiny."

The red orb in his right eye socket started to glow. And then he could see it. "See, it's all fine," he said, and it was not clear if it was directed at Caren, Fubuki or the bystanders - or himself. But he looked confident again.

"I use *Flint Cragger*, a Rock monster from my own graveyard, and a Level 4 or lower monster - your *Clear Cube* - as fusion materials."

"What?" Fujiwara exclaimed. "But..."

"It looks like this Orichalcon eye blocks your nasty attempt to stop my dueling with dirty tricks. Let's go!"

Jim spread his arms. Behind him, what looked like a dinosaur skeleton rose from the earth. Next to Fujiwara, the same happened with a small mechanical box inside a translucent crystal.

"... I fusion summon *Fossil Machine Skull Buggy*!"

The two monsters disappeared in a swirl and were replaced by a large vehicle that looked like a triceratops dinosaur, except its legs were replaced by wheels. The Machine roared and stood up on the hind wheels for a moment, then fell onto the ground and roared aggressively. The monster had 1400 attack points.

"Yes! Good job, Jim!" Jūdai exclaimed.

Jim smiled. "So much for your tricks! *Skull Buggy*, direct attack!"

The dinosaur roared again and the wheels started to turn, propelling it right at Fujiwara.

However, their opponent was prepared: "I activate my continuous trap *Nihilistic*

Summon Technique. I select one monster of Level 4 or lower which was removed from play and special summon it in attack position. Needless to say, I choose *Clear Cube*." The Card flipped up and out of it came the monster that had just been removed by Jim, right in *Skull Buggy's* path. The buggy simply ran it over, destroying it yet again. Since the monster had zero attack points, Fujiwara lost 1400 life points and they fell to 2000.

"Ha! You wasted your card summoning that small-fry monster again," Jim pointed out. Fujiwara shook his head: "When *Clear Cube* is removed from the field, I can special summon another *Clear Cube* directly from my deck," he explained. He got the card from his deck and placed it on his disk. A new monster, that looked just like the one destroyed seconds ago, appeared.

"Summon as many of those as you like," Jim said. "I set another card and end my turn."

Fujiwara smiled. "This was just the warm-up. Now I will teach you the fear of Darkness," he said and drew his card. A sly smile appeared on his lips.

"I activate the Field Spell *Clear World*," he announced.

A large, shining crystal appeared in the air above Fujiwara. Rays of light shone from it and hit the field.

"Based on the attributes of the monsters you control, an effect applies to you," he explained. "And it's not the kind of effect that you would like."

Fubuki and Jim exchanged wary glances. Obviously Fujiwara was not going to tell them what kind of effect to prepare for.

"But your *Clear Cube* also has an attribute," Amon remarked from outside the field. "Are you not cutting your own flesh like that?"

Fujiwara chuckled. "No, I am not. *Clear Cube* is treated as not having an attribute at all."

"Bugger off!" Jim exclaimed.

Amon clicked his tongue. "That was to be expected, I guess," he murmured.

"This is just the beginning," Fujiwara smiled. "Next I activate *Clear Sacrifice*. I can reveal a level five or higher 'Clear' monster in my hand, then remove from play 'Clear' monsters as sacrifice for its tribute summon!"

He held up a card from his hand. "*Clear Vice Dragon* is Level 8 so it requires two tributes. I remove *Clear Phantom* and *Clear Cube* from my Graveyard to summon it with the effect of *Clear Sacrifice*."

"So he needed *Clear Cube* in the Graveyard and let it get destroyed so it ends up there," Jūdai concluded. Johann nodded in agreement.

The two monsters rose from the ground and then combined. The appearing monster was enclosed in a large transparent crystal, like the others. It was a dragon with massive claws. Its attack points were zero.

Something happened the moment the monster appeared on the field. Jim felt a cold shower run down his back. His artificial eye lit up again. When he glanced at Fubuki, he was standing there without moving, but he seemed to see something. His eyes were flickering this way and that way, and his lips were moving like he was seeing something, even though nothing was happening. The spectators were behaving weird too.

Jim turned; Fujiwara was smiling viciously.

"What are you doing!?" Jim exclaimed. His right eye lit up more brightly than before and tinted the whole scenery in red. Then it stopped.

"Wha-," Fubuki gasped next to him. He looked confused, but at least he had snapped

out of that weird state he had been in. "Huh?" he stared at the playing field. "Didn't I just destroy that dragon?"

Fujiwara's mouth twitched. "You just had to get into my way," he spat at Jim.

"I have no idea what happened, but I guess I did," Jim said, hiding his confusion.

"Oh, that is good," *Crystal Keeper* said relieved.

Johann looked at the spirit: "Do you know what happened?"

"Based on what we know, Fujiwara was trying to see how the duel was going to proceed by letting it all happen in Fubuki's head."

Crystal Master added: "Then he would pick up the actual duel once he found his weakness and knew what strategies he had in mind. That is how he was going to win."

"Fujiwara was playing dirty again, huh?" Jim mused. "But it didn't work on my Orichalcon eye."

"I... thank you, I guess," Fubuki said to him. He was still a bit unsure what had just happened, but had grasped that what he had just seen was something that had yet to happen.

"You're welcome, mate," Jim replied and gave him a thumbs-up. Then he turned to Fujiwara.

"Dirty mind games aside, what are you gonna do with this dragon that has zero attack points?" he taunted. He knew fully well that the monster was almost guaranteed to have an effect that would make it much stronger based on some condition, but he did not want to show his growing insecurity.

Fujiwara chuckled. "Let's see. *Clear Vice Dragon*, attack *Skull Buggy*," he ordered. The dragon roared inside the crystal and opened its mouth.

"You see, when *Clear Vice Dragon* attacks, it gains twice the attack points of the monster that it is battling," he said. The dragon's attack point counter shot to 2800.

Jim grit his teeth. "Not so easily! I activate my Trap *Sakuretsu Armor*! When your monster declares an attack, it is destroyed!"

The card flipped up.

"Good move!" Jūdai called out from outside the playing field.

Fujiwara's smile did not disappear. "When a card or effect is activated that would destroy *Clear Vice Dragon*, I can discard a card from my hand to negate the activation and destroy the card whose effect was activated."

He put one of the cards from his hand into the Graveyard. A beam of light shot from the crystal that the dragon was in and pierced Jim's trap card. Then *Clear Vice Dragon* launched its actual attack and shot a dark beam from its mouth at *Skull Buggy*.

"Jim...!" Fubuki gasped and his hand moved to the activation switch for his set card.

Jim raised a hand and shook his head. "I'm fine! Keep that to protect yourself," he advised. Fubuki complied.

The attack pierced *Fossil Machine Skull Buggy* and it dissolved. Jim's life points fell to 2600. He gasped. The impact of the life loss felt so real, as if a part of him had just been eradicated.

"Jim!" Jūdai cried out. Caren growled with worry.

Jim forced a fierce smile on his face. "Don't worry mate, I'm not down yet," he reassured the watchers and stood upright again.

"Not yet," Fujiwara agreed viciously. "*Clear Vice Dragon* changes to defense position after attacking. My turn is over. But soon you will wish you had chosen Darkness immediately instead of going into this duel."

The dragon moved into a more defensive position inside the crystal.

Next it was Fubuki's turn, but the duelist looked grim already when he put his hand on his deck to draw the next card. It was plain to see that he was at a major disadvantage: *Memory Snatcher* prevented him from checking his Graveyard to do anything with the cards that had ended up there, and due to *Clear World*, his Dark monsters would not be able to attack.

"Fubuki, you can do it," Jūdai encouraged him. "You beat the Darkness before!"

Fubuki hesitated and looked at Jūdai. "Did I?" he asked weakly. "Because I only remember that *you* saved me from it, and more than once."

Jūdai looked a bit helpless, but Johann cut in: "But that means it is possible to beat the Darkness, right?"

Fubuki looked at the duo and smiled. "With you two still so full of hope, there is no way I can just give up, I guess," he said. "My turn, draw!"

He drew and looked at the card. *Swing of Memories*. The card image showed a young girl standing next to a swing that was hanging from the branch of a tree, looking at the sunset. The sight of that card made Fubuki smile. Somehow, it filled him with a tender feeling.

"This card..." he said thoughtfully. "I think it reminds me of someone..."

"That's impossible. Everyone you knew is already erased from your memory," Fujiwara objected.

Fubuki looked at the card some more. The feeling of warmth became stronger. It was almost like he saw someone else standing next to the swing. A girl, too, but one with blonde hair. Then she turned around and said something to him. He could not remember her voice, or what she said, but the image was there.

Fubuki smiled. "I don't remember who you are, but I know that you existed," he said, more to himself, "just like the monsters in my Graveyard. I can get them back, I just know."

He put the card into a slot on his Duel Disk.

"I activate *Swing of Memories*. It allows me to special summon a normal monster from my Graveyard."

"But you don't remember what's in your Graveyard! And you cannot check because of *Memory Snatcher*!" Fujiwara pointed out.

Fubuki looked at his Graveyard. "I don't remember, but I know it is there. It has to be. I can feel our bond!"

He looked at Fujiwara with a determined expression. "I special summon *Red-Eyes Black Dragon* from my Graveyard!"

Fujiwara flinched.

The Duel Disk ejected the card and Fubuki put it on the field where it roared loudly.

"Yes! You did it!," Jūdai cheered.

"Whatever," Fujiwara spat. He was clearly not happy about the development.

"*Red-Eyes*, attack his *Clear Vice Dragon*!" Fubuki ordered and pointed at the opponent's dragon.

The black dragon did not move. "*Red-Eyes*?" Fubuki asked uneasily.

Fujiwara smiled again. "In the *Clear World*, your monsters cannot attack while you have a Dark monster on the field," he explained with a satisfied smile. "Calling your monster was completely useless, and due to the effect of *Swing of Memories* it will be destroyed again at the end of the turn."

He cackled.

Fubuki's expression dampened.

"That sucks," Jim said. "But don't you have a card in the Graveyard that can bring it

back? If I remember correctly, the effect of *Black-Eyes Wyvern* is..."

Fujiwara's cackling died while Fubuki's smile came back. "You're right! I had forgotten about that card..." Fubuki said.

"Hah, all his dirty tricks are useless against Jim's eye! Way to go!" Johann cheered.

Fubuki nodded. "I set two Spell or Trap cards and end my turn," he announced. "*Black-Eyes Red Dragon* is destroyed because it was summoned by the effect of *Swing of Memories*."

The black dragon burst into pieces.

Fubuki activated a switch on his Duel Disk. "But now I use the effect of *Red-Eyes Wyvern* in my Graveyard. I can remove it from play to special summon *Red-Eyes Black Dragon* back to the field!"

The dragon reappeared with a roar that seemed even louder and more powerful than previously.

Fujiwara shrugged. "Great, you have a monster back that cannot attack and is easily overpowered by *Clear Vice Dragon*. You're just dragging it out."

"No, I'm handing this over to Jim. Let's give him a beating," Fubuki said and smiled at the duelist next to him.

"Thanks mate," Jim said, "I draw a card!"

He checked the new card. He had only one other card in his hand and one card in his Graveyard, but most likely he would be able to form a good combo with them.

"I activate the Spell *Miracle Rupture*. I discard a rock monster from my deck to Graveyard, then I can shuffle my Deck and draw another card."

He did what he had just described, and drew the new card. This one would help.

"Let me cut in before you summon any monsters," Fubuki suddenly said. "I activate my Trap *Burst Breath*. I tribute my *Red-Eyes* to destroy all face-up monsters that have less defense points than my monsters has attack points."

He looked at Fujiwara triumphantly: "Since all your *Clear* monsters have zero defense, they have to go. And since you are out of cards in your hand, you cannot protect *Clear Vice Dragon* by discarding one!"

The *Red-Eyes Black Dragon* shot a fiery breath at the field. Fujiwara's monsters disappeared in the inferno, then Fubuki's dragon did the same.

"Good job!" Jim said and raised his right hand. Fubuki understood and gave him a high-five.

"When my *Clear Cube* is removed from the field I can summon another *Clear Cube*," Fujiwara said sourly and put the monster on the field which looked like one of the two that were just destroyed. He played it in defense mode.

"Alright, now comes my turn. I summon *Weathering Soldier*!" Jim announced.

The monster that appeared was a burly humanoid figure made entirely of two different types of rocks. "*Weathering Soldier*, attack his *Clear Cube*!" Jim ordered.

Fujiwara had no way to stop the attack. *Clear Cube* was smashed by the *Weathering Soldier's* fist and disappeared.

"Yes!" Johann exclaimed. "You are cornering him!"

"We're not done yet," Fubuki said. "I activate my other trap, *Red-Eyes Spirit*! I can summon a Red-Eyes monster that was destroyed this turn - *Red-Eyes Black Dragon* come back!"

For the third time in this duel, the black dragon appeared with a screech.

"Because you have a Rock monster on your field, you must destroy one of your monsters due to *Clear World's* effect," Fujiwara calmly told Jim. "So your turn ends

with you being defenseless.”

A ray of light shot from the Crystal that marked the field spell, and destroyed Jim’s only monster, *Weathering Soldier*. Jim grit his teeth.

“I set a card, then I end my turn,” he announced.

“You almost got him!” Jūdai said.

Crystal Keeper and *Crystal Master* nodded. They seemed to be content with the new developments.

“I do not think so,” Fujiwara said. “I still have the advantage as long as *Clear World* is on the field. Tricks like *Burst Breath* can only get you so far.”

He drew his next card.

“I summon *Clear Rage Golem*,” he announced and placed the card that he had just drawn. The monster, like all his ‘Clear’ monsters, was enclosed in a crystal. It looked like it was made of stone and had big arms, but its lower body was just a single piece of rock. Unlike the other ‘Clear’ monsters that he had used so far, it had 1600 attack points.

“*Clear Rage Golem*, attack Jim directly,” Fujiwara said. Jim still had 2600 Life points and would have survived the attack, but chose to act instead: “I activate my Trap *Uluru the Guardian Spirit*! This card can only be activated when I have *Uluru’s Guardian* in my Graveyard. I just put it there to activate *Miracle Rupture*. I can special summon *Uluru the Guardian Spirit* as a normal monster in defense position.”

The card flipped up and set itself on the field in the vertical position of a defense-position monster. Above it appeared the image of a humanoid shape made of rocks, not unlike the *Weathering Soldier* that had been destroyed last turn. It displayed an impressive amount of 2500 defense points.

“All your attack position monsters must attack it, so you cannot stop *Clear Rage Golem*,” Jim added.

The monster inside the crystal moved forward and crashed against the one on Jim’s field. Fujiwara’s life points fell to 1100. He flinched.

Jim fixated his gaze on Fujiwara while he was clearly suffering from the loss of life points. The red bead in his eye socket glowed. And it showed him something.

A small boy, sitting with his arms clasped around his knees.

He was crying.

“Mom... dad... why did you leave? Did you forget about me...? I don’t want to be forgotten...”

Jim gasped.

“I can see it,” he said and looked at the Fujiwara in front of him. “All this time... all you wanted is to not be forgotten.”

Fujiwara looked at him. “Nonsense. Memories are sadness. Everyone should forget me, and I should forget everyone. That is how we can be happy.”

“I don’t believe that!” Fubuki said. “Fujiwara, I remember. When you left, you said it causes you pain to think that your friends will forget you someday! But that means that you *want* them to remember you!”

Fujiwara shook his head. “You still think you can save me, huh?” he asked.

“I already said so!” Fubuki said.

Fujiwara shook his head. “That is quite hypocritical, isn’t it? In the end, you are just doing this for yourself. You cannot accept that you could not stop me back then. And

you..." his eyes bore into Jim's, "... you don't have any connection to me or Fubuki, but you cut in because you want to be the hero, huh?"

Caren growled in protest.

Jim nodded at her. "Say what you want, we got the upper hand now," he said.

"He's right," Amon agreed. "You have only a weak monster and no other cards left. Try cheating your way out of this."

Fujiwara sneered. "I end my turn," he said.

"*Uluru's Guardian Spirit* is destroyed at the end of the turn," Jim said and looked at Fubuki. "I'm leaving this to you."

Fubuki nodded. He drew.

"You still cannot attack with your Dark monster," Fujiwara pointed out sourly.

Fubuki smiled. "I do not need to attack to beat you," he said, looking at the card he had drawn. "I activate *Inferno Fire Blast*. I can inflict to you damage equal to the attack points of a *Red-Eyes Black Dragon* that I control. That is 2400."

Fujiwara looked shaken. "No," he gasped.

Fubuki raised his hand. "Finish him!" he said.

His *Red-Eyes* roared and fired a large fireball at Fujiwara. There was no more protection for his opponent, whose Life Points fell to zero.

"You did it!" Jūdai shouted.

Fujiwara dropped to his knees. "No... I... I just wanted..."

Fubuki hurried towards him. "Hey Fujiwara! Don't worry. It's all going to be okay. Darkness will be gone soon!" he promised.

Fujiwara looked up at him. "Tenjōin..." he said weakly. Then he opened his mouth again to say more, but suddenly his gaze became blank. His body slackened. Then it turned black before it fell apart, turning into a pile of what could have been duel monsters cards if they weren't completely black on both sides.

Fubuki stared at his empty hands.

The pile of cards quivered, causing Fubuki to retreat, but he did not find the power to stand up from the ground. The cards piled up into the air and formed a shape that vaguely resembled a human.

"What...," Fubuki gasped at the figure that was now towering over him.

The dark silhouette slowly showed its features. It wore a hood that was part of a long cloak. Its face was entirely covered in shadow, but the eyes were glowing menacingly. Fubuki shivered.

"Darkness", he whispered.