

CRYSTALIS
MU
PART 8



Crystalis Mu (A Part of *The Crystalis Saga*)

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Return

Cracking her neck & knuckles was Jade standing before her stunned friends. During an argument with Russell over the matter of using the Gonagan Crystals to revive a seemingly deceased Princess Onita, Jade became overwhelmed by an immense energy. When this power subsided, Jade had two voices & an aura of evil surrounding her – the same emanation Princess Onita produced until her fall.

Rini asked her smirking friend, “Are you really in there, Jade?”

“When does ‘yes’ mean anything else, you idiot?” Jade spat with the dual voices of herself and another being.

Sternly, Rini declared, “But Jade would never talk to me like that.”

“Is that because you’ve always thought of yourself to be better than me? Is it because you believe that since you’re the daughter of the mighty Serena of Gonaga while I’m just the child of a feeble insect that couldn’t even best his teacher that you’re greater than I?”

Rini was dumbfounded by Jade’s statements with the prior mumbling, “I would never...”

Dash realized what was going on and needed everyone else to know as well, “Rini, don’t listen to her! That’s not Jade! I think Oni’s spirit has moved, possessin’ her instead of Onita. The way she sounds is just like Onita. Just like Oni.”

Jade looked at Dash before saying, “Of course you would figure it out. This vessel became open to me during that little argument between the daughter of Jas and the son of Princess Serena about that traitorous worm you currently call a princess. This girl was too stupid to remember that I am forever attached to the original Gonagan Crystal. A heart open to anger is where I feel at home. Russell, thank you for your stubbornness. I don’t know if I would’ve had this opportunity otherwise.”

Furious, Russell sprinted toward Jade; throwing wild punches. Like Rini during her battle against Princess Onita, Jade avoided each strike from her opponent until he grew winded. Waiting for

the perfect opportunity, Jade swung her right fist against Russell's abdomen. Russell was barely able to stand after the seemingly debilitating attack weakened his legs. Claspng her hands together behind Russell's neck, Jade used her appendages to yank the Russell's head into a left knee strike that landed between his eyes. Russell dropped to his knees, leaving himself wide open for a kick from Jade to his stomach that knocked him several feet into the air. Before Russell hit the apex of his flight, Jade joined him in midair. Jade tossed seven blue energy spheres in Russell's direction so they collided and slammed Russell against the concrete road leading toward Gonaga Marketplace.

Each energy attack was more powerful than the last, wrecking Russell's already aching body. Russell could barely breath as he lay in this newly formed crater that was once a part of Gonaga's busy, seaport area. Floating until she stood beside Russell, Jade physically revealed her next plan of attack. Jade unsheathed her father's golden sickles from the holsters on her pants, wanting to cut Russell down like Jade did Princess Onita only minutes earlier.

In her mind, Rini had waited long enough for Russell to defend himself; entering the battle as Jade's arms descended toward her sibling's face. Leaping with her legs forward, Rini dropkicked Jade's back so her friend fell face first against her concrete base. Jade tried to roll to her feet, only for Rini to jump on top of her best friend and clutch Jade's wrists. Throwing her left leg upward so the toe of her boot hit Rini's upper back allowed Jade to give her former ally a taste of her own medicine. The strike's impact caused Rini to fall toward an equally grounded Jade. Using her hands in hopes of stopping the fall didn't help Rini as Jade hastily sat up to headbutt her stunned adversary. Rini ended up on her back following the collision of skulls, giving Jade the chance to punch Rini's face several times. When it appeared Rini was incapacitated by Jade's strikes, the apparently possessed woman turned her attention to Russell – who still hadn't recovered from Jade's previous attacks. Rini slowly opened her eyes to find Jade walking toward her brother.

The struggling Rini screamed, "Leave him alone!"

Jade smiling at her demanding adversary caused Rini to repeat herself. The grin gracing Jade's

face abruptly disappeared. This change in Jade's body language was due to something powerful rising in Rini. A surge of energy Rini never before experienced flowed through her body. Rini's energy poured purple in color from her form throughout the area, knocking Jade off her feet.

Russell flew into a building behind him, as did Dash. Jade regained her balance before pitching several energy spheres at this immense energy's source. These balls of Jade's energy exploded against Rini's body upon impact. To Jade's shock, Rini walked through the dust kicked up by each blast. Not paying attention to her surroundings almost cost Jade when she felt an incredible power moving through the ground in her direction. Jade jumped backwards, witnessing three purple energy balls erupt from where she once stood. The energy continued upward until it floated directly above Jade.

With the tip of her right index finger, Rini controlled her energy spheres. Smartly, Jade tried to cause a collision of Rini's energy; but Rini proved to be one step ahead of her friend at each turn. Seeing her original plan of destroying the energy with a crash didn't work out, Jade changed her strategy. Spotting Russell's prone body, Jade flew toward him with Rini's energy in hot pursuit. Dash screamed at Russell to warn him about Jade's approach. Unable to move fast enough, all Russell could do was brace for Jade's incoming attack.

Instead of hitting Russell when coming within reaching distance of her supposed target, Jade changed her trajectory by going up instead of straight. Unbeknownst to Jade was Rini predicting this planned physical shift in Jade's movement. When Jade looked down to witness Russell getting hit by Rini's attack, the energy engulfed Jade in a woefully gorgeous display of purple light. Jade's screams echoed until her tattered frame hit the ground seconds later. As her energy level normalized, Rini, with her mother's sword in hand, approached Jade.

"I'm sorry," Rini whispered when she stopped atop Jade. "I have to do this."

Rini raised her sword above Jade's neck in perpetration to decapitate her trembling best friend.

Rini's tearful hesitation gave Dash the chance to run and yell, "Stop, Rini! It's not Jade you have to destroy! It's the original Gonagan Crystal!"

The words reverberating in Rini's mind made her remember how Oni's spirit moved from person to person. To the left of Jade's body lay the necklace containing both Gonagan Crystals.

Dash informed Rini, "It's the smaller, smoother one. That's the piece she's travelin' through."

Rini moved her sword from above Jade to the Gonagan Crystals. With all of her strength, Rini drove her sword through the original Gonagan Crystal, bisecting the blessed jewel. A weak, evil essence immediately exited its prison that only Dash could see. Rini kneeled beside Jade in an attempt to revive her. Seeing no other choice, Rini started performing CPR on her friend as the spirit once inside the original Gonagan Crystal slipped through the cracks of the destroyed gift shop Onyda was buried underneath. Rini's actions not helping Jade forced her to call for Dash. Russell struggled out of the crater to join his friends & family in their effort to save Jade's life.

All of a sudden, the road everyone stood on began violently shaking. A large crack formed, beginning at the gift shop's remains. The split turned into a chasm as it moved toward the only four people remaining in the area. Dash hastily scooped Jade's body while Rini helped her brother to a believed safe spot. With wide eyes, everyone watched the store's rubble descend into the planet. The shimmering gold of something attracted Russell's eyes when he turned to watch the planet's steam rise from its depths.

As this glowing item fell off the ledge it sat upon, Russell realized what the object was; shouting, "No!"

Dash and Rini looked at Russell when he collapsed into a seated position. Watching Russell pound the ground with his fists made Dash ask why he was so upset.

"We let it fall!" Russell told Dash. "The second Gonagan Crystal just fell into the gorge! That was my only chance!"

Dash, while saddened about the Gonagan Crystal entering the planet, needed to understand how Russell lost his "chance", "It's messed up the crystal's gone, but--"

With his face directed toward the tattered ground, Russell cried out, "But now we can't bring

them back!”

Tears flowed from Russell’s eyes; slamming against the road like hail.

With Jade’s head cradled in her lap, Rini made a guess at who her brother intended to restore, “Bring back Mother and Father. Mother used to tell us about how the original Gonagan Crystal returned Gonaga back to its state before Oni’s last attack. I assume Russell wanted to use the second crystal to do what she did.”

Confirming his sister’s assumption, Russell lamented, “Father, Mother, Uncle Jas, little Onita, I coulda saved ‘em all. Why is this happenin’?”

Dash sat with his bemoaning student to say, “I’m so sorry, Russ.”

Rini abruptly said, “Jade!” upon noticing her friend’s head move. “Jade, wake up!”

Sadly, Rini couldn’t coach Jade into consciousness as the planet began vibrating again. To Dash, Rini & Russell’s shock, a loud, feminine screeching came from inside the chasm. After the ungodly wailing passed, a geyser of molten lava exploded from the crevice for almost a minute. Watching intently, everyone couldn’t believe what they saw when the lava stopped spewing: a crystallized, purple hand. This appendage gripped the ground above, using the cracked concrete to reveal what was connected to this hand by pulling itself onto the surface.

Covered in purple crystal was none other than Onyda. When the original Queen of Gonaga gained a vertical base, her three enemies gazed at a fiery core visibly raging inside the middle of her body. Russell’s eyes moved from Onyda’s torso to the almost half-foot-long nails protruding from Onyda’s hand that appeared sharper than razors. Like those watching her, Onyda glared at the objects of her attention. Though the purple crystal encasing her body covered her mouth, Onyda’s words were still audible somehow.

This was obvious as Onyda growled with the dual voices of herself and her daughter, Oni, “I heard what you said, young man.”

It didn’t take long before everyone realized Onyda was referring to Russell.

Onyda continued speaking to explain what she heard, “You believe the Gonagan Crystal is lost. But little do you know the crystal of my first husband returned to the other half of its original owners. Unlike my daughter, however, I didn’t foolishly use some of the crystal’s blessed powers for a power boost. I fully absorbed it. I am one with the second Gonagan Crystal, and the last remaining essence of my daughter. Now, it is time for you and your fellow peasants to die.”

With his sword by his left side after gaining a solid balance, Russell prepared for a great battle. Dash stepped to Russell’s right, bringing smiles to their respective faces. The still unconscious Jade was the only thing on Rini’s mind.

Onyda’s walking forward was halted by an unfamiliar male voice resonating from the distance, “Hold it right there!”

Following the command came a sound of horse hooves clapping against the stone. Through the wrecked buildings lazily walked a gorgeous, unusually black Clydesdale. On this horse rode a man draped in black. Rini first noticed how this unknown individual’s energy resembled Dash’s power. It didn’t take long before Dash realized the same thing Rini recognized.

The rider spoke in Onyda’s direction after his horse neared Dash, “Even though you look differently, I can feel the beast that dwells within is my mother.”

Stopping his carrier and jumping off in front of Dash revealed Dash’s assumption of this person’s identity was correct.

This rider said to Dash, “It’s great to see you again, big brother.”

Russell couldn’t believe his eyes as he watched Dash struggle to hold back the emotion welling inside of him.

Wiping away tears starting to down his cheeks, all Dash could say was, “Ken, I’ve missed you so much.”

“As I you, Dash,” Ken happily responded.

“But where have you been all this time?”

With a pat on Dash's right shoulder, Ken told his brother, "I appreciate the concern, but can we talk about this later? It seems like we have work to do."

Moving until he stood alongside the reuniting brothers was Russell to verbally ready them for war, "I already like this guy. We have a giant piece of crystal about to tear Gonaga apart. The last thing we need to worry about is catchin' up!"

Ken looked into Russell's eyes during his statement, astounded by what he saw, *His eyes are just like Princess Serena's. Is this Serena her son?*

A silver, double-edged sword engraved with the names of Dash, Jas, Jake & Serena was Ken's weapon of choice.

The first Queen of Gonaga's booming laugh was a prelude to her words after seeing Ken unsheathe his sword, "While it's obvious you're stronger now than you were when you defeated my child, you still don't have enough power to stop me."

Rather than let Ken respond, Russell replied, "We'll see about that!"

Russell planned to be the vanguard of this initial strike against the crystallized Onyda, but Ken ran past Russell before he could take his first step forward. Using her fingernails, the former ruler deflected Ken's sword swings. It only took several seconds before Ken figured out Onyda's pattern.

Dodge left, swing right, Ken thought. She will dodge as I start swinging right. I must fake her out.

Ken followed his strategy, feigning a right slash with his sword. Onyda leapt to her left to catch Ken's incoming sword just like he predicted. Stopping in mid-swing, Ken spun 180-degrees with his sword still extended. Onyda was somehow prepared for Ken's change in motion, kicking away the incoming weapon. Stunned by this turn of events left Ken open for a strong kick to his stomach. Ken used the strike to distance himself by rolling backwards after hitting the ground back first. When Ken's head moved to look up, he found several fire spheres heading his way. Unfazed by this impending attack, Ken pressed forward; cutting through the six fireballs until the tip of his sword lay against

Onyda's neck.

Unlike his original plan that failed, Ken's new strategy involved being grabbed. Onyda slapped down the sword touching her, clutching Ken's neck immediately after. Ken's tactic worked perfectly as Onyda's concentration on Ken's upper body made her vulnerable to anything Ken had planned with his legs. A simple, single kick to the original Queen of Gonaga's left kneecap destabilized her footing. Ken's chance to trip Onyda was taken by her attacker.

Falling atop Onyda with his sword at her throat again, Ken asked, "Any last words?"

Ken didn't expect a hole to open in Onyda's crystal face covering that allowed her to spew fire from her mouth. A flame geyser engulfed Ken, pitching him in the direction of his horse. Ken rolled to put himself out as his prized animal stamped in distress.

When the flames died out, Ken calmed his scared horse by saying, "It's okay, Buckshot, I'll be fine."

Hearing his master's words made Buckshot step back. Ken, slightly burned and his clothes singed, rose to his feet with his sword guarding his midsection. Gonaga's first queen seeing her advantageous position enticed her to charge Ken. Waiting until Onyda was within a few inches of him, Ken seemingly disappeared before the old queen could hit her target. No one could find Ken, let alone recognize his energy.

From the corner of Dash's left eye revealed something directly above the increasingly frustrated Onyda. This spec in the sky was in actuality Ken. Dash understood if he kept looking up it would blow Ken's cover. Everyone was oblivious to Ken powering up to his maximum. Ken's energy level hitting its peak made him vanish again. Reappearing behind Onyda without concentrating to veil his energy allowed her to pinpoint Ken's whereabouts.

Onyda remarked at Ken's positioning, "You really think you could get the jump on me that easily?"

Haphazardly spinning around with a punch in mind caused Gonaga's forgotten royalty to hit

Ken's energized sword. Though her strike failed, the misplaced punch didn't stun Onyda; giving her the chance to grab Ken's sword with her hands. The struggle over Ken's weapon saw a physical manifestation of both fighters' energies crack the ground they stood upon. Without warning, Onyda snapped Ken's sword. A collective gasp moved through the watching Dash, Russell & Rini.

"You were weak in Jarad," Onyda condescendingly said to Ken, "and you're weak now."

Following her statement, Onyda head-butted her stunned enemy between his eyes. Ken fell head over heels upon impact. Ken's attempt to roll through his fall left his face open for Onyda's kick that unexpectedly connected and knocked Ken loopy. Hastily leaping into the sky after dropping her current adversary, Onyda readied another fireball. Rini laid down Jade's unconscious body in hopes of saving Ken before he could be hurt or worse by Onyda's upcoming action. Dash yelling at Rini to stop her intentions didn't halt her continuing toward Ken as Onyda tossed down a fireball some thirty feet in diameter.

"Ken!" Rini said while shaking the half-conscious hero. "Come on! You gotta get up before it's too late! Ken, don't make me do all the work here!"

Rini barely had Ken on his knees when the intense heat from Onyda's latest attack pushed Rini down alongside him. The horrifying screams echoing in the heart of this fireball brought tears to Dash's eyes. With a snapping of her fingers, Onyda made her fiery creation explode. Debris & chips of stone flew in all directions as Russell shielded Jade's body as Dash covered his face. After several tense moments after the roaring sound died down lay the immobile bodies of Ken and Rini instead another energy-made crater. On rubber legs, Dash ambled over to his injured brother and student. Seeing that Rini and Ken were still breathing slightly calmed Dash; allowing him to reassess his current situation. Formulating a plan, Dash tried to get Russell's attention to tell him what Russell needed to do.

"Hey, Russ!" Dash said without worrying about Onyda overhearing him. "Russ, get over here so we can.... Russell, are you okay? Russell, answer me!"

For some reason, a kneeling Russell rocked back and forth rather than respond to Dash.

Unbeknownst to Dash were the images running through Russell's mind: his parents' deaths; his intense training; Jade's physical invasion; the attack on his sister.

Breaking Russell's concentration was a single, masculine voice entering his thoughts, telling him, "Let it go. Let it all go."

As Russell rose to his feet, streams of green energy flowed from the mostly closed crevice where Onyda became one with the Gonagan Crystal.

The former queen peered at Russell moving with the energy oozing out of the planet, saying to herself, "Impossible. There's no way he could've regained his strength so quickly. Wait, why am I worried? I can finish him off just like I did the rest of his family with less power. This will be quick."

Being so preoccupied with Ken and Rini, Dash never noticed Onyda descending directly behind him. Dash went to grab the sword holstered to his back upon recognizing Onyda's energy settling behind him, only for the original Queen of Gonaga to stop Dash's intended action by clutching his right wrist.

Kicking the back of Dash's left leg so he fell to his knees, Onyda started choking Dash from behind while hissing, "Your pupil sure is resilient. It will be fun to watch him squirm in front of you."

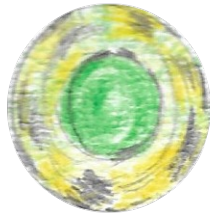
No matter how hard Dash tried he couldn't free himself from the chokehold. Onyda happily waited for Dash to pass out so she could throw him alongside Rini and Ken.

"Three down," Onyda gleefully proclaimed. "One more insect to go."

When Onyda turned in Russell's direction she discovered Russell struggling to move as the green energy enveloped him.

Onyda told her potential final adversary, "I'm quite impressed by you. Your determination to fight someone much stronger than you reminds me of your parents; and look how they ended up."

But Russell could barely hear a word Onyda said. Russell's mind had fallen into a sea of light.



In Majan, King Octavius did his best to comfort any distressed Gonagans. For some reason, Queen Athena experienced a nauseating feeling that caused her to lie down soon after leaving their ship.

Rising from her spot following a short nap, Athena heard a woman say to the Queen of Gonaga, “What are you going to do now?”

Queen Athena quickly peered around to find out who asked her the question. Seeing no one looking at her, let alone speaking to the queen, Athena turned her attention to her husband.

“Did someone just say something to me?” Athena asked Octavius.

Instead of hearing King Octavius, the same voice that entered her ears seconds earlier told Gonaga’s latest matriarch, “Please, don’t worry yourself when you return home.”

Once again, Athena looked up to find out who kept talking to her without the queen’s knowledge.

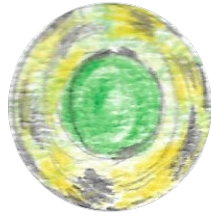
Queen Athena’s focus returning to King Octavius gave him the chance to say, “You’re just tired, my dear. You’ve.... I’ve put you through too much. Your mind is just trying to sooth you during this tumultuous time.”

Vehemently, the Queen of Gonaga replied, “No! That sound came from someone. Actually it sounded like... Serena!”

“Your sister? Athena, please rest yourself. You’re--”

The same voice speaking to Athena suddenly told the king, “She must return to Gonaga. Her family needs her more than her people do. But we will protect her. She will save Onita when no one else can. Thank you for loving her, my brother.”

And with that, the voice died. The king gazed at the sea only several yards to his right, seeing something rising from the waters. Through the grains of sand, green beams sprouted from the ground, heading toward the current Queen of Gonaga. Before King Octavius could say anything about the green rays nearing his wife, a blinding light emitted from Athena's body. It took almost a minute until the king could see again. Opening his eyes revealed to Octavius that his wife had vanished. King Octavius scurried around the area, asking whomever he saw about Athena's whereabouts. Little did the fearful ruler know that his wife had returned home.



The same illumination that blinded King Octavius swept through Gonaga until it reached Onyda and Russell. Unlike the King of Gonaga, the light didn't affect Russell, but stupefied Onyda. When the unexplainable brightness finally died, Queen Athena found herself in Gonaga beside the unconscious bodies of Rini, Dash, and Ken. Athena couldn't believe her eyes upon seeing Ken lying in the hole with her niece and her only remaining childhood friend. The energy flowing toward Russell forced the ruler's eyes in his direction. Standing in front of the queen's steadfast nephew with her back to Athena was a woman covered in purple crystal.

"Who is that?" Queen Athena asked herself. "Did she hurt Rini and Dash?"

The same voice that ordered Russell to, "...let it go," spoke to Gonaga's queen, "They aren't why you're here. You need to save Onita."

"Save Onita?" Athena mumbled.

Without thinking, the queen's eyes moved from the situation before her to a lone woman several

yards to Queen Athena's left. Athena was compelled to approach this person seemingly wounded during battle. Taking only a few steps the Gonagan leader to figure out this woman's identity. Athena stumbled over her own feet trying to run toward her daughter.

As Athena fell to her knees at Princess Onita's cut and bloody body, the voice that initially spoke to Russell returned with the words, "She's lingerin' between life and death. Athena, you're the only person who can save her. Put your hands on her chest."

Wiping away the tears now streaming down her face, Queen Athena followed the command while the voice continued speaking, "Now concentrate on all of that energy you're usin' to cry in believin' Onita can only stay outta death's grip thanks to you."

Dash was starting to regain consciousness during Athena's concentration process. Focusing as hard as she could, the Queen of Gonaga believed with all of her might that doing something as simple as placing her hands on Onita's hurt body would save her only child. Suddenly, a great energy exited Athena's body. Dash watched in awe of his queen's very life energy leaving her to enter the near-deceased princess. The glowing green energy that expelled from the planet resembled the physical manifestation of Athena's energy while she transferred it into her daughter.

After several moments of intense focusing, Queen Athena heard the words, "You've done a great job, Sis."

Athena nearly passed out once she removed her hands from Onita's steadily breathing body. To the present Queen of Gonaga's astonishment was the fact Princess Onita's mortal wounds began healing themselves.

Athena, staring at her quaking hands, asked herself, "How did I do that?"

From the distance, Queen Athena heard Dash say, "You gave of yourself like none of us could."

Onyda glared at the energy enveloping Russell as she asked him, "So this is it? All you can do is produce some green fog around yourself?"

Russell not responding made Onyda shout, "That energy won't help you now!" before charging

her target.

Shockingly, Onyda's crystalline body bounced off the energy that shielded Russell's body.

"What the...?" was all Onyda could say as she continued punching the energy blocking her attacks.

Frustration set in due to Onyda's repeated failures, causing her to change game plans. Onyda flew into the air, tossing down a large sphere of purple energy. Rather than avoid Onyda's energy, Russell stood his ground so this ball of destruction landed on top of him. Seeing concrete crack and the land shake because of her energy brought laughter from Onyda.

Onyda excitedly screeched following her joyous moment, "The pain must be excruciating! Oh how I love to kill these mutants!"

Though Dash face was etched with worry, Queen Athena didn't understand why Dash feared for Russell's safety after discovering she had the ability to revive those at death's door.

Dash hastily informed the obviously weakened queen, "What you performed on Onita wasn't somethin' you can haphazardly do. The amount of your life's energy you gave up to save Onita will take weeks, months, maybe even years to replenish. Some won't come back at all. If Russell doesn't take care of himself on his own, there's no one that can help him."

...to be continued