

Preface

So in the process of rewriting my Zapbots stories back around 1995/96 I decided to try and find a way to incorporate my new friends from college and various other parts of life into the stories. As I wanted to make sure all my friends that I cared about were well aware of what they meant to me. Inspired by a few Star Trek episodes I came up with this idea to help bridge the gap and bring my newfound friends into the Zapbot universe.

This was particularly funny to my roommate Michael Barnard who found the various commentary here hilarious as he helped me work on what I would say in the particulars of the situation. With his help I crafted this story to present my new group of friends to the Zapbot Universe. Mike has now since gone onto greater fame as one of the most wanted illustrators in California. He was the one who coined me with the nickname 'Gump' in college.

In the original saga, I had my friend Matt E. all the way up to the very late stages of the saga when our friendship dissolved I had him ahem... killed off. In the rewrites I moved this up to this story as at the time I didn't want to relive the stories I had written for him as he was no longer a part of my life. Thus started the trend of using the fictional character of Mike Quartz for my hidden love interest.

Also after writing this my friendship with Alan began to deteriorate as living with a Jehovah Witness did not seem compatible with a gay man's life. However, this did provide a great writing point for the Zapbot plots of which you will find out in later stories. Out of respect for him though I did change his last name.

The person labeled as 'Scott' in this story was not actually named Scott after all, as I have adjusted his name to protect who he was (although anyone who knew me at the time would automatically know who he was.) Funny enough, many years on Facebook this individual reached out to me to make amends and it was nice to get to know him again. The rhetoric will remain the same here as it was close to arguments we had at the time while our friendship was toxic.

Now refreshing the story for 2021, a lot of the dialog had to be corrected as it is not very how-shall-we say politically correct for modern times. Needless to say the point gets across and the story still holds up on its own I think.

You decide.

Anthony S. Anselmo

Reality

By Anthony Anselmo
with special help from Mike Barnard

Chapter 1

"Gump!" went the voice. I slowly opened my eyes and the dreams of the night began to fade away.

I jumped straight out of my bed, or what seemed to be a bed, but it didn't look like mine. I turned towards the person who was yelling in my ear. This tall young boy, with dark hair and green eyes was staring at me.

"You're going to be late for class," this boy said.

I looked around frantically, trying to control my hysteria and figure out where I was. The room was a small apartment with a bed, two desks, a small wooden dresser, and various pictures and posters on the walls. There were boxes full of videos tapes, magazines and books all around. A television and a clothes hamper also laid on the floor.

"What the HELL!" I screamed.

The boy jumped back and seemed perplexed and unaware of why I was yelling. The first thing that came to my mind is that I somehow was in a holographic program.

"Computer, terminate program!" I yelled.

Nothing but dead silence hung in the air. I looked at this boy and he looked at me. I was wearing boxer shorts and a t-shirt and was now sweating and began to pace around the room at a rapid rate.

"Gump what are you doing?" The boy asked me.

"Who are you? Where am I?" I cried.

"Gump are you all right?"

"I am Ambassador Anselmo of the Federation of Zapbots, where the hell am I?" I yelled.

"Oh don't start with that Zapbots shit again Gump."

"Why do you keep calling me Gump?"

"Cause that's your name, remember Chris gave it to you last year at the dorms."

"Dorms, what dorms?"

"Are you all right?"

"Who are you? What species are you? What planet am I on?"

"Well you're on Gearatron, except now we got humans instead of Zapbots, so quit being stupid and get ready for class."

"How do you know about Gearatron?"

"I seem to recall hours of tortuous sessions of reading your boring stories, but how else would I learn to make fun of you?"

"Where's Boaty? Where's Flier? Anthony to Boaty, come in!" I screamed into the air, but no response, or even call speaker noises.

"I just flushed him," the boy said laughing.

"Who the hell are you? You read my stories? Okay, what are they about?"

"It's your lame life down on paper!"

"Lame life, I'm leader of a planet!"

"Well, then you can lead the way to class, let's go."

"Class, what class? Where am I?"

"Geez, no more Taco Bell before bed for you. Look! You're going to class to learn how to draw those stupid things and make a living off of it. As if they are not your life already."

"What life is that?"

"Good question."

"What's your name? Seriously what's your name?"

"I'M DORKATRON!"

"Huh? who?"

"DORKATRON who is late for class."

I tried to turn on my X-0 suit, but nothing was happening. I had no graphical pictures across my eyes and I felt no power surges. Suddenly I looked and felt my arms, and I realized they weren't part mechanical. I had my original arms back, before I lost them. The sensation was weird, yet appealing.

"Look, I don't know who you are? Or what's going on? But I have no idea where I am, and what is happening."

"Too many soft tacos?"

"I don't eat Tacos?" I said calming down, knowing I would never eat something so disgusting. What has happened? The last thing I remembered is finishing my Personal Logs, and turning in for the night. The next day I was going to wake up and go to breakfast with David.

"You are what you eat. Look if you don't feel like going to class, then I need to get going?"

"Which class?"

"Well you fall into the class, of dumbest asses, but I'm going to painting. I think you have Figure Drawing. Well, you're going to be drawing robots anyway, so why don't you stay here and get some rest?"

"Yeah, I guess. Sure. So the Zapbots are where?"

"Within your thick skull, no where else."

"Oh, okay," I said. I slowly sat down and looked at the floor.

"Gump are you going to be all right?"

Suddenly I saw pictures of my Mom and Dad on the wall.

"Yeah, um, DORKATRON, I'm just going to call my parents."

The boy laughed, opened the door and walked out. Looking around the room for a phone or other sort of communications device, I don't know why but I dialed my old phone number and prayed someone I knew would answer.

"Hello?"

"Dad? Dad! What's going on! Why are you back on Earth?" I cried.

"What are you talking about?" my Dad's voice said perplexed.

"Is Mom there?"

"Yeah, she's right here."

I heard him give the phone to my Mom.

"Hello?" my Mom said with her cheerful voice.

"Mom? What's going on?"

"What's; what going on?"

"Where are my Zapbots?"

"Your Zapbots? Did you leave your drawings at home?"

"Drawings?"

"Yeah your sketches that you drew?"

"I dunno, did I? I'm talking about the real life ones. Where are they? Is this some kind of elaborate joke?"

"Real life ones, are you all right?"

Suddenly I realized that this wasn't right. My mom's voice was concerned, and if anybody knew about my Zapbots my parents would. Something was wrong, definitely wrong.

"Oh here they are!" I said, "Found them! Let me give you a call back later, I'm late for class."

"Okay, bye," said my mom and hung up.

Hanging up the phone I walked into this other room and looked at the various items. It contained a television, bed, dresser, desk, and an aquarium with two iguanas in them. Once again the room was covered with posters galore of movies and shows. I looked through some of the papers on the desk. There were paintings, and drawings of all sorts. I looked on the back of one and the name Mike Barnard was written on it. So I guessed his name wasn't really Niggatron, after all. But who was he and how did he know about my Zapbots?

I found some clothes and put them on and walked outside the apartment. I saw a window down the hallway and on top of it was the word "office". I rang the buzzer and a kind lady with big glasses and a even bigger smile came to the window.

"Hi, how are you?"

"Um a little disturbed. Could you tell me where I am."

The lady laughed as if I had made the best joke in the world.

"Why Columbus silly, got lost in your own apartment building?"

"No, just a bad night. Thanks, talk to you later." I said, running out the door. Apartment building? That was my apartment, so who was the kid, and why was he calling me "Gump?"

I walked out into the open street and immediately smelled smog and pollution watching the cars speed by the apartment building.

"What the hell, they are all still using combustable engines in their cars, that's not right!?!?"

Walking down the street I came to a college campus. The college sign said "The Columbus College of Art and Design". Students were walking around going to and from class. The buildings were of various types, with white paint, fine cut lawns and numerous artistic decorations.

A little calmer now, but still scared I was trying to figure the puzzle out. Where were my Zapbots? What had happened to me? What had happened to Earth? Why was I here? I was scared shitless and felt alone, vulnerable, tired, sad and like I didn't have any control over the situation. I had no X-O suit, and any signs of my Zapbots or any signs of my Zapbots' influence had disappeared.

It was like my life before the accident with Messy as my regular human body parts were back. I felt my arms and realized I was totally human again. Not only did I feel weak, but also I had the grumbling in my stomach, something that I had almost forgotten about. I guess I should have grabbed something before I ran out, but then again, I shouldn't be here.

Suddenly I felt a sharp hit on my shoulder. A boy with dark hair, and a huge body walked past me.

"Asshole!" he said.

"What's your problem?" I said immediately preparing up a fight. And then I realized, I had no weapons.

The boy turned around. He had a stern heart shaped face, wild brown eyes, was wearing a leather jacket and had the look of someone who was pissed off.

"I never lied to you," the kid said.

"And who to pray tell may you be?"

"Duh, probably your best friend."

"What's your name?"

"What?"

Suddenly I heard another voice off in the distance yell.

"Scott! Leave him alone!" I turned around. Behind me another kid came up to me and put his arm on my shoulder. The kid who was called Scott turned and walked away.

This other boy was a little taller than me, had a wavy hairdo and distinct facial features. He was wearing a blue winter jacket and carrying a book bag.

"Don't let him bother you?" he said.

"Yeah, thanks."

"So have you written any new stories lately?" the boy asked.

"Stories, you mean Zapbot stories?"

"Yeah, oh and I finished reading your Logs, pretty impressive--"

"Logs? What logs?"

"Your diary you keep on your computer."

"Shit! Gotta go!"

Darting back to the apartment I ran as fast as I could and jumped into the air. However I soon realized I didn't have my X-O suit and fell back down to the ground. I continued to run, but slowed down after falling short of breath. Something I also had forgot.

Re-entering the apartment I saw the old computer and turned it on. It was a Macintosh, a primitive, but relatively easy model we used to have before my Zapbots.

I saw the date, January 6, 1996. Well the date was correct, but the place and setting was wrong. Either this was some elaborate joke, scheme, or somehow, some way I had entered another universe.

Chapter 2

As the computer booted up the phone rang and I slowly grabbed it.

"Hey Anth?" said the voice. I didn't speak hoping the person would realize I didn't know their name.

"This is Jon?"

"Jon who?"

"Duh your friend code name Centepeede, sysop of my bulletin board. Are you going to call tonight?" This voice sounded younger, but still mature. How this person knew me was incredible.

"Call what?"

"The Board, you know the one you're co-sysop of? Oh by the way I finished your Zapbot story."

"Which story was that?"

"Oh, the last one you sent, I can't remember the name, but anyhow you going to call tonight right? Marauder and Corellian should be on."

"Yeah, sure, hey I'm feeling a little sick so I'm going to lie down. Can you do me a favor?"

"Yeah sure,"

"Ahhh okay... can you send me that copy of the story back, I need to fix some things."

"Sure, hey you okay? You sound weird."

"Weird? How?"

"Well first of all you sound disturbed, second you're not talking like you. Taking a grammar class or something?"

"No, just a bit nervous today. Hey give me your number will ya."

"You should know it by heart by now."

"Yeah, but for some reason today I'm forgetting things. My brain is off today."

This strange young boy gave me his number and I wrote it down on the nearest note pad.

"Okay, well talk to you later."

"Okay, bye."

"Bye."

Who the hell was he? How did he know my name I wondered what had happened to all my Zapbots, the creatures I had made, who I loved! I pinched myself but it wasn't a dream.

The computer finally booted up and I clicked on PRIVATE LOGS. Up came the window.

Password:

"Great!" I cried. I thought carefully, what would I use for a password. I typed MATRIX in.

The screen cleared and the computer finished booting up. Unbelievable! It worked, and the logs came up on my screen.

"December 25, 1990!" I cried. "My lord!" I said.

Slowly and steady I began to read.

Reading back through my old logs as they had been transferred from my old Apple IIE computer before my Zapbots to this new computer. So far I had not reached the date my Zapbots had come to Earth, and everything checked out, exactly how I remembered.

Once again the phone rang and I picked it up.

"Hey!" went the voice.

Once again I kept quiet.

"It's Matt."

Now the voice said it was Matt, but I know it wasn't Matt Eggbert. However, it did sound strikingly familiar.

"[Matt Rogish](#)?" I said making a guess.

"Gosh, no shit!"

"Long time no see."

"What, I just talked to you last week before you left home."

Matt Rogish had been one of those schoolmates who had always been nice to me. We were friends back in the days of elementary school and would play together with our robot toys. Due to the way middle school dynamics worked I distanced myself from him as he became one of the cool kids and I was left in the nerd category. However we had always said "Hello" to each other in the school hallways. But after I left school early to form the Zapbots we lost touch simply due to lack of time.

"I was home in, Chesterland Ohio right?" I asked.

"Yeah."

"What did I do back home last week?"

"Well we went sledding, to McDonalds, saw your sister's choir concert, cleaned Bill's barn, blah blah blah. Why?"

"I seem to be having a bit of amnesia. Bill who again?"

"[Bill Thomas](#)?!? You know Billy."

Bill Thomas had been another schoolmate who I met in Middle School. I met him as I worked in the computer room at the guidance office. He was also extremely kind to me and usually stuck up for me in various classes against bullies. I never thought of calling him and becoming friends, and now here I was cleaning barns with him?

"Help me? What's wrong?" Rogish continued.

"Matt, have you ever heard of my Zapbots?"

"Yeah, you write stories about these cheap rip-offs of transforming robots."

"But no spaceship landed in my backyard six years ago right?"

"Spaceship? Huh?"

"Never mind, anyhow, I gotta go. Can I call you back later?"

"Sure, anytime."

I hung up the phone and went back to looking at my logs.

Suddenly I hit the date that the spaceship had landed in my back yard. I read the log, but it wasn't the log I wrote. In fact the day was totally different. Up to this point, all my memories had been correct with my logs. I didn't know what was going on. All I knew was the answers lied somewhere in these logs.

Chapter 3

"Temporary Master's Log. Stardate 1/16/96. I don't know what has happened, or what is going on. All I know that things have changed, or I have changed. I am writing this cause I know deep down inside I am not crazy. My memories are too real to me. Hopefully someday my Zapbots can get to me, or somehow they can get this letter.

"By some incredible phenomenon, my life has changed. My Zapbots as I know it have ceased to exist, and my life has gone on as if the Matrix spaceship never landed in my backyard. I am scared, frightened and perplexed beyond all control. Reading my logs I have developed three theories possibly explaining this.

"1) Through some force, history or time has been changed and the spaceship that carried the Matrix, which landed in my backyard never, happened.

"2) Through the theory of multiple realities (there are innumerable answers for a decision, and all possibilities that happen, do happen somewhere in this giant universe), I have somehow jumped to a reality where the Zapbots cease to exist.

"3) This is an elaborate joke, hoax, or I have been captured by some enemy and changed in my surroundings.

"I neglect the third one cause my body has returned to fully human status. My artificial limbs are gone and are human once again. This could only be done if history has changed, and I KNOW this isn't a dream.

"Whatever the case, it seems according to my logs, I have continued through my life, without my Zapbots. High school was rough, but around the 11th grade I finally made more friends and by my senior year I had several good friends and finally established some sort of respect for myself at school. I graduated from high school, and continued in my interest in art. I came to the Columbus College of Art and Design and stayed in the dorm last year, but am now residing in an apartment this year.

"Friends before my Zapbots have remained with me; all except Matt Eggbert, which I have read in my logs, had abandoned me, for some unwritten reason. This hurts me beyond my heart, but I realize there is nothing I can do about it, at this present time. David and Jeremy have remained my friends, as well as several others. My old schoolmates Matt Rogish, and Bill Thomas became good friends with me since my senior year. I have grown very attached to them and they have become, supposedly like brothers to me. Also, any friends of theirs have also become somewhat friends of mine.

"The status of Earth has remained unchanged, just like before my Zapbots. Technology has not grown by very much, and the world is still a cold, lonely and barren place. Like I said, my Zapbots are not here.

"It appears that pollution, crime and hunger as well as the other problems of the world still exist in this life of mine. What really confuses me is, if I have these Zapbot memories, why is my body totally human? Why don't I remember anything but my own life or reality? Why can't I recall this reality's memories? Anyhow, through the technology of the Internet, home computers and what is called private bulletin boards I have made several other friends. The Internet appears to be a primitive Zapbot communication network. The world has set up several connections through multiple servers of computers. A person can send mail through a computer from one person to another. Also a kid could run a Bulletin Board out his house, providing games and entertainment, all through the primitive phone lines.

"I have made several friends this way by calling a board one-day. I met a kid by the name of Jon Centepeede. According to my logs, although I have only seen him once face to face, we have become good friends. On his Bulletin Board, which he runs out of his house, he goes by the name Centepeede. There are also several other good friends of mine, who I refer to them by their code names on the board. It seems I was elected co system operator of this board after spending all of my time on it.

"And there are of course, the people I have made friends with here in Columbus while I was continuing my education. My roommate is named [Mike Barnard](#). I used to also have a good friend named Scott, but according to my logs he turned out nice at first, but ended up being an asshole in the end. This explains my incident this morning. I have many more friends here, but I didn't write about them that much in my logs.

"Anyhow, I am amazed for all these friends, but I must find a way to get back to my own world. I know this is going to be impossible since the technology I'm used to doesn't exist. However I will just have to try my best. I don't belong here.

"I walked through what is supposed to be my room and I see pictures, paintings that I have done in this life. I see a six step self portrait series and I look at the crude painting and wonder what this life must be like. I feel like I don't even know myself now, and that everything is different. I feel so lonely and trapped, and my heart has become empty, and that anything that was myself has disappeared. This world, so curious, yet feels so cold.

Suddenly the door opened and Mike returned from class.

"Gump, how are you feeling?" he asked.

"Umm, tired... How are you?" I asked.

"Damn Fashionbrand was being a jerk again today! He didn't like anything I did."

"Oh, I'm sorry to hear that. Hey, how long have you known me?"

"We'll almost a year and a half now, why?"

"Oh just wondering. Look I'm going through so trauma right now."

"Trauma, Gump! What's wrong? A little nervous about the flight?"

"I can't explain right now, but just bear with me. If I seem to ask dumb questions--"

"Well like any of your questions had any relevance before," Mike said smiling and laughing.

"You know, I hope you're joking when you say that," I replied calmly. I was still unsure about Mike. He was so perky, cheerful and happy all the time, and seemed to just enjoy life as itself.

"Gump, you know I'm just joking with you, something is up with you isn't it."

"Well if I told you wouldn't believe me."

"What happened now?"

"Look, I can't tell you right now. Where is the nearest library?"

"It's down the street, but you'll miss your next class--"

"I know, okay I'm going to be there for a while. Will you take any messages for me?"

"Sure, you sure you're okay?"

"Tired, frustrated, but all right."

I went to the Main Columbus library and proceeded to the historical reference section. Even though I had somehow changed worlds, I still retained all my prior information from my Zapbots, and it was specific too. It came natural to me and I didn't need to stop and scratch my head to remember.

I checked the old newspapers around the date of the Matrix spaceship landing in my backyard. Nothing to be found. I tried to look for some scientific journals but the library only gave those to teachers.

Disgusted and tired I returned home. I called my supposed friend Jon's computer board with my computer and modem. I soon adjusted myself to the slowness and crude graphics of the computer, and began talking with him in the online chat room. Surprising my nickname on this board was Shortstop, and his Centepeede.

1) Shortstop: I think I'm having memory problems. I can't seem to remember much of my life prior to this day.

2) Centepeede: What did you do, get hit in the head?

3) Shortstop: No, it's just hard to explain. You can browse the World Wide Web right?

2) Centepeede: Yeah, why?

1) Shortstop: I need you to find some information for me. I need to know if there was any astral siting on a certain date.

2) Centepeede: Why?

1) Shortstop: Um... It's for my Zapbot story.

2) Centepeede: Oh God! Not another "Craphots" story.

[Marauder has logged on line 3]

[Coreellian has entered the room]

[Marauder has entered the room]

3) Marauder: Hey guys.

4) Coreellian: Hey!

1) Shortstop: Hey guys, how are you doing?

4) Coreellian: Wow, you're calling from Columbus?

1) Shortstop: Yep

[Angus has joined the room]

2) Centepeede: Hey guys, we finished blowing up the refrigerator today! You should have seen the flames!

5) Angus: Hey guys!

1) Shortstop: You blew up a refrigerator?

2) Centepeede: Yeah, I told you about it, remember?

1) Shortstop: I told you I'm been having memory problems. I didn't know you like to set things on fire.

2) Centepeede: What, man you must be screwed up. You know we're all crazy guys:]

4) Corellian: Shortstop was wrong?

3) Marauder: Get laid yet? :)

5) Angus: hehehehe

1) Shortstop: Look guys, I'm feeling sick. I better go. Talk to ya.

2) Centepeede: Take care

3) Marauder: Bye

4) Corellian: BYE!

5) Angus: c'ya...

Disconnecting from the board and once again I began to set to work on a plan to help myself. If Jon could find something relevant to why the Matrix didn't land, or why something changed on the date, I could possible...

Wait, what could I do? I began to get frustrated, for I was in a world, without the technology of my current memory. My Zapbots if anything would have to try and find me.

Yet, I could not just sit here on my behind and do nothing. I decided to go to art class, and see what my life was like. As long as I'm in the life, I might as well enjoy it, as I may be stuck here forever, still hoping I would be able to find a way back home.

Chapter 4

"Master's Log, Supplemental. I never thought an art college would disgust me. I cannot believe the ignorance of the students and the teachers.

"I have to admit that the possibility of me containing all my former information has helped me breeze through the classes with no problem. Still I find the teachers are rude, boastful, and think they know everything. Many teachers are incoherent with what they say, and others seem to follow a totally different discipline that the deans have stressed.

"I was sitting in class taking in all this information when I thought occurred to me. If I'm here in this reality, who is me in the other? Is it possible that Anthony Anselmo from this reality is now finding out his Zapbots are actually real? I can barely imagine what he is going through right now.

"I returned home and did my homework in one hour. Mike, my roommate seemed a little amazed and concerned because I am not "acting like myself". It seems the Anthony of this reality is prone to being the butt-end of jokes, and also has the problem of letting people take advantage of him. It is basically what I was like before my Zapbots.

"This situation with the person called Scott seemed to be his main conflict. Reading through my logs I see that the other Anthony was so desperate for a friendship, he choose this person called Scott out of appearance and first impressions. At first Scott appeared nice, considerate and more understanding than other people. However, as the year progressed tension built, Scott was revealed as a greedy, lying, self centered, inconsiderate, leeching asshole (to put it frankly). It seems recently I had just told him to go away several times, but he would always convince me to remain friends. Finally he left and now is holding a grudge for me.

"Talking with other classmates I found out that I seem to hold high respect at this school. I am the "Mr. Nice Guy" or the "Guy that is nice to everyone." Such a conversation happened today in the cafeteria while I was eating dinner with my supposed friends."

"You mean Phil Collins isn't President?" I asked a kid by the name of Greg Lawhun. The table roared with laughter. However, as the noticed my serious look on my face they soon realized I wasn't joking.

"No, he just released the new song, President where did you get that Gump?" Greg answered giving me a strange face.

"I fail to see where this Gump name came from?" I replied.

"Gump you sure you're okay, you are acting strange today?" said Ryan Treptow.

"Ahh leave him alone, Anthony you're too nice to people, you let people take advantage of you," replied Kerry Flaherty.

My supposedly deaf friend Jill then tapped me on the shoulder and softly spoke.

"What happened with Scott?" she asked.

"Umm actually it's a long story, I'd rather not go into it," I replied.

"Gump finally told him to kiss off!" replied Mike.

"I was reading my logs and I could not realize the infatuation I had for the guy. Then again I couldn't understand why I was so desperate to get a friend last year."

"We all were, cause this place was scary!" said Ryan.

"Scary?"

"Yeah, I mean no one knew anyone, no one got along with their roommates, well except a few. The food is terrible (still is), the only thing we all had in common was X-Files, Star Trek and art!"

"Star Trek! Wo Ho!" cried my friend [Alan Four](#). Alan who I unfortunately didn't write in my logs seemed to pop out of no where. He was supposedly a big fan of a TV show as I was, and thus after Jill introduced us, we became good friends. He also lived in the same apartment building as Mike and I did, so we usually hung out. Mike said we were hoping to get a three bedroom together the following year.

Suddenly a man came running through the cafeteria door.

"Oh my god! There is a fire down the street!" he yelled.

The whole cafeteria good up and ran outside as I found myself once again frustrated by my physical limitations.

As we came around the corner of the street, we saw the old abandoned building going up in flames. Fire trucks were just pulling up, but they couldn't get through because of the traffic.

From high above I saw a person's silhouette on the top of the building. Then I heard a scream.

"How the hell did he get up there?" I heard one of my friends' say.

Inpatient I didn't waste a moment. Whether I was a Zapbot or not I could not sit by and do nothing. Pushing my way through the crowd and ran towards the building. My friends came running after me as if I was some insane lunatic.

I ran to the fence that surrounded the building and jumped up and over. I was getting tired and felt exhausted already from my poor physical condition, but I continued on. After I climbed over the fence and ran into the burning building.

Vision was poor as I could barely see and smoke was just above my head. My short height seemed to help at this time as I ran up the steps coughing and brushing dust out of my face. How I wished for my X-O suit as I could have taken this fire out with no problem.

But the memories of my Zapbot training were still in me, and I could compensate for having no powers. I continued to run up the steps, fire was all around me as I dodged in between roaring hot flames. My skin begin to itch as the heat came closer and closer to me each time.

I made it to the roof but the door was jammed. Looking back I saw the fire had now encased the stairway.

Slamming the door as it would not open, and my hand began to rage with pain. Running back down the steps the farthest I could go, I ran with all my might into the door.

The door sprang open and I fell to the roof exhausted. A little kid came running up to me as I looked up and between the bright sunlight and my smoke filled eyes I saw he was only about 7 or 8, and could see him crying.

Standing up I ran towards the edge of the building. The fire squad had already set up a jumping bag. I ran back towards the door and found the stairs had totally collapsed.

Grabbed the kid although I was tired and under extreme pain I went to the edge. Picking the kid up in my arms I stood on the edge of the building. The fire squad was busy moving people away, for the building looked like it was beginning to collapse.

I saw the air bag below and with one deep breath I closed me eyes and jumped.

As I fell, it seemed like forever and I expected someone to grab me, or my booster rockets to ignite. But finally I fell into what seemed a soft

cushion of clouds. The next thing I know hands were pulling us out of the cushion and dragging us away from the site. I turned around to see the building collapsing and smoke filling the sky.

My friends came rushing up to me, and I slowly coughed at them as the ambulance crew hoisted me into the ambulance.

I woke up in the hospital feeling pretty good, but awfully tired. The doctors, the police, and the fire department came in and all shook my hand.

"Although you are not qualified to go into a fire, you still saved a young boy's life," the Police Sargent said.

My friends came into to see me and all had appreciation and encouraging words to give me.

"Gump, you're a hero!" cried Alan.

"(cough) yeah, so what else is new?"

"Definitely going to get pizza tonight!" said Mike.

"Why the hell did you go in there?" asked Alan.

"What was I suppose to do, just stand there?" I replied.

Shit! This wasn't right! The real Anthony for this reality would never be able to do this. Not only were things messed up, but also I was messing things up in this timeline. Maybe that kid was suppose to die, how did I know that I should have interfered with this reality's time.

They all continued to talk, but the words just drowned off into the background. After a while the doctor let me go home and I called my mom and dad and told them the whole story. Like usual, they did not believe one word of it. However, once I told them the medical information they realized something what up.

The President of the college granted me a week off school to rest and recuperate. As I returned back to my apartment and slowly got adjusted to everything again, this place was beginning to feel, like I belonged there. I was beginning to get attached to the small apartment.

After a short dinner I went walking down the main street with Mike, and Alan. We were going to the main City Center shopping mall to look for some new CD's. I was really having a fun time with both of them. I realized that people like these two weren't made anymore in this world. It made me sad to think I never got to know them as younger kids.

As we walked down the street, I turned and saw a young kid playing with his toys. When I looked harder I stopped and studied him.

The toys were the same robot toys, the same ones I use to play with. This brought back serge of memories and I soon realized I needed to get back to my own reality soon.

Chapter 5

"Master's Log Supplemental. I refused all publicity; I refused any mention of my act. I even told my parents not to come up to visit me cause I was fine. I am continuing going to the art classes cause I figured I better kept the real Anthony's reality in order.

"It was a little crazy here, the first week. I had to go searching through everything. All of the art supplies, little trinkets, toys, clothes were everywhere. Nicely ordered as I would have it done, but it took me a while to understand the arrangement and origination of everything. All of these things were very interesting to see, and in the process I feel as if I am rediscovering myself.

"I expected this to be a dream now and wake up. Still it continues as usual. The world is not only messed up, but people are also. People always get shafted one way, or the other. Government will hand out money to people who abused it, and these people will take it and run. Politics were corrupt more than ever. Politicians lied through their teeth, just to get into office, just to save their backs, while children die all around the world, people starve, and the cries of the lone man were muffed by the confusion and excitement of the real world.

"However, from the people I had recently been able to get to know, I see a glimpse of hope in the future. Instead of negative thoughts I am met with positive outlooks on life. These people are living each day to the fullest, and you could tell why, cause their faces are smiling. I am hopeful this reality will continue to exist for a long time. Besides I may be stuck here forever. Which would suck! Hell, all I worked for will be gone forever."

2) Centepeede: You were right some astronomical occurrence happened on that day.

1) Shortstop: Really! What?

2) Centepeede: Well, supposedly an object of some sort was seen in the sky. The observers took a look through their telescope and saw for a split second a UFO of some sort.

1) Shortstop: THEN WHAT HAPPENED?

2) Centepeede: Woah calm down. Well then it seemed to burn up in the atmosphere. It never reached earth.

2) Centepeede: You there?

1) Shortstop: Yeah, how did you find this information.

2) Centepeede: It would be better if I didn't tell you. Let's just say I poked my nose around certain places I shouldn't. I'll be fine though as long as I delete my log file on exits.

1) Shortstop: Cool, thank Jon I appreciate it.

2) Centepeede: Dude what's wrong with you lately. You seem, like not there?

1) Shortstop: You wouldn't believe me. You would think I was crazy, so there is no point in explaining.

2) Centepeede: Anthony, dude, just tell me. I've known you for over a year now, and I can always tell when you need help or not.

I was scared, but I figured that if I didn't start somewhere I wouldn't get back home. I figured he was also too far away to cause any damage to the situation. Still, I didn't want to ruin the other Anthony's friendship with this guy. I proceeded to explain my whole story, briefly to Jon, figuring if he didn't take it I could call it a big joke. I poured out my heart to the guy, and my typing speed increased and so did the sweat.

Suddenly three words came across my screen after I was finished typing.

2) Centepeede: I believe you.

1) Shortstop: Really, after that elaborate story?

2) Centepeede: I've known you, or I guess the real Anthony for too long to misjudge, and I know you're not a crazy person. How do you expect to get back to your reality?

I was astounded. I prayed he wasn't pulling my leg.

2) Centepeede: What can I do?

1) Shortstop: Nothing right now, you've been a great help so far. Just be there if I need some more info.

2) Centepeede: I'll keep looking into it for ya.

1) Shortstop: You are a saint. If the real Anthony gets back here, please remain his friend, but don't disclose any of this information. Tell him it was a dream.

2) Centepeede: You sure?

1) Shortstop: Yep, gotta go, so I'll talk to you later.

2) Centepeede: Take care. Zaphot guy.

"Tell me the very first time you met me?" I asked.

"Gosh I can't remember that? Can you?" asked Bill.

"No, it's not exactly imprinted in my memory. I remember we met sometime in Middle School." I replied.

"Yeah we use to hang out in the guidance room and work on the computers, remember?" Bill continued

"Yeah I taught you Basic programming."

"Yeah, remember the For Next Loops?"

"Sure,"

"Of course you didn't really get to know me till senior year. Then we had Hoffman and had to do those stupid English reports."

"The ones on video, correct?"

"Yeah. (giggle) remember when she gave us the second report. Both Matt and I both wanted to do another video with you, so we both automatically turned towards you cause we wanted to be in your group."

"Yeah, sure I remember it."

"You better, unless you are losing your mind."

"Oh you can say that."

Walking back with Mike and Alan back from class they were talking and Mike was making Alan laugh like crazy. As we walked they seemed to notice I was quiet more than usual as I was inside my head with my thoughts.

"Gump you okay?" asked Alan.

"You really have been under something lately," said Mike.

Suddenly I felt a sharp pain in my head and a cold chill ran down my back. I turned around to see my supposed enemy staring at me from down the sidewalk path.

"What the hell!" I said.

"Like getting back stabbed?" Scott shouted.

"What the hell is your manfunction?" I said.

He began walking towards me, and I began to get concerns as I knew I was defenseless in this weak, primitive body. However, I needed to stand my ground

"We were good friends for almost a year, I know you better than anyone else on this campus! And now you won't even let me in your apartment," Scott yelled.

"Well according to the facts, you have threatened my life several times. I don't--"

"Look I'll stay in Mike's room. I won't even bother you."

"You have said that many times before, and time and time again you have bothered and--"

"NO FUCKER! Goddamn! You're so shallow minded! I never lied to you! You can't give me one good reason or time when I lied can you?"

"Well, actually--"

"See! You can't remember when I lied to you cause I never DID! I thought of you as a brother--"

"A brother would never tell me I was going to hell, and if I didn't agree with your opinion, you would--"

This conversation was getting heated fast, but I felt the need to not put up with the abuse from this supposed hot-head.

"Dammit, you were wrong! Can't you see that! You can't admit that you're wrong!" Scott continued.

"I can't?! You were the one--" I tried to continued.

"Mike, did I ever lie to him? Did I ever--"

"DON'T even try to bring him into this conversation. This is between you and me!"

"No, it concerns everyone! You have no concern for others."

"I wasn't the one who took my stuff without asking. I didn't take YOUR food! I didn't steal from you! And I always PAID YOU BACK!"

"Bullshit!"

"Name one time,"

"I can't--"

"Look, I stayed up with you that one night, when you were crying--"

"I was crying cause you were yelling at me, cause if I didn't believe in what you believed, I was an asshole. I wasn't the one who called me an insensitive asshole. I never used you!"

"When did I ever used you? I always asked to do stuff!"

"You always lied! And I did much more for you than you ever did for me."

"Goddammit! I helped you in numerous ways, more than I could count. I defended you--"

"You made fun of me behind my back! You my secrets!"

"Only because you said it was okay!"

"I don't recall that!"

"Well your memory sucks! How can you do this to me! You are the one who is crazy and that all my stuff was shit!"

"I may have been hard at times, but everyone has their own tastes. But I didn't appreciate you taking over my stereo, or abusing me during wrestling, or using my stuff, damaging my stuff, my god you putting BB's through my WALL! It doesn't take much to have some concern for my personal stuff! A friend would never do that."

"Mike did it too! And we got a good laugh, and I usually felt bad--"

"No Scott, I don't believe you any more. I once did, but you're putting on the biggest act of your life!"

"BUT MIKE DID IT TOO!"

"IF MIKE JUMPED OFF THE BRIDGE WOULD YOU!"

"GODDAMMIT! You're never going to keep your friends! You always lie and backstab them!"

By this time I was fed up with him. His arguments apparently always got me nowhere, and he never gave up till he was told he was right. My logs although insufficient, had never prepared me for this, this I couldn't give him any logical reasoning or proof. Scott was rude, interrupted every train of thought I had, and was lying once again to my face. Mike backed off and remained silent cause he was still somewhat a friend with the jerk. Mike remained neutral. However Alan attempted to speak, and Scott responded harshly.

"Butt the fuck out!"

Now I didn't mind if people picked on me, and I know the Anthony of this world felt the same, but when people were rude to anyone but me, my friends or family, I got really MAD.

"LISTEN YOU JERK! AND LISTEN ONCE CAUSE I'M NOT GOING TO SAY IT AGAIN! YOU ARE THE BIGGEST ASSHOLE IN THE WORLD! YOU DEFINE ASSHOLE! YOU USE PEOPLE! YOU ABUSE PEOPLE! YOU PLAY WITH THEIR EMOTIONS SO YOU CAN GET AHEAD OF THEM. YOU SAY YOU CARE, BUT YOU REALLY DON'T! IT IS ALL A SHOW!" I yelled at his face.

"WHY YOU!"

By now everyone on campus has stopped and turned around.

"YOU'RE NOT GOING TO GET ANYWHERE IN LIFE! WHY CAUSE YOUR NEVER GOING TO GET PAST BEING ASSHOLE! YOU WILL GO FROM JOB TO JOB, FRIEND TO FRIEND AND THINK YOU ARE RIGHT! IN THE END YOU'LL BE SAD AND LONELY AND YOU'LL WONDER WHY! Well, maybe you should take a good look in the mirror!"

I turned around to walk away. Suddenly I heard his jacket unzip and fear ran through my body. I turned around to see him pull out a gun!

"Go to hell," he said.

Mike and Alan both grabbed me and hit the ground, but it was too late, something already had hit my leg.

"POLICE!" I cried. Suddenly everyone on campus stopped and I heard a scream.

I heard the reloading of the gun. My leg hurt like a bitch, but I didn't let it get to me. I got up and ran towards him. He grabbed me and threw me across the pavement. I landed face first on the pavement. My skin began to burn and tear across the harsh surface and tears ran down my eyes.

Rolling over on my stomach I saw Alan come towards Scott. My logs said Scott he knew karate, and I saw Scott strike rapidly at Alan. The spot he was aiming for could kill a man on contact. However Scott missed and Alan fell backwards onto the ground.

I cried out in pain. I began to crawl slowly trying to get somewhere. I then heard a shout for a security guard.

"YOU! DROP IT!"

Scott grabbed his gun and ran the security guard took off in chase. Another security guard, came up to me.

"My god, what happened fella?" said the guard.

He helped me up and I felt the fear slowly receded. Mike and Alan came up to me.

Then I saw it. For an instant, my heart stopped, and my mind went blank. The sounds of everyone around me disappeared, and I heard only faint mumble. I shrugged off everyone and began to limp in the direction of the little yellow car. No car in the world was this color, only one I had made, the Zapbot of the name Speedy.

I approached the car and began to run my hands over the huge hubcaps. No, this couldn't be real. It had to be him. Softly I spoke.

"Speedy, speedy! It's me!"

The car said nothing, but I felt, ever so softly a stir deep within the car. After that I knew, it had to be him.

"Speedy! SPEEDY! It's me!"

Once again only a stir, as if he didn't want to be discovered.

"Dammit Speedy, you gotta help me! I don't belong here!"

Mike, and Alan had now come up to me. They grabbed a hold of me, but I fought them and the pain off.

"Please Speedy!" I said.

"Gump, are you okay?" Mike asked.

I had to force him to respond. I realized that there was probably a rule saying that you can't interfere with human society. In this reality, maybe the Zapbots had to remain a secret; thus transformation was not only transportation, but also disguise. Maybe they were keeping watch over the humans, but they just couldn't make their presence known.

There was one way to make sure I wasn't losing it. All Zapbots had a set of special prefix codes. These codes were developed so that no one Zapbot could turn against his allies, and if anything went wrong with them, I could always gain control again.

I tried the door but it was locked. I hoped and prayed although this was a different reality, some things were still the same. Softly I spoke.

"Code Section: One...Zero...Two...Nine...Three...Eight...Four...
Seven... Five...Six..."

Suddenly the doors popped open. I went inside and pressed the start button. The doors closed and I took a hold of the wheel and began to drive. In the background I heard the cries of my friends and a small voice. A voice I knew all too well.

"What the bolt??"

I began to drive the car. I passed by my friends and took off into the street, and went on the highway.

As we hit the highway, I slowly tied a tourniquet around my leg to stop the bleeding from the bullet as it was starting to get over the floor of the beetle.

"Look I know you're there Speedy, and I have control so you might as well give up!"

"I don't know who you are, or how you knew my prefix code—" said the car.

"Oh God! It is you!" tears ran down my cheeks for the voice that sounded like home.

"But you will be erased!"

"Look Speedy! You gotta trust me! I don't belong in this world. I belong in another reality. You gotta help me get back there!"

"You're crazy kid!"

"DAMMIT! How else would I know your prefix code! I know the one to make you transform too! You gotta take me to Misslemax!"

"Misslemax? What's Misslemax?"

"Our city?"

"You mean Duplaflex? How the heck?"

Of course, Misslemax was developed especially for me so it might not exist here.

"Look please help me! If I'm wrong you can kill me! If I'm right everything will be put straight! PLEASE! Give me your word, cause a Zapbot always keeps his word."

Suddenly the car began to get calm and I knew I hit his spot.

"Look kid, I'll do what ever I can. Just please don't reveal me!"

"Promise!"

"I promise!"

"Good, as soon as were out of the city limits, take off for Duplaflex! I need to talk to Botimus."

Hope began once again...

Chapter 6

Things seemed so different, but yet familiar. If the theory of multiple realities was correct, depending on the jump I made, the change could be great or small. It had to be a small jump, for most of my memories were correct up to that certain date, and through some strange reason my Zapbots still existed.

The walls were pretty much the same, except for a few decorations, it pretty much felt like home.

Some Zapbots I made were still there, and some were new faces. But all faces were staring at me. There was no human support on Duplaflex, no human levels, so they set me down on the computer console.

"Speedy! How the gigabit did you allow this to happen?" cried Ultra Attack.

"I told you! He knew my prefix code!"

I was sitting on the cold computer table on the main bridge of Duplaflex. All of my Zapbots that I recognized gathered around me.

"He knew your prefix code?" asked Ultra Attack.

A small gasp came from the crowd. I sat quietly, not to stir any attention. Obviously they knew nothing about me. To them I was only an ordinary human, another small insignificant being on the planet below.

"That's impossible!" cried Dodge.

Softly I spoke,

"Code Section: One... Zero... Two... Nine... Three... Eight... Four... Seven... Five... Five..." I said.

With that Dodge jerked back and transformed into his car mode. A louder gasp came from the robotic crowd.

"WHAT THE.... HOW!" Dodge cried.

"I say we erase his memory!" cried Scan.

"I think we might have to terminate him," replied Ultra Attack.

"NO!" came the voice from the back room. I saw Botimus walk into the room.

"He is a human, we are not allowed to kill them," Botimus replied.

"But he's a threat to us! He knows about us!" replied Speedy.

Botimus strolled up and looked sternly at Speedy. Everyone hushed.

"We will not destroy the life forms we were made to protect! Besides, we're programmed not to!"

"True!"

Botimus bent down to me. Even though this was a different world, I still felt his warm compassion.

"Who are you?" he asked.

"I am Ambassador Anselmo, from the Federation of Zapbots, however, not the Zapbots of this reality or time!" I said.

"Ambassador?" asked Botimus.

"The highest form of government office," I replied.

"There is no such form of government here."

"I know, I don't belong here. Look it's a long story."

Suddenly Scan burst in and pointed his finger at me.

"We don't have time to listen to your lie. I think he's a spy!"

"Spy? From whom?" asked Botimus pushing Scan's hand aside.

"Look, if you let me explain it will make sense," I replied.

"Considering the fact he has our serial numbers and prefix codes in his head, I think we should give him our audio receptors," Botimus replied.

"He could kill us now if he wanted to!" cried Speedy.

"But he hasn't!" Botimus said. "Go ahead human Anthony."

"Thank you Botimus. It sounds weird but do you guys know of the theory of multiple realities?"

"Yes, of course. For every decision there is unlimited possibilities that can occur, and some believe they do occur in different planes of existence," said Scan sharply.

"Well for some strange reason, I have jumped realities. My memories have remained the same, but the world around me hasn't. In my reality, I built you guys and I lead the race. I don't know how, but somehow either history has been changed or I have jumped to a universe where, well you guys still exist, but I don't lead you."

"You built us?" cried Timetravel.

"Yes, a spaceship carrying the Matrix of leadership landed in my backyard several years ago. From it's help I reconstructed the race of Zapbots, after almost being totally destroyed. All I know is I woke up several days ago in a bed that wasn't mine."

"The Matrix was lost in space in an attempt to find its new owner," replied Botimus.

"Yes, the spaceship burned up in orbit right?"

"Correct."

"Well for some reason in this reality it didn't reach me, or the real Anthony, who's memories and life should be here. In my world it did. How you guys developed, and remain almost the same is beyond me."

"So the Zapbot race was destroyed?"

"The ancient Zapbots. Somehow they send the Matrix to me and I started a new generation."

Scan was laughing in the background.

"The history we know of is that we won the Great War and defeated the Junkicons. A small group of builders were sent to find new designs for the next generation of offspring. They scanned the planet Earth and copied the designs of the television shows."

"And so did I, to some extent! In fact everyone copied designs somewhere. So that's how we're so close in reality."

"It could be possible in another reality things could be much different."

"True."

"I don't believe this," said Scan, "Your believing him."

"Scan! Code Section: One... Two... Three... Four... Five... Six... Seven... Eight... Nine... Zero... Alpha."

With that Scan transformed into his computer mode and shut up.

"Only a builder would know someone's prefix number!" said Botimus.

"There has to be some relevance to his story!" replied Flier.

"But I have to get back to my reality! Run a neural positron scan on my brain! Where's Boaty, he can do it!"

Everyone gasped and fell silent. Flier ran up to me and knelt down sticking his huge face in my view.

"B..Boaty....How do you know if him?"

"He was one of my most trusted friends?" I replied.

"Boaty...died," said Flier.

Suddenly the idea struck me. I ran my hand over my face, and held back the tears. I knew this would always be a possibility, but I never wanted to bring it to the front of my mind.

"I'm sorry Flier, I'm so sorry, how did he die?"

"In battle, he saved us all."

"Boaty would."

Flier stood up and spoke directly to Botimus.

"He knows of Boaty. He's got to be telling the truth."

"Correct, lie detector tests I'm running now is confirming that," said Scan running a scan on me now, stuck in computer mode.

"Scan, can we get him back his reality? Or figure out how he got switched?" Botimus asked.

"Well if he got here, there must be a way to get back," Scan replied.

"Well do whatever you can to help him! All diplomatic courtesies are extended to this person."

"The prime directive says we shouldn't interfere with humans," said Speedy.

"He is not a human from our time, we must set things straight, If we do not act, things could get a lot worse. Scan, do what you can, meeting when your ready," replied Botimus.

Flier came up to me once again.

"I believe in you, I don't know why, but I do?" he said.

"You all are my creations, or at least to me you are. I cared for you guys, no matter what reality I'm in. You don't know how relieving it is to find you guys existing here!"

With that, Flier softly scooped me up into his hands and took me to his room to rest.

"Its amazing how everything is almost exactly how I know it, but yet some little things are the same. I don't think I made that big of a jump."

"Probably not, proceeding with scan," replied Scan.

"Are things better or worse here, then your reality?" asked Speedy.

"Some good, some bad. We're still at war with enemies, but Earth is peaceful, and we haven't had any major deaths now in the Zapbot world at our present time."

"So Boaty might still be alive!" cried Flier.

"Flier, no," I said.

"No?"

"I know what you're thinking. That Boaty, the Boaty I know is meant to stay in that reality and you are meant to stay here. If I try to bring either of you over, it would possibly screw everything up more."

"Yeah, but you don't miss him like I do!"

"No, I miss all my Zapbots. I don't belong here and neither does the other Anthony in my reality."

Scan walked over to me and ran a device over my bruised leg.

"True, but there might actually be a number of Anthony's in different realities. There may be more to here than meets the eye. Oh I removed your indentation of the primitive weapon, and your wound has healed." replied Scan.

"God, what the hell did this? Why is everything screwed up?" I asked.

"I believe I know why. Scan to Botimus, I'm ready."

Scan was walking around the conference room. I was kindly made a soft chair and sat in the middle of the gigantic table.

"I believe Anthony has jumped through a time disturbance in space. By doing so, everything has become distorted and he was displaced," said Scan.

"We knew that! How do we fix it?" asked Ultra Attack.

"If we find the exact same distortion in space, recreate the events and send Anthony through, everything should return to normal. All Anthonys should return to their proper place in their realities. Due to the fact this Anthony went through the distortion and mixed everything up, sending him back should fix everything."

"Okay, so how do we find this?" asked Botimus.

"Sir Anthony,"

"Ummm, I was called Master in my reality, but just call me Anthony here," I replied.

"Okay, what do you remember last before arriving in this reality?" asked Scan.

"Gosh, it's so hard to remember without my computer brain," (I explained that story prior to this meeting). "If someone could take me back to Earth, I made some logs, I can use them to help me."

"Speedy will take you back. Retrieve your logs and return here, and we'll try to set things straight," replied Botimus.

I stood up on the giant table, tears where in my eye.

"Thank you, I hope you guys continue to survive everywhere you go, or are!"

Chapter 7

1) Shortstop: Jon, can you send me a copy of my logs. I transferred them to computer and sent them to you? I'm leaving to go on the Zapbot station now.

2) Centepede: No way!

1) Shortstop: Yep!

2) Centepede: Yeah, but how?

1) Shortstop: Make a printout and place it on your front porch. One of my...or the Zapbots will pick it up.

2) Centepede: Okay, um what's going to happen now?

1) Shortstop: Well once everything is set straight, none of this will ever occur and all memories for everyone, except myself should return normal.

2) Centepede: What about your friends?

1) Shortstop: What about them? I can't do anything. I've interfered already with this reality. Soon you guys will remember nothing.

2) Centepede: Well that sucks a big dick! :(

1) Shortstop: Sorry buddy.

2) Centepede: It's understandable, well look me up in the other reality will ya.

1) Shortstop: I sure will! You take care too!

I walked into the room to try and get the last of my logs, and found Mike standing there with my parents. They all had a concern look on their face.

"Mom? Dad?, Mike? What are you doing here?" I asked.

Suddenly two police came around the corner.

"Son, you need our help," my dad said softly.

Suddenly I knew everything that was going on as my actions and behavior, unknown to them made me look like I had lost it.

The police grabbed me and I turn to run, but they held fast. The dragged me down the hallway out to the door.

I fought with all my might, but both policeman and my dad held me down.

I had to get out of here!

"Speedy! HELP!" I cried.

Out of nowhere a yellow car with no driver came cruising down the street. Everyone let go of me and hit the dirt. I ran around to Speedy and got in.

"Get me out of here!" I said.

"Can you guys take care of Scott for me?" I asked.

"Remember, we won't remember any occurrence of this either?" replied Scan.

"If I'm correct sir, if the events of these two realities are similar, Scott should not cause any damage to the other Anthony," said Flier.

"But what if he does?" I asked.

"I can, maybe set up a sub space transmission, so when we pass through the rift, everything will return to normal but we will receive data concerning what happened," said Scan.

"So basically you'll receive a transcript of what happened when I passed through the rupture?"

"Correct, we may not believe it at first, but once the message comes in, we will receive it and interpret it. This will tell us to protect the other Anthony or send Scott to prison."

"Well, we have to make this work, cause my life is pretty much messed up in this reality right now," I said.

"Don't worry, I have found the space rupture in nearby space. If we travel through it with you passing at the exact spot, everything should return to normal and the rupture should seal back up," Scan replied.

Duplaflex flew out of Earth's orbit and warped into space. The stars streaked by as I watched from my tiny seat on Botimus's chair knowing this was the moment.

Chapter 8

Space was flying by us at an incredible speed. Scan told me to sit on the center of Botimus's desk, and doing so he would calculate the exact coordinates in space for me to hit.

"Approximate time to rupture?" asked Botimus.

"Two minutes, and thirty seconds," replied Scan.

"I'm picking up the rupture on my scanners. It's approximately five feet in diameter," replied Ultra Attack.

"Wait, I'm 5'6"," I cried.

"Understood, I have calculated for that and adjusted our course so you'll fly in without any problems," replied Scan.

Suddenly the bridge of Duplaflex began to shake a bit.

"I'm picking up sub space distortions all around. Attempting to maneuver around them, hold on," replied Scan.

Everyone held on to his or her chairs and the bridge bounded back and forth through space.

"Raise shields," Botimus ordered.

"Shields are not responding, too much special interference," replied Flier.

"Scan can you compensate?" asked Botimus.

"Attempting to, but I don't know how much our structure integrity fields can hold?" replied Flier.

"Can we accomplish this?" Botimus asked turning to Scan.

"I believe so, but it's going to be close. There's no going back now!" replied Scan.

The ship flew into a starry field and the space around the ship began to shift and swirl.

Suddenly my body began to tingle. I felt a strong sensation growing inside of me. I felt like my old self was reaching back towards me in this reality.

"STRUCTURAL SHIELDS COLLAPSING!" cried Scan.

"Hightone, transmit the message!" ordered Botimus.

"We can't hold on any longer! THAT'S IT!" cried Flier.

A huge burst of light hit me, as white light and static filled my view. I was overloaded with an array of senses. I felt as if my body wasn't even tangible, as if the outer boundaries of my skin weren't even there, and were some large glob of mass.

The white light grew brighter and brighter and then suddenly....

I popped out of bed sweating; I was breathing heavier than I ever was before.

I looked around as my vision cleared. I saw the outline of a planet, and then as I drew back I saw the structure of a window. A window frame I had seen before. Green, with a slanted rectangle towards the ceiling structure. I saw the tilted windows hitting the green tinted ceiling with the track lighting. I saw the blue sheet on my bed. To my left was a short glass S-Shaped curved stand. Behind it was several bookshelves indented into the wall. Across the room was a desk with a monitor screen (now blank) and a door to a closet. The blue carpet smelled like the musky peach smell. The green walls and yellow bulbs gave it a homely feeling.



I got up and ran out of the room. The doors opened and closed with a swish. I ran down the hallway and out a door to the left. I ran across the cold floor of the garage and ran into the turbo lift.

"Deck 15," I said.

The turbo lift flew down towards the bottom level. I stepped out of the turbo lift and ran across the hallway towards the opposite door.



The door opened and I stepped into the human observation deck of the bridge of Misslemax.

Slowly I walked towards the window and looked down. My eyes were wide open, my heart pounding. I saw my Zapbots; sitting at their stations, watching charts, walking to and back from their chairs.

"YES!" I cried.

I pressed the call button.

"Boaty, are you there?"

It was a long pause, for a second I was afraid I hadn't made it. Then I heard the soft calm voice respond and I saw his wide silver body step into view, from out under the observation deck.

"Yes Master, what's the problem?"

"Nothing, Nothing at all. Um... divert course away from here please."

"...and so I ended up back here. Thankfully," I replied.

"Quite an impressive adventure Master," said Botimus.

"Believe it or not," I said.

"Well, I guess there is not much else we can do about it," replied Flier.

"I want our sensors realigned to detect these sub space distortions," I replied.

"It is a shame that we don't retain any memory of the Anthony that switched in our reality," said Botimus.

"My guess is he would be so shocked of the sudden change he would probably have an emotional breakdown and freeze on the floor," replied Boaty.

"Possible, but everything is back to normal. The only people that know about what happened are the other Zapbots and us. I just hope the message got through to them. I don't want that Scott kid bothering the other Anthony."

"How come we weren't the ones who figure out what was going wrong and fix it in this reality?" asked Speedy.

"You probably did, but you couldn't do anything. I was the one, who entered the rupture and messed everything up, so needless to say, I had to fix it. We're fortunate we existed in another reality," replied Boaty.

"Of all the strange things that can happen in this Universe, all of this did, and lucky resolved itself. This has really opened up, at least to me the realization that we are out here...explorers in space, and that things are not what they always seem. Anyhow, meeting dismissed," I finished.

Everyone got up to leave, Boaty walked behind my chair and I tapped him to stay.

Everyone left and the room only contained Boaty and myself in my Shortstop X-O suit.

"How does it feel to be in your old body again, Master?" asked Boaty.

"Weird, I feel a bit more powerful, but stiff and rigid. I got use to my old body again. I kind of miss it."

"Understandable."

"Boaty, when I had heard you had... died. It made me think a lot. Being in a different reality made me appreciate what I have accomplished here. It was also an experience... I shall never forget. For a brief period of time, I knew what the world would be like without you guys. It also made me see that any decision I make here could mean life or death for anyone I know."

"Master, you as well as I know, the future is sometimes unavoidable, and life is almost predestined for us."

"For some yes, but you can still cheat life sometimes. Death is like a tiger, crawling, haunting you. You might not be able to beat it, but you can slow it down."

"Well Master, remember you were once dead yourself."

"Well I guess maybe you can cheat death. I just pray you never have to go through what I did."

"I doubt it Master, for your care is too great of have anything seriously bad happen to us."

"Don't say that Boaty, for that is illogical presumption."

"True, but being logical all the time can bit a bit..uh boring."

With that I walked over to him and hugged him, and just held my robotic friend for the longest time.

"I stopped talking to you?" asked Matt.

"It was rather obscure in my logs, but for some reason you just forgot me," I replied pouring my coffee.

"I would never do that to you!"

I sat down and held the warm coffee in my hands. I looked straight at his face, and although I knew he was sincere, I had experienced so much in the other reality, it just made me think.

"Look, realities are our choices we made. It is conceivable that you did, at one time or another, get mad at me, or one of us did something to offend the other person."

"I'm sorry."

"Don't be sorry, just realize we may have conflicts. You've become my friend recently. Both you and David and Jeremy, have just begun to explore my Zapbot world, you'll NEVER know WHAT'S going to happen."

"That Scott guy sure sounded like an asshole!"

"Actually, he reminded me of you!"

"Oh thanks!" he said smiling.

I slowly drank my coffee and looked out the window towards the stars.

"So what are you going to do now?" Matt asked.

"I have a lot of people to meet, again, and some business to take care of."

Chapter 9

2) Centepeede: Well I managed to kick out that annoying user, but it seems they keep wanted to just come on and play games, or leech.

1) Corellian: Well I don't know what we can really do. If we impose post-call rations, no one will ever call.

3) Marauder: I say we try contacting the Zapbot government for funds.

1) Corellian: You mean via the Zapbot-net?

2) Centepeede: I've tried that, they only allow extra funds to be distributed for educational purposes. I bet the leader doesn't even know how to run his own computer. Hey someone new is logging on.

4) [Shortstop] has entered the chat room.

2) Centepeede: That name sounds familiar... Where have I heard that before?

4) Shortstop: Hi Jon, JP and Josh. You don't know me, but I know you.

2) Centepeede: What the hell?

1) Corellian: What?

3) Marauder: ?????

4) Shortstop: It's a long story.... my friends.

It felt good to be back in my Shortstop body as I strolled into the hanger from the hallway. My Zapbots were awaiting my presence. Botimus, Boaty, Flier, Speedy, Hightone, Carry-On, and Pick-Up.

"Okay, here is the game plan. Boaty, Hightone and I will inspect my two college friends Mike and Alan, and see if Scott is as deviant in this reality as in the former. Botimus, you and Speedy will take Matt to gather my two high-school friends Matt Rogish and Bill Thomas, and escort them back here. Carry-On and Pick-Up will pick up my Bulletin Board friends."

"Zapbots, transform!" ordered Botimus.

My Zapbots all transformed into their vehicle space modes.

"Start your thrusters!" he replied as we all flew out of the space dock hanger of Misslemax to Earth below. Little did we know in the space around us hung something cloaked and waiting.

"I do not believe this! Just think, while we were talking to Karen, my car was being jacked up!" said Alan as he was walking down the the hallway of the three bedroom apartment.

"This is BUlllllShitt!" replied Mike trying to console his roommate.

The two had just come back from someone driving them back to the apartment as the college trio began to figure out how to get Alan's care out of the impound lot.

A loud shave and a haircut knock was heard on the door, confused my soon to be friends opened the door.

"Hi, can we help you?" asked Mike Barnard staring at me.

"Can you help me? You don't know who I am?" I replied.

"You do look familiar, like I've seen you on TV somewhere," replied Mike.

"Forest Gump?" said Alan.

"I am, Ambassador Anselmo, of the United Federal of Zapbots."

"Zapbots?" both of my friends said at the same time.

"Okay!" said Alan.

"Oh my Klan!" said Mike.

"You have been selected, based on your wholesome nature to explore the Zapbot base Misslemex, and well... be my friends if you choose to," I replied.

"Are you crazy or something?" asked Mike.

"Oh geez, look, it's a long story. Would you guys like to get something to eat?"

"We can't his car has been towed."

"Towed?" I inquired.

"Yes Towed, and I don't have the credits to get it back!" replied Alan.

"Hold on checking." I said going through my computer bank. Up came a graphical display in front of my eyes of the new laws passed recently under Columbus.

"Columbus safety law 123.4 section States no car may be towed unless proper notification has been made to the owner, ...and it has to be there for more than fifteen minutes," I said.

"Yeah, we were only there for about ten!" responded Alan.

"Hmm, let's go see if we can take care of this." I replied.

"Approaching the city of Cleveland.... Passing Cleveland, descending into Russell," replied Botimus.

"Has Master contacted these people yet?" asked Matt sitting inside Botimus Prime's cab. The crew descending onto the small part of my hometown where I used to live and the adventure began.

"I believe not, I think he wants it to be a surprise," replied Botimus.

"I think they'll be more than surprised," replied Speedy.

"I don't recall these guys from school," said Matt.

"Okay, my sensors indicate the humanoids we're looking for are in close proximity. It appears they are working in a tall red structure containing many horses," replied Botimus.

"It's called a barn," said Matt laughing.

My Zapbots set down on the roadway and pulled into the driveway of my old friend Bill house.

"Bill, who's that pulling up now?" asked Bill's mom.

"I dunno, Billy are you expecting anybody?" asked Bill's step dad.

Bill Thomas and Matthew Rogish came around the corner of the barn. They began to walk up to the vehicle. My friend Matt Eggbert jumped out of Botimus.

"Hi, greetings from the Zapbots," Matt said.

With that my Zapbots transformed.

"Holy...Oh my...My...Jesus!" said Bill.

"Hey you're one of those Zapbot thingies!" said Matt Rogish.

"Well, I'd never been called a thingie before!" snapped Speedy.

"Oh Speedy don't be such a geek!" said Matt Eggbert.

"Pulling into Rocky River orbit," replied Carry-On as his brother descended from the skies to the small town on the west side of Cleveland Ohio.

"Bro, I'm picked up a strange distortion in a localized sector," replied Pick-Up.

"Oh, you're scanners just need adjusting." complained Carry-On.

Out of the blue, laser shots were fired and just missed hitting the two Zapbots.

"CARRY! GONGOS!" cried Pick-Up as he transformed and looked behind his brother.
"What? On Earth, that's impossible!"
Suddenly a laser blast hit Carry-On causing massive damage to his engines.
"I've been hit!" he cried as plummeted towards the Earth below. Pick-Up quickly went down to rescue brother.

"So, the famous Anthony Anselmo wants to meet us?" asked Bill.
"Yep, you guys and you guys only," replied Matt E.
Suddenly Botimus and Speedy both received an incoming transmission.
"Botimus.... Gongos! We're under attack?" cried Pick-Up on Botimus's call speakers.
"What? Is he joking?" cried Speedy, "Gongos can't reach Earth with our defenses!"
"Well if its a joke or not, we are needed! Let's go!" replied Botimus.
Speedy and Botimus transformed and Matt E. got inside Botimus.
"Master Matt, you should stay here,"
"Yeah right, I'm a trainee, and I can take care of myself, let's go!" he ordered as the crew drove out of the area and converted to aerial mode, leaving my high-school buddies in wonder.

"Slywing has returned Master dude," said Hightone.
"SQUAWK SQUAWK!" cried Slywing that flew down from the sky and perched on Hightone's shoulder.
"He says 'Scott is in a mental institution at this time'," stated Hightone.
"Cool, one less problem to deal with," I replied.
Slywing flew down from Hightone and landed on my arm. I walked with Mike and Alan into the towing department.
"We have an illegal towing here, my friend," I cried to the attendant..
"Yeah right buddy, Your robots don't scare me!" said the big fat guy sitting behind the desk. The room was filled with the smoke from his cigar and didn't help with the ugly person sitting in it.
I grabbed the man and pulled his fat carcass from his chair and across the desk.
"I have a recorded tape from this bird on here. I also have a file of several other towing violations. I suggest you comply, or your business might end up being shut down, buddy!" I said.
"Okay, Okay, fine, just please don't hurt me!" argued the blighted individual.
"Um Master, is this wise?" said Hightone. "The Zapbots really don't need a lawsuit, it would like be bad for our image."
"You forget Hightone, I have the best lawyers money can buy!"
In the mist of my interrogation, suddenly my com radio echoed a distress call.
"Master, we have a code red in the Rocky River sector of Ohio," replied Botimus.
"What? I'll be right there!" I responded putting the man back in his seat.
I grabbed my friends and flew out of the office.
"Boaty, grab his car and lets go!" I cried. .
Boaty and Hightone flew over the fence and grabbed Alan's car giving the vehicle back to the two individuals as we took off for the west side of Cleveland.

"Approaching the area," radioed Botimus.
"Where are they?" asked Speedy.
Botimus and Speedy landed in the main street of Rocky River as the place was deserted. There was not a single person in sight.

Suddenly a little boy came running up to the cars. Botimus and Speedy transformed and Matt was set down upon the ground.

The boy was about seventeen years of age, yet he looked a bit more mature for that. He spoke with a deep voice, and was talking ecstatically.

"R...Robots are over there!" he cried.

My Zapbots, Matt and the kid ran over towards the side of the local mini-mart. There by the side of the building, were Pick-Up and Carry-On lying with laser blasts in their sides.

Oh my gigabit, what happened?" asked Botimus.

"Look out!" cried the boy. Botimus, Hightone and Speedy turned around to see a Gongo flying above them.

Botimus grabbed the two humans and dropped and rolled, as he made it just under a split second before the Gongo fired. Speedy jumped underneath the overhang of the building.

"Speedy to Misslemax! Help! We need backup!" Speedy radioed.

Botimus let go of Matt E. and the boy and motioned to them to take cover. He got up and formed his laser gun.

The Gongo came flying up over the team. Botimus opened fire and the Gongo went flying backwards crash landing in a bunch of nearby trees.

"I don't know how they got here, but I'm getting sick of them very fast!" cried Botimus.

At this time Boaty and myself came flying up to the scene from afar. I saw him and Speedy on the ground below next to the mini-mart building. Carry-On and Pick-Up were lying on the ground disabled.

"Botimus, status?" I asked over radio.

"For some unknown reason a Gongo has gotten through to Earth," he replied waving to us from the ground.

"Make that Gongs, plural," said Boaty pointing to the sky. As I looked over the horizon, about twenty Gongs were approaching the city.

I landed next to Speedy, Carry-On, and Pick-Up.

"Misslemax, we need reinforcements and we need them now!" I radioed back home.

I interfaced to my Shortstop mode and ran out towards Botimus and Hightone.

"Hold them off until help gets here. Boaty, take our wounded up to Misslemax!" I ordered pointing at our two Zapbot friends. Just as I finished weapon fire hit the mini-mart with rubble falling upon them burying them whole.

"SHIT!" I said. I fired at the Gongo and missed. He returned fire and hit me, and then Hightone. Hightone flew back and crashed into the building himself. Botimus caught me and helped me up.

We looked up and saw Gongs surrounded us. I stood back to back with Botimus.

"Two to twenty, seems pretty fair to me eh Botimus?"

"Oh just more exercise, (as the humans would say)," replied Botimus. I looked back to see the others trapped underneath the rubble of the building.

Suddenly, firepower came out from nowhere and hit the Gongs, and they dispersed like ants. Over the horizon I saw a dark shadow encase the city, and then I saw the body of Misslemax.

Out from the hanger came the spirit of my Zapbots, Soar, Sand, Dodge, Iron, Terrian, Tiremarks, Tiretracks, Poppin, Repairs, and Pliers all few out and began to attack the Gongs.

Likewise firepower came from Misslemax being run by Ultra Attack, and Scan.

Botimus and I began our counter attack, opening fire at the Gongs as they continued to scatter trying to recover from the immediate onslaught of Zapbot abilities.

"I want them captured!" I ordered.

My Zapbots proceeded to go about, as the Gongs fled for their lives. But they were no match for my Zapbots' firepower and flying abilities, as they swung around and encased them in small force fields.

A feeling of relief and superiority returned to me again. At the same time I was pissed off that this could happen. We had force fields; stations and even fixed the security flaws in them the first time the Gongs broke through. Yet, here they were attacking us again.

Suddenly I saw a small boy run up to me.

"Jon?" I asked bending down to his level.

"Please, help, he's trapped!" Jon cried.

"Who?" I asked.

I looked towards the Mini-mart. Boaty had dragged himself and the others out. Suddenly I realized somewhere. Where was Matt?

I switched back into my X-O suit form and ran towards the Mini-mart. I crashed through the glass door and saw a pile of rubble, left by the Gongo; I ran with my heart beating and came around the corner of the aisle. I saw a hand, a soft young hand underneath the rubble.

I dug through the rubble with all my speed and might. I pulled his frail body from the rubble. I pulled him close to my body. I tilted his head towards me. I did a scan on his body, and then all the fear, all the pain, all the tension was gone.

"No... no.. not you.."

Chapter 10

"Master's Personal Log, Stardate 1995.271. Matthew Eggbert my best friend has left me. In the process of trying to find new friends I had lost my closest one. My heart has turned to a cold, numb piece of stone as I feel alone, and scared once again. It seems in any reality, I would lose him sooner or later. What hurt me the most was the fact that I never got the chance to say goodbye.

"Yesterday was probably the saddest day in my life. Four days ago we brought my dead friend's body to Earth for his funeral. I took it directly to the wake hall and left, for I just couldn't stay. I came back later and tried to talk with his parents, but they met me at the door to the room where Matt's body lay. He yelled at me and screamed.

"'Keep your fucking robots away from my family!' cried his father. I tried to explain what happened to him, but he insisted that with our quote, unquote advanced technology I could have saved his life no matter what the circumstance was. In my weakened emotional status, I couldn't fight back, so I left again.

"On the day of the funeral, I went to the church, but made sure I was a shadow in the background of the darkly lit arena. The media had also caught wind of this and walked like predators. Headlines read 'Best friend of Zapbot Leader dies! Are we truly protected?'.

"After church I followed the cars to the cemetery and watched from a distance on a high hill. I could still hear everything, even without my X-O suit's powers. After the ceremony, everyone left. I watched as they lay the coffin into the ground and covered it up with dirt.

"I always knew he would go first. In my logs, in both realities, I wrote this. Even the days before my Zapbots I knew, for some strange reason I would lose him sooner or later. I swore to him I would protect him, I said my Zapbots would never allow anything to happen to him, and then something did.

"The last few days, with what we talked about, still rang in my head. I have locked my other friends, new and old in their Misslemax rooms because I am so scared that I will lose them too. It was my carelessness, my own fault that his death occurred. I was mad at myself, I was also mad at the ancient Zapbots! Why? Why did they choose me? Yet I know, whether I was chosen or not, found or not, in any case, or any reality I would sooner or later have to lose all my friends, or die again myself. I keep catching myself, saying 'If I were still in school, I'd still be nerd but have Matt' and yet from what has just happened with me I know that isn't true.

"I'm so scared that I will never be able to talk to his parents about this. I feel they should know, but his sister cried when she saw me, his mother too and his dad almost punched me. For a family that I knew for so long and felt a part of, they now hate me! Because of what I've done, and yet I feel that is only to be expected, because they are humans.

"I haven't seen anyone. I refuse to answer my door, and I sit in my bed. I still continue to shower, shave, and sleep, but I barely eat. I usually am lying in my bed crying, staring at the ceiling, hearing the ship moving in space. I am only recording this now cause I don't want to forget all that has happened, and I need some way to vent this emotion.

"I had talked with Botimus previous to all of this. He felt he was the one to blame. I assured him the Matt being a Zapbot trainee knew the risks and had the privilege to go along. What happened afterwards was what war does. It kills. I assured Botimus, if anybody was at fault, it was I, for not finishing Matt's X-O suit, and not finishing his training.

"I'm surprised Boaty hasn't beeped me, no wait a minute, no I'm not. If anyone understand me more it's Boaty. He knows when I'm ready, I'll come out, but will I ever be ready again?"

"Computer, place this log in priority zero. Unavailable to access for anyone, except myself for now."

I slowly turned off the computer console after finishing my log. I got up and walked to the kitchen. As I made myself a glass of tea from the processing images of Matt's, flashed back in my mind. I had video copies from my X-O suit recordings, almost every minute of every day I spent with him. I wanted to give his parents a copy, but for the time that was impossible.

His name will go down in Zapbot history. He helped me more than he could ever know. As I passed by a mirror, I saw my eyes were red from crying. My body was weak for I hadn't even eaten for the day.

Suddenly the door to my room opened. I looked surprised. I locked it? How could anyone...then I saw my friends David stroll in, then Jeremy, then Matt R, Bill, Mike B. Alan, ...all my friends! I saw behind them Click and Tiny standing by the door with some tools, possibly explaining this rude entrance.

"Anthony," said David, "At times when you needed a friend you lock yourself away."

I looked at them, and then for the first time in a few days, I smiled.

Chapter 11

As Botimus and the others tended to our Gongo problem, I started on a self-served mission. I began to study every medical book, download ever file on human existence. I studied the human body like never before, exploring every organ, and ever atom. As I consulted with my Zapbot friends. Scan, Vebox, Click, Superrobot, Tiny and Experiment all helped me. In the end I believed we would accomplish something no one else has done.

I was working on the project from my Zapbot ready room, in Shortstop mode. I heard the call speakers for the door beep and ushered the familiar "Enter..."

Boaty came in and strolled up to my desk.

"Master, I believe we have found the answer to our security breach," he replied.

"Yes?"

"The Gongos are moving through the inner dimension. The fourth dimension, beyond time and space."

"How can they do that?"

"It's rather complex, but needless to say they have found a way to transfer their bodies to anywhere in the Universe. Our shields are useless to their cause."

"Oh wonderful? Is there any good news?"

"In fact there is, this process slowly destroys their cellular tissue. After a few trips, they can no longer do it without any injury. Our spy's resources have said they have discontinued this method of attack because of the uncertain danger. Also, it very hard to predict the location they can jump to, so they have supposedly lost a large group of their army all ready."

"So have they stopped with this way of travel yet?"

"I believe so, however, this just goes to show that we need to constantly maintain defenses everywhere we are, no matter how protected we think we have an area. Botimus has already started deploying construction for various emergency stations around our sectors."

"Well done Boaty."

He got up to go and then proceeded to turn around and stare at me.

"Yes?" I asked looking at my friend.

"I have yet to give you my condolences for the death of your friend. I am also sorry for the problems that have arose from this and the conflict between you and his family."

"We are all susceptible to death Boaty, we must all realize that."

"Could the Matrix of leadership do nothing to help you Master?"

"The Matrix, is not in the position to play with life and death. At least nothing of that sort to my knowledge so far. When the Matrix acts I will know, and it make sense. I do not believe Matt was made to live beyond his destined time."

"Very unfortunate Master,"

"Yes, it is my friend."

"Anthony...", I heard. I looked around to find myself in a cloudy area. Flying and from the way I moved I could tell I was in a dream. However, it was unlike any dream I ever had before.

"Anthony..." I heard again. I saw a figure in the distance again. As my body floated closer I could see, it was MATT! Was my mind making this dream up with emotions, or was Matt really trying to contact me?

"MATT! Where are you?"

"I am with you and all who I love!" he replied in his familiar voice.

"Matt, I'm so sorry!"

"There is nothing to be sorry about. I am always with you?"

"How do I know this is not just a dream?"

"Boaty will beep you and wake you any second now."

"Matt..."

He reached out and hugged me. I felt the closeness of his body.

The beeps rang and Boaty's voice awoke me from my deep sleep as I slowly opened my eyes to see my familiar room.

"Dammit!" I said.

"Master...?" replied Boaty inquisitively.

"Yes, Boaty..." I said laughing, and I could not stop laughing for some reason.

"Master's Log Supplemental... Slowly and steadily things are returning, back to normal status at Misslemax. My newfound friends are starting to take up my time, and I am as busy as ever. Still, there is a voice missing from the hallways. The voice I remember, and will keep with me no matter where I go.

I went to the cemetery and found Matt's Headstone. I put the flowers down and stood staring at it for several minutes. As I knelt down and recited a poem wrote by the great Catullus. In my other reality I came across this poem. Supposedly my favorite teacher, my High School Latin teacher told this to me. I revised it to fit Matt and slowly spoke it to his grave.

*'Through many people and many seas we have traveled,
and now, I come to this sad resting place of yours,
to present you with the last gift of death,
and to address silent ashes in vain,
When, fortune has taken you away from me,
alas brother, unworthy of death, taken from me,
in the ancient custom of family and friends,
that has been passed down by generations,
receive much flowing of tears,
and forever my brother, goodbye and farewell.'*

I paused for a minute. The wind was blowing around me on the cloudy day. It was usually cloudy when I went to the cemetery. I slowly kissed the stone and transported back to Misslemax. I knew this was only the beginning, and life will never, never be the same again.

"Master's Log, closed. Priority One."

The End.