

Preface

This story started from an extremely vivid dream I had one evening back in my younger days and thus became a running theme of the Zapbots with me saving or rescuing various boys/men/friends from danger. This is the introduction of Mike Quartz who will become a pivotal character in these stories going forward as you shall soon see.

Some of the concepts here will require a bit of a stretch of imagination but I would implore you to just go with it.

Once again similar to Ironman stuff, way before I even knew of who Ironman was.

Anthony S. Anselmo II

The Boys Town

Part 1

By Anthony Anselmo

Chapter 1

"LOOK OUT!" I yelled.

Botimus quickly leaped out of the laser blast's way as rock debris flew everywhere. I put my hand up to stop the incoming rocks and then stuck my head up, once again over the ledge.

They were moving closer, but we still had the advantage. I continued to fire at the approaching Gongs, knocking some of them down just before I slid back into the ditch to conceal myself from getting hit.

My Zapbots flew all around my Shortstop body as some were flying in the air, others were in the trenches, and still others were running on the battle field.

"Master, bogey at 5 o'clock!" yelled Speedy. I quickly leaned up and saw an incoming Gongo on a hoover sled. Aiming my arm canon at him I opened fire. The laser hit his sled, and it exploded into a million pieces as he fell to the ground dead.

One does not grieve a tear for his death though as these were creatures of pure evil, with no morals, and no respect for life. Common thoughts of decency don't even cross their primitive egocentric minds. Never in the Universe had there been such a threat now as the Gongs. Half machine, half-organic monsters with gnashing teeth, razor sharp claws, and shell covered body with distinct animal instincts. They were a threat to the human race but luckily they posed no real threat to my Zapbots, except in situations when they had superior numbers such as this moment.

At that moment the rock that concealed my body blew apart and I quickly rolled over to the other side of the ditch. As the battle had gone on for hours the situation was getting tiresome.

Only a month ago on a rescue mission to save my best friends we had discovered the Gongs had penetrated our security system for the Earth and built a base in Antarctica. We thought we had destroyed them all, until we found their secret base.

"Master, we can't hold out much longer, our energy is going fast!" Speedy yelled from behind a rock.

"Preaching to the choir here!" I cried, turning to Alert firing next to me, "Any strategic plans?" I asked.

"I'm constantly thinking of plans Master, when I got a good one..wait.." Alert responded.

Suddenly a laser blast ripped through the trench and hit Alert as he fell backwards and crashed to the ground. It seemed like slow motion, but I ran to him and saw a hole in his chest.

"ALERT!" I cried. Botimus Prime my second in command came to my side to help our wounded friend.

"Botimus where are our reinforcements?" I yelled over the laser blasts.

"There being held up Master, but they should be here any minute." Botimus said ducking just in time, missing a rocket.

"Pliers, get down here and get Alert out of here!" I said over the com.

Plies flew down from the aerial battle scene and I could see he took a few hits as well. He landed in his ambulance form, and I loaded Alert's body into his cargo bay.

"Master, it won't be that easy to get him out here," replied Pliers.

I quickly looked around and evaluated the situation. Once again I felt inferior to these arrogant beings.

"I'll cover you! Botimus hold down the fort!" I yelled.

"Be careful Master," Botimus replied.

I looked at Pliers, and held up my hand up towards him pointing to my fingers.

"On the count of three, ready, one...two....THREE!!!"

We bursted out of the hole in the ground and headed towards the sky at mach speed. I set up a shield and began taking out various incoming Gongs on sleds. As we reached the outer atmosphere and began to pick up speed, laser shots and bombs exploded everywhere around us. I swerved left and right to dodge all of this, while at the same time continued to fire at incoming enemies. Pliers flew right behind me in his aerial vehicle form which resembled something similar to a shuttlecraft.

We reached the point when Pliers engaged into Warp and headed for Misslemax stationed just above the planet. As I watched him engage and fly away I let my guard down and turned around to find an array of lasers, bombs, and rockets coming straight at me.

"FRAQ!" I yelled as I tried to move, but it was too late as the weapons all collided with my placement in space. It felt like a giant body had slammed into mine and I lost control. I began to spin backwards at breakneck speeds waving around in the outer stratosphere like a helpless baby with the ground and sky constantly exchanged places.

I fell so fast I had no idea where I was going, I just knew I was heading down. My damage report came up with all my scanners offline as I knew I was in trouble. Before I knew it the ground began to enlarge and I stopped spinning and started falling. My engines cut out and I plummeted down towards the surface below.

Trying everything I had, but alas nothing worked as my Shortstop body was just out. I saw the trees coming closer and closer to my visor. As a last resort, I engaged my emergency systems and my Shortstop body transformed into its spaceship mode and then encased itself with shields.

I was in a cockpit and saw from my monitor the ground coming at enormous rate. Suddenly I crashed into the trees pulverizing the ground with an enormous crash. Screens blew out as my spaceship's body started to rip open and I flew underneath the seat as my ship bounced several times before coming to a complete stop.

Chapter 2

I pushed the piece of scrap metal out of my way to reveal the daylight. As the smoke and hissing sounds came from the damaged spaceship/body, I stumbled to the ground in my X-O suit mode in a very dazed order.

Looking around I found myself in a heavily dense forest, while my Shortstop body had impacted with the ground and was completely nonfunctional.

Doing an internal systems check on myself I found the suit was extremely low on energy. It was not the best situation to be in considering I had no idea where I was.

Worry once again began to set into my mind. Not only had I left my Zapbots in battle, but also I was now stuck and unable to return to Misslemax. Not enough energy to fly or even make a radio call at this point, my X-O suit was a hobbling piece of heavy armor barely able to move.

I thought of using the last of my energy to send out a distress call, but stopped it short for fear of a Gongo picking it up. I would have to find another way to recharge my energy before I sent out a call or took to the air.

A brief scan of the area found a small town nearby. I deactivated my suit and started walking towards it. The forest was swarming with bugs and other annoying creatures and I was constantly hitting my body to kill the devilish fiends.

It wasn't too hot, but it wasn't comfortable either. The humidity had tempted me to turn to full power on my X-O suit numerous times, but I kept it off to conserve on power. I was hot, miserable and just plain tired.

I reached a clearing of the forest and saw before me a great wide field that stretched into a town. Walking across the field and I studied the area. The buildings were varied in structure from fairly small to big and industrial. A small cottage would sit right next to a giant factory, making the whole scene look odd. I made out the placement of the town around the turn of the century.

With my GPS sensors destroyed I had no clue where I was in my world. My travels could of taking me as far as the equator I estimated. My compass was off and I couldn't establish a link with the Zapbot satellite network because of the normal block outs we used during battles.

It seemed like it took me hours to cross the the large field, but I'm thinking it had to be at least thirty minutes. I finally reached the outskirts of the town and began to look around. As I entered the main street and tried my best to blend in with everyone else with the standard clothes I maintained. I adjusted my clothing holograms to suit the present style after I got a glimpse at what the locals were wearing.

As I walked into the main part of the town I immediately saw signs and from the language I knew I had somehow landed somewhere in Germany. With my computer implants in my brain I could easily translate their language, so reading and speaking would not be an issue.

However, I came across what seemed to be two guards or men of uniform, and for some reason they carefully watched me. I tried to ignore them, but they stopped in their tracks and started walking towards me.

All of a sudden I heard them yell out "STOP!" in German and a gunshot rang by my ears. I didn't bother to turn around cause I knew they were firing at me. I heard the screams of everyone on the street and began to run away from their presence not wishing to engage or cause a disturbance.

Everyone flew to the ground; as I jumped over bodies as bullets raced by my body. I would normally turned on my X-O suit at this time, unfortunately my power had gotten so low I couldn't get it to even activate.

I ran around the corner of a big warehouse building, and down a long alley. The guards were hot on my heels. I had no idea why they opened fire, but if I got out of this alive I would be sure to take care of this situation.

Running towards the back of the building I saw an old door. Using the power of my bionic body replacement parts, I barged down the back door to the building in the large warehouse. It was a huge warehouse, with boxes stacked as high as the ceiling but I didn't have time to stop and ponder this, so I ran my way through the maze of boxes.

Hearing the guards burst in and start yelling, I ran through the endless array of boxes until I came to a dead end. I looked high at the stacked crates and realized I was in trouble.

I turned around with sweat running down my body, my back to the wall and fear in my heart. The guards came around the corner and stopped a few feet away. One raised his gun towards my direction and was about to shoot straight at my head.

Out of the corner of my eye I saw a shadow move. Suddenly from out of no where an arrow came and pierced the heart of the gunner. He fell to the ground with blood dripping out of him.

The other guard turned around, but a giant crate moved from above and suddenly dropped on him like a piano from an old comedy movie. It smashed the head of the guard and he lay there motionless, blood everywhere, and deceased.

I saw the figure come from out of the dark eire shadows that encased him. He was a young man about my age (18), with brown hair, blue eyes, and an extremely handsome face. And yet for some reason he looked like he had matured faster than most adults our age. His face showed small wrinkles here and there, as he looked a bit older than I was. It was a very odd feeling seeing this individual stand before me and I felt immense gratitude towards him at once considering my situation.

He walked up to me and stood a few feet away. His clothes were completely torn and barely covered his extremely muscular yet pasty white body. He carried a bow and arrow, which I could tell were his crude methods of protecting himself.

"It's amazing how Lee's men can go on kicking people's asses and think they can get away with it," he spoke. His voice was stern, low and once again he sounded older than he probably was.

I was still standing there, getting over the shock. As I realized at the moment I must have appeared very funny looking, being motionless observing this stranger who had probably just saved my life. A very odd feeling stirred in me towards this individual, something I had not anticipated.

"You seem familiar, I can't remember where I have seen your face," he said.

All this time I kept quiet...

"Well say something man? Do you speak?"

"Nice bow work?" I replied.

"Yeah, you know the only problem is," and then he stopped short of getting casual, I assumed for his protection. "Dude, can I help you in anyway?"

"Yes, what's going on here? Who are these guys, and why are they chasing me, and where is the police, and where the hell am I?" I asked.

"You mean, you don't know? I take it your not from around here? How did you get here?"

"Ummm no, I been a lot of places but definitely not here..."

"You're in Snutz, an unmapped town in East Germany. The guards that I just killed are members of a secretive Nazi army. Their commander is called General Lee, and he has taken over this town."

"Secret Nazi Army? You're joking?"

"Wish I was. This town is secluded from the rest of the world as a vast mountain range surrounds us. We hardly get any visitors and it's been like this way for years, even since the second world war. We survive on our own with crops and electricity produced through the coal mines. The douchebag raised an army and took over this town, making it his private kingdom! He keeps the town locked down under lock and key. We can't send for help cause he has it surrounded..."

"What about radios...? TV? Doesn't anybody fly in?"

"Nope, hardly any electrical appliances. People have liked it like that for years. Very old fashioned. So when this guy took over, nobody could fight back, or call back, or leave. Planes traffic never flies over here... how did you get here?"

"It's a long story, I kind of crashed..."

"In a plane?"

"Sort-of. But if there is a situation, I'll can probably help you take care of it."

"Yeah, you looked like you would be to help with our band..."

"Band...musical?"

"No, I've started a group of men, well....really boys to try and beat this asshole. Um, can I trust you?"

"Yeah sure, why?"

"Well I'll show you something, but I don't know if you could be a spy."

"Spy? Do you think those guys would come running after me if I was a spy?"

"Well it could be an elaborate staged hoax, but I did see you walking and I can tell your not from around here. Plus your leg is bleeding."

"What?" I screamed. I just looked down to notice my mechanical leg had started to bleed, unfortunately it wasn't blood, and it was oil.

"Holy Shit! What the hell is that? Your blood is black!"

I reached down and shut off the supply, my leg was now feeling stiff and I knew it would be hard to run from now on.

"Wait! I know who you are. You are that robot dude! We get stories sometimes across the telegraph. You are that guy who invented those robots? Aren't you?"

"Yeah, basically..."

"Shit! How did you get here, oh, that's right, you crashed. Jeez with your help we can take back our homes? Will you help us?"

"Sure, the best I can. Obviously I'm not in the best of shape, but once I get some power I'll be fine."

"Where do you need power from?"

"Any electrical unit will do, it takes a while though, with primitive units."

"We've got one line of electricity in our camp, oh by the way, I'm Mike... Mike Quartz."

He held out his hand and I firmly shook it. There was a static charge shock between the two of us and we both strangely ignored it.

"Anthony, Anthony Anselmo, pleasure to meet you. If I can get back to my robots I'll make sure we take care of this mess. I can't believe we let this happen."

"Who, you. Its not your fault..?"

"Yeah, it is. I mean we're supposed to be protectors of justice and we didn't even bothered to scan the Earth for stuff like this."

"Hey dude, come with me."

With that I followed my new friend towards a staircase of boxes. He had set up an elaborate way to get to the top of the boxes. It was a bunch of cliffs, which done correctly, you could jump to and fro. This proved easy for my friend, but kind of hard for me with my disabled leg. However, I finally made it to the top of the boxes and decided not to look down.

We walked across the boxes, all full of junk, people's belongings, and garbage. We came to the side of the building. A panel of windows stretched the entire side of the building. My friend opened a window and showed me off to the roof of the building.

The top of the building was mostly concealed from the rest of the world by the edge which contained bricks for a ledge. I followed him through the array of pipes and stacks and over various rooftops of the small town, which now seemed much larger. As we came to a building that seemed to be the second largest in the town, he showed me a ventilator shaft and motioned me down.

"Umm you go first, I'll follow," I said.

He climbed in and slid down, as I did the same I slipped and fell headfirst into the tunnel.

I rode down the long and curvy tunnel and finally hit the bottom. An opening emerged and I fell headfirst into the floor.

Looking down and around I found myself in an old abandoned building. Mike helped me up and lead me towards the back rooms. It was so dark, I could hardly see and I ran into Mike several times. Finally we came to an old clock, that was not even working. Mike went besides it and pushed it away. This revealed a hole in the wall and he ushered me in.

We entered the dark hole and emerged on a bed, a cot in fact. I was in the bottom portion of a bunk bed. A small boy was sleeping next to me. It was dark and dim and I could barely make out where I was going. I tried to climb over a sleeping body but I slipped again falling onto the floor. Mike was already there. I looked at the maze of beds, lined up one by each other. I heard a kid say "What's the racket?" and Mike replied "Go back to bed."

I started to get up and felt Mike put his arm around my shoulder and neck which was a very odd feeling at the time, but I took it as a gesture of friendship. He held me down to the floor trying not to wake any one up saying "shhhh."

I looked around and saw in amazement, bunk beds lined up, wall to wall. In them were boys, all sleeping during the afternoon.

"Okay here's our base, and this is our..."

I interrupted him, "What, all these boys are hiding out?" I asked.

"Yep, we're all here to fight the Nazi's. Most of these boys don't even have parents," Mike replied.

As I stood up and started to walk around the huge room with bed everywhere. The living conditions were okay. No major smells, but it was still dirty, I could see this boys lacked food, water and other essentials.

By now all the boys had awoken from the commotion and Mike began to explain to them who I was. They all started murmuring and I stood there in the open floor in amazement, just staring at them. Turning around in the big dark room. These poor kids, I couldn't image what they had gone through. I was determined to set things straight, but first I needed help.

"So this guy is going to help us kick the Lee's as-" started a younger kid.

"Quiet Jim, sorry that's my little brother and he asks too many questions. Here is our only electrical outlet," Mike said.

He pointed to an electrical outlet emerging from the wall in a rather haphazard fashion. Only two prongs this was going to require some jiggering of my equipment. I sat down, pulled out a string from my X-O suit and plugged myself in. Slowly energy started to kick in.

"Can you get any more help?" Mike asked.

"It all depends if I can get enough energy to break through the Earth's atmosphere with a signal."

"Okay, try your best man. We appreciate it more than you know."

"I understand, it's okay. I won't let you guys be alone any more." I responded.

I sat there and began to get acquainted with this interesting group of germanish Robin Hood merry men. Hopefully soon I could call my Zapbots for help. That is, if everyone was still functional.

Chapter 3

"Master's Log, Supplemental. My current situation, although worrisome, is pretty much stable. I have gathered enough energy to send a message out for help once every hour.

"I am currently stranded in a strange unknown town in East Germany. Apparently left untouched for decades the people of this small town have been taken over by a small Nazi brigade. Isolated from the world the townsfolk have pretty much given in to this small army of control as it being commanded by a man by the name of Lee.

"Mike is the leader of a rag tag team of what I would call Robin Hood boys that have been causing mischief in order to combat the army. Some are locals of the area, others simply are castaways after their parents died from some apparent plague years ago.

"In order to understand the situation better, I will be attending a party with Mike. His Aunt is being forced to marry General Lee, so Mike and I will be observing this apparent individual."

The room had the fancy decor, and the walls were finished in fine oak. The smells were that of a typical rich home, cooled by the only cooling unit in the city, and as the fancy maids ran by and the butlers walked around carrying glasses, I couldn't help but wonder what this guy had done to achieve so much power. Everyone had a look on their face of sadness except the obviously high of society in the room.

My disguise suited me well and I looked just like Mike, dressed in a suit and tie. I looked out the window often to observe guards in uniforms marching up and down the street, and people going hungry lying on the side of the road. It was like a visual out of a world war movie.

Mike showed me around the rich house that his Aunt was being forced to live in. I managed to keep my temper down and maintain a casual observation. There were numerous high-class people dressed in all sorts of fancy attire, wandering around, talking about nothing. It seemed to them that nothing was wrong. The world outside was oblivious to them. Or maybe they didn't want to say what really was on their minds.

I was in the library with Mike while everyone else was talking. As Mike watched the door I quickly glanced at the General's papers, and stored them in my memory banks.

Suddenly everyone outside began to whisper and the murmur died down to a hush. I walked out to see the host and his, so to be wife, enter the room.

The General was not what I expected. His face was as regular and normal as any other man. Plain, ordinary, mustache and calm. Yet I could sense hatred in his eyes, the hatred of a way of life created long ago.

He started to walk around and talk to everyone. I saw Mike's Aunt and could tell from her eyes she was sad with a calm face; held behind a black hat with a black veil.

Mike began to whisper stuff to me...

"What happens if he comes up to you..." he started, but didn't have a chance to finish. The General came up to me and extended his hand.

"I don't believe we've met, you're new from around here?"

"No, I believe you are wrong?" I responded with a stern monotone voice. I realized after I said this might have given him some sense of doubt, for he withdrew his hand before I could extend mine.

"How did you get here, it's not like many people can reach us here. We're so isolated."

"I'm a traveling journeyman, seeking my religious purification. I just came in today and have yet to learn about your town. I find it amazing how secret this place is from the rest of the world."

"Um, yes, its very secret. Have you learned about our ways yet?"

"I don't quite underst-

"It's okay, you'll learn soon enough. Just make sure you don't delay your journey too long here. We're not accustomed to strangers."

"Ummm sure...."

"Ahhh Mikey," he said turning towards Mike. "Good kid, one of the few kids who doesn't give us problems. We have a gang running loose, but we'll find them soon enough. This may be a large town, but they can't hide forever... Glad, we've kept him under tight reins."

With that, the prick walked away. I could tell this was going to be trouble, and I now understood what Mike was fighting for.

"How come they haven't searched the warehouse yet?" I whispered to Mike.

"Other end of the city, too many rumors of it being spooked, so no one figures kids would live there. Also too much garbage to shift through." Mike replied. We began to walk out of the setting.

"This seems like a bad dream, I can't believe all the power this jerk has," I replied.

"Don't worry, it's not like anyone else in the world cares," responded Mike.

"I DO, and I'm sure other people will too once they find out about this." I patted him on the back to show him my support.

Suddenly we came around the corner and two guards grabbed us by our necks. They dragged us around an alley and held us at gunpoint.

I gave my guard a sharp elbow to the groin and he flew down with my mechanical arm's power. I quickly grabbed the other guard off of Mike and flung him towards the wall. He hit it and then slid downwards and didn't move.

I grabbed the first guard and held him by the neck.

"Why are you doing this! TELL ME!" I screamed.

"We....We're suppose to kill...a...any strangers who come into our town!"

Grabbing the fool I proceed to throw him across the alley. He fell down on the hard ground and I ran over to both of the bodies. They were still alive, but knocked out for a while.

Running back over to Mike I helped him up and we started back to his base. As soon as we walked in Jim came running up to his brother.

"Mike, the other guys have been captured!" he said frantically with tears down his cheeks.

"What!" I asked.

"I sent a spy mission to their base, but now they're captured. Dammit, now they're done for!" Mike replied.

"No they're not! Let's go get them," I said.

"Huh?"

"Get a group together. I have enough energy for a small spy mission. Let's go get them."

I still had not received any communication from my Zapbots, but I knew this was no time to worry about them. If we didn't save those boys, they would be killed, and I could never live with myself if they were.

Chapter 4

We reached the end of tunnel, which lead to the secret underground access rooms of the military complex. Water was running quietly out of the metal grating. Mike unlocked the plate and I constantly looked around to watch for troops or anything that might spell trouble.

Beginning the long walk down the water pipe, it was big enough to hold about two tons of water, so we had no problem fitting in it. Reaching the end of the tunnel, looking up above us was an access plate. Mike climbed up and as discreetly as possible moved the cover off.

I activated my X-O suit to be prepared for anything. My forethought told me I had enough energy to get these kids in and get them out, with the least amount of firepower. So I had to be careful on how I used my power. My boosters and transformation were still out so I couldn't fly out of here to get help. My radio signals still received no reply.

Climbing upwards we entered a hallway that was dark as night. My night vision optics kicked in immediately.

"Why was it that all bad guys never installed track lighting?" I thought.

Climbing up a series of ladders we finally came to a ventilation shaft. I was already too accustomed to these things from my last adventure, so I slid in first and began scanning for kids.

We slowly crawled through the shaft, slowly and carefully Mike, the boys, and myself moved not to make any noise.

Then without warning I heard a loud crack...

"Oh Shit!" whispered Mike.

Before I had a chance to think the shaft collapsed underneath us. We fell down as a pile of debris came down upon us.

I quickly pushed the metal off and began to dig Mike and the other two kids out.

"Great! What else could go wrong?" replied Mike coming out from the mess. And of course he didn't have to say that at a worse time.

"STOP!" yelled a guard coming around the corner. He raised his rifle but before he had a chance to shoot I fired my laser at him, stunning him as he fell to the ground unconscious.

"Wow! Cool!" said Mike.

"Yeah, but I'm really low on energy again, let's go. The kids should be close."

We ran around the corner and through a series of doors. Before we knew it we had reached the cell holding area.

There were tens of boys, sitting behind the cold bars, with scratches and ripped clothes. Cold, wet and dirty they barely were able to keep the filth off their faces from the horrible conditions they were being stranded in. Ranging from pre-teens to teenagers to young adults, it broke my heart.

"STAND BACK!" I yelled. I fired at the metal bars and they melted. Mike and his comrades quickly ran in and helped the boys to their tired feet.

We began to retrace our steps, but once again we ran into a troop of soldiers. They opened fired, as I flew my arm forwards to set up a force shield. The bullet bounced off and I motioned to Mike to take the kids elsewhere.

More guards came around the corner and I continued to stun them and keep my shield going. I walked backwards following Mike and the boys towards another shaft.

As the calvary of guards increased, slowing me down, and draining my energy I did what I could to keep the boys protected. By the time I had walked back to the new exit through the ventilation shaft the boys had already climbed up and proceeded on their way.

Acting fast I deactivated my X-O suit so it wouldn't bring the shaft down with its weight. I jumped up and was barely able to pull myself up when the guards came around the corner and started shooting, bullets barely missing my body again.

I started crawling like lighting, but the guards began to climb up into the shaft themselves. They couldn't fit in, but put their guns in the shafts and fired. I turned a corner just in time to miss some bullets.

Reaching the boys at the end of the tunnel, it opened into what appeared to be a large sewage pipe. I crawled down back into what appeared to be a water outlet and they were already halfway down, running.

"Anthony! Hurry! Run!" cried Mike. I started to run but didn't understand their worry. I suddenly hear something, like the rush of water, as if someone decided to basically flush all the toilets in the city.

I quickly engaged my X-O suit and began to run down the tunnel. A quick look behind me saw a huge river of waste approaching. I picked up my speed and continued towards the opening of the tunnel to the world outside. The light was coming closer and closer, and so was the water.

The boys had made it to safety and were yelling for me to run. I felt the water on my X-O suit's toes. If it touched me, my shields would lose all power from my low energy and I could possibly drown.

Running as fast as my damaged mechanic legs could carry me, at the last moment I engaged the only thing that wasn't damaged, my tiny emergency boosters and jumped!

I soared over the air and as the water flew under me I landed on the side of the ditch up the riverbank standing next to Mike. At that moment, my X-O suit lost all power and shut totally off returning me to standard bionic human status.

"Whew!" I said.

"Nice move Anthony!" said Mike.

Then I heard the screams of the German language above and turned just in time to see guards come over the hill.

"Run!" I yelled.

"Duck!" cried Mike.

We started to run and climb the hill as I was yelling at the boys and trying to cover them as much as possible.

They made it over the hill and down the embankment and as I came over the hill a bullet gorged into my side and I fell down to the ground.

"AHHHHHHH!" I cried at the top of my lungs. The pain was excruciating and from that I know I blacked out.

Chapter 5

I woke up in Mike's bed and my eyes suddenly focusing on the world. I saw that most of the boys were gone. I started to move and then saw that my side had been bandaged and my X-O suit cord plugged in.

Mike heard me move and came from the bathroom. He had just gotten done bathing himself with the crude shower facility.

"How are you feeling?" he asked with wet hair dripping on the cold floor.

"Fine. What happened?" I asked in confusion.

"After you got shot we grabbed you and high tailed it back to here. Everyone made it, but now they've piped up their search in the city we're planning to move to our mountain base at nightfall."

"You have a mountain base?" I asked.

"It's not as well equipped as here, but it's for last resorts and this is a last resort."

He sat down next to me on the bed with worries in his spirit. His face was somber but yet in his eyes, I could tell he was sad. Mike's brother Jim came from the other room and sat down next to him.

"It's like sometimes I wonder if it will ever end. The constant fighting and fear...I've seen... so many of my friends die," Mike said. I knew he was trying to keep back the tears, the long frustration of all his life's battles. But now the emotion over swept him and he put his hands up to his face hiding the emotion.

I struggled to sit up and I pulled his hands away from face. For me life itself was a constant battle, like I was always down on my luck. However I usually made it home safely, even when things were bleak. Heck I had fought giant robots, enormous sun monsters, and a planet eating robot. Still while this was a smaller adventure I had to try my best to give these kids a happy ending. I had to try... I had to try.

"Look Mike, I promise you, after this is all done there will be no more pain," I said.

He got up and went to the lone painted window and looked out the crack to the city below.

"Tomorrow they're having a march, and they're planning to execute people unless the rebels come forward. We're going to attack and get this finished once and for all. Whether we all die or not it doesn't matter now. I'm send Jim out past the mountains to get help."

"Can Jim make it past the mountains?"

"I don't know, it's over hundred miles to the nearest town, so we've been told."

He slammed his fist down against the window sill and turn towards me with tears in his eyes, the color of blood red.

"I'm so sick of all this shit. You had it lucky dude. I wish I had your life," Mike cried.

"You think? Listen Mike, I know you're tired, but I went through the same crap as you did. I was injured in battle, more then you could ever believe.. look.."

I pulled back the fake skin on my robotic arm. The body replacement I had lost in my first battle with the Junkicons. The metallic part shone brightly and Jim jumped up in shock.

"I lost part of my body in a battle, and I also came from a horrific battle. I don't even know if my Zapbots are still functioning, cause I left when they were fighting. So yeah, our chips are down. But you can't dwell on that. You got to keep trying! If you give up, you'll never win, and they WILL beat you."

I got up and walked towards him. I put both of my hands on his shoulders.

"Look! We're not done until the fat transistor sings. So we'll fight tomorrow, and we will win. I know it!"

"How?"

"I got a plan, if I can divert some of my power from my Matrix.."

"Mat..what?"

"Umm let's just say I may have another power source. We may have an upper hand after all."
Mike smiled a bit at me, with his strangely boyish looks shining through the mature over dried
face.

"You're a good man Anthony, I'm glad you crashed here."
I chuckled at the absurdity of it all.

Chapter 6

We set out to the mountains at nightfall as we traveled slowly and quietly as the full moon hung in the air. We made it across the rooftops, and to the outer limits of the city. The land now changed to rough terrain and began to ascend. Mike and Jim led the group with the other boys as I followed the rear to watch and protect.

Climbing up the highest mountain, from there I could see the entire land scape. I could turn around and viewed the mountain range with the town surrounded by the mountains. It was huge with thousands of mountains as far as the eye could see. I turned to Mike...

"Jim's going to make it through this?" I asked.

"I know. The nearest city is over a hundred miles away. We've been through the mountains before, so I'm hoping he can find his way. Our dad use to take us fishing and hiking a lot," Mike replied.

"Wait," I said. I tried to send my signal one more time. With the altitude we were at, it would be a pretty good chance it would make it. I hadn't fixed my Matrix conversion yet, but I had enough regular power to send out a strong signal.

"Well, anything?" asked Mike.

"No, not..." and I was stopped short. A message appeared across my viewfinder screen.

"30?... (unknown character Message...discontinued...."

"Oh shit!" I said.

"What!?" asked Mike.

"I got a message!"

"That's great!"

"No it's not!"

"Huh? What did it say."

"I got a partial message. They still must be fighting cause its under battle code. It got 30 with a missing number. I need the last number to know what they meant. Damn, stupid codes!"

"Huh? What does 30 mean?"

"Well if I got 301 that means 'Message received, backup coming', but 302 mean 'Message received can not send backup'. And of course 303 means 'Message received will send backup at appropriate time', and 304 means 'Backup not available' etc...etc... DAMN!"

"So either help can be coming or not?"

"Or it may be coming, but not for a while. Either way they received a distress signal and probably my location."

My frustrations increased as I walked to the edge of the peak and sat down, I looked far into the horizon and saw the moon and stars. I had seen them so many times before, but now I felt like I had never been there. If I could just get Misslemax to fly over here everything would be alright. Heck if I could Speedy over here he could stop this incident.

"Hey Mike come here?" I said.

Mike came down and sat next to me.

"See that. That's Orion's belt. Well that middle star is the sun for Gearatron's system. The one on the left is the second sun."

"What about the third?"

"The third is really much farther away, but because of its brightness and Earth's position it looks like the others."

"Cool...Do you think you'll ever take me there someday?"

"Hell sure, if we can ever get off this rock."

I started to hum a song as the boys began to settle down for the night. It was done by one of my favorite bands. I didn't understand the meaning of the song except for sorrow and that someone felt like an alien. Mike just sat there and listened and soon everyone else came up and listened.

No cloud, a sleepy calm,
Sun baked Earth that's cooled by gentle breeze.
And trees with rustling leaves,
Only endless days without a care,
Nothing must be done.

Silent as a day can be,
Far off sounds of others on their chosen run.
As they do, all those things they feel give life some meaning.
Even if they're dull.

Time to stop this dreaming must rejoin the real world.
As revealed by orange lights and a smoky atmosphere.

The trees and I are shaken by, the same winds but where as.
The trees will lose their weathered leaves.
I just can't seem to let them loose.
And they can't refresh me those hot winds from the south.
Feel like an alien, stranger in an alien place.

Now the light is fading fast.
Chances slip away, a time will come to pass.
When they'll be none.
Then addicted to a perfumed poison,
Betrayed by its aftertaste,
We shall lose the wonder and find nothing in return.
Many are the substitutes but they're powerless on their own.

Beware the fisher man who's casting out his line,
Into a dried up riverbed.
But don't try to tell him cause he won't believe you.
Throw some bread to the ducks instead, it's easier that way.
Feel like an alien, a stranger in an alien place.

The trees and I are shaken by, the same winds but where as.
The trees will lose their weathered leaves.
I just can't seem to let them loose.
And they can't refresh me those hot winds from the south.
Feel like an alien, stranger in an alien place.

After I finished singing Mike just turned to me and said. "Nice singing Anthony, cool song."
Then we all sat and watched the stars fade sleep, until morning broke the night sky.

Chapter 7

The dawn came so quickly I swear it was five minutes. This would be the moment of truth as it could all end or continue here. I started to reflect back on all I had learned from my Zapbots. I restudied my training programs, and prepared myself for battle. Hopefully, if my Matrix override worked, it would not be my last battle.

We proceeded down the mountaintop and back into town, except Jim who was sent on his way, to hopefully send for help.

"If Jim can't do it, no one can," said Mike.

We scrawled over the mountains tops and took our selected positions Mike and I devised. Every boy had on them their crude bow and arrows, their only choice in weapons. As we heard the stomping of numerous feet an army of men came down the main street. We stood at the ready. Dust arose and so did people from their houses from the calamity. There was sorrow for the selected victims to be executed.

Standing at my position I was at the top of a house that was at the dead end of the street. From the far distance I saw the general coming through. This was different terms though. He was now my enemy and I his, although he didn't know that yet.

The poor souls bound by hand were led to the end of the street facing west of me. I waiting until the General had come closer to the dead end.

Then the marching stopped and the general came around on his horse and held up his hand to speak.

"LET ALL SOULS KNOW, IF THE BOY REBELS DO NOT STEP FORWARD NOW THEY WILL BE BLOOD SPILLED FOR THEIR SAKE..."

I engaged my X-O suit to full power and jumped down to the ground below. The General and the entire army turned around in shock and saw my robotic armored body standing there.

"I don't think so General!" I said, and opened fire with my stun gun. My automatic target went into affect and I began knocking down soldiers, one by one.

"LOOK OUT! FIRE!" the General screamed. Then from on top of the houses and rooftops, Mike and the boys opened fire with their arrows.

The General pulled on his horse and retreated, as I heard the screams of men being stunned or hit by arrows, falling to the ground. The dust rose blocking my vision and with my infer-red out I couldn't see anything.

"Hold fire!" yelled Mike from above.

We stopped firing and waited for the dust to literally settle. I figured we had taken care of the army. As the dusk cleared and only a few feet away from me, more soldiers were running towards me and firing with their rifles.

Panicking as the bullets flew off my metal I was having problems aiming. There were too many of them at this point to correctly charge up and fire each time. They were also attacking the buildings and the boys ducked to avoid the bullets.

I stepped back some and regained my alignment and then continued to hit person after person until a pile of knocked out Nazi's began to grow in front of me. Leaping back up to the rooftop I ran towards where Mike was standing. The battle had now taken to the rooftops and men were coming up the ladders to where the boys were stationed.

I made it where Mike was, just as a soldier came through the trap door and aimed his rifle. Opening my lasers at him, I hit him as he fell back, and tumbled down the stairs.

I ran up to Mike, and knelt down next to him.

"How's it going?" he asked.

"Whadda you think?" I replied, "Look out!" and I pushed Mike out of the way of an incoming bullet.

"Be careful!" I said helping him up.

"Yeah, you too," he said. I saw worry in his eyes and I could tell he was holding back his fear.

As I saw people hiding in their houses and stores, peeking out the windows, seeing the action I knew I could not this continue, even if it meant my death. Jumping back down into the street I continued to fire at the oncoming of soldiers approaching the building. They were coming at me from all sides now, and I kept wondering where all these people were coming from. For a small town, he sure did have a large army.

Suddenly I heard a cry from above and I looked to see a kid gasp his arm and started to sway at the top of the building. Ramming my way through the soldiers as the kid began to fall from the building, I kept pushing and pushing my way through the puny soldiers with my X-O suit armor. I wanted so much to get to that kid. As a last resort I jumped and held out my arms.

I closed my eyes, and felt a thump. When I opened them the kid was safely in my arms alive. I stood up and power jumped back up to the rooftop placing him there as his friends ran to his side.

Standing at the edge of the building my power went completely out and, my X-O suit's armor disappeared and I felt the sharp sting of a bullet once again, in my side. Losing my balance I fell backwards and landed on a hay cart breaking my fall.

Dragging myself out from the cart, staggering and noticing the shooting had stopped. The General rode up on his horse and pointed his gun towards my body lying in the dirt.

"A valiant effort hero, but all in vain..." he said.

"Go to Hell!" I said calmly. With that I heard a shot, saw the smoke and then felt another pain, much greater in my chest.

"NOOOOOOOO!" I heard Mike scream from above.

My body felt pain and my eyes began to get blurry. I felt so alone, helpless and most of all sad. Then, as if it was a dream I heard a rocket engine. I turned my head to see out of the sky a rocket I knew so well. The rocket was that of the warrior Omega Dupream. My face began to grow a smile through the eye fog as I realized my message had finally been received.

Everyone stopped fighting and the rocket landed just outside the town. From the dusk a base transformed and I heard the might roar of the familiar Zapbot voice.

"Omega Dupream is preparing for battle, please exit the rocket now."

The Nazi's just starred at the giant silo standing a mile away. Suddenly I turned my head and saw and heard a familiar tractor trailer driving up towards our location with several other vehicles either driving or flying behind.

"ZAPBOTS! TRANSFORM!" yelled Botimus Prime going into robot mode.

The cars suddenly changed into the familiar robot bodies I knew and loved as they came running towards the soldiers sending them scrambling as my Zapbots swooped down and proceeded to attack the misguided humans.

I saw Boaty grab a few and place them in a makeshift electronic cell. I saw Flier grabbed more and began throwing them into a buildings and structures!

Suddenly a shadow emerged over me and once again as I turned my head in horror seeing the General standing above me.

"You may have defeated my plans, but you shall still die!" he said with a bloody face.

He raised his gun again towards my head, and my eyes became even blurrier. Suddenly out of the nowhere, an arrow hit his chest, straight center. He gasped for breath and I turned to see Mike above with his arrow.

The General regained his stance and was about to finish the job even though he was wounded. Suddenly Omega Dupream transformed into his robot mode shaking the ground and stood there in robot form raising his arm cannon. A laser ray dispersed from his cannon and hit the General directly. Within seconds the General's atoms were spliced apart and he dissolved into the air.

Once again like clockwork, I lost all conscience and blacked out.

Chapter 8

I awoke in a soft bed and could see the familiar surroundings of Click and Superrobot near me. My wounds had been repaired and I was tired, but was relaxed as I realized I was home. At first I perceived it was all a dream or heaven, but as Mike came through the automatic door a smile came to my face and his. He came to the side of my bed and grabbed my hand.

"Anthony, you did it! We're freed!" he said smiling and holding in tears of joy.

"No Mike, we did it!" I responded smiling back at him.

"Master, the German republic has taken control of the town. All forces of the Nazi army have been arrested with the German and United States armies having flown in to help with reestablishing the town," said Superrobot.

"What about the Gongos?" I asked.

"They had us for quite a while Master, finally reinforcements came through and we were able to defeat them, one of them being good old Omega. We intercepted all of their bases and drove them out of the immediate solar system, back to their sector. The Earth is safe once again, Click" replied Click.

"So you got my message?"

"We were receiving your messages, but were unable to respond because of the black out. We also could not pinpoint your location. The Gongos had us cornered for at least a day or two.

"Anthony, we also got Jim. He's safe and sound too!" Mike replied excited.

I breathed a breath of fresh air and a sigh of relief. Once again I had been saved while hanging by a thread. I was now home, and my friends were safe and sound, along with my Zapbots.

"Master's Log 1994, I am leaving my newfound friend Mike to help rebuild his shattered town. He will be moving now to University with his brother Jim to further his education. The school is a fine school and Mike is anxious about going to see new parts of the world, heck the Universe with me with his time off.

"I will be returning to Gearatron to continue our new space exploration operations. This will take me a while and I doubt if I will be returning to Earth anytime soon. However I have arranged to see Mike and his friends once a month. I have grown attached to this group of kids and feel like a father figure to them.

"I am hoping in the future Mike considers a Headmaster placement. For his courage and bravery have been recognized by the German government. He is a unique individual, strong and brave and very compassionate for himself and others. I am extremely glad all this happened cause I would have never gotten to know him otherwise."

I proceeded to fly Mike down to his home, now free and dropped him off. His Aunt had the whole large house to herself. As the United Nations crew rode into town with supplies I could tell things were moving on for the better. He just finished his tour and two-night stay on Misslemax. In that time we had become extremely close and I could tell he was much happier with himself and life.

"Well don't forget me being that far away, across that galaxy!" Mike said.

"I won't, how could I ever going through what we've been through."

He looked at me, and for the first time I could see him smile brightly and could tell that his fear was gone. It was a very loving feeling and I was extremely sad to leave him.

"Take care, Anthony," he said, and then hugged me. I graciously returned the favor feeling his warm body press up against my recovering flesh wound. I engaged my X-O suit, transformed in Shortstop and flew off into the atmosphere looking behind at my little human friend on the ground.

All the while I knew the adventures had only just begun between us.

The End