

Rouge Invasion

By

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BACKGROUND

For a long time, species of cybernetic tail-less squirrels called Noxtroni have lived in a collective civilization in which each Noxtroni takes care of another. This arrangement has worked for them for many centuries without troubles. One day some of the Noxtroni has heard of a new system called a 'republic'. Most of the Noxtroni had decided to take this new system, but the ones that have decided that the old life is the good life are referred to as 'Rouges' and the ones that took on the republican life are called 'republicans'. After the split there were many fights, but thing have settled down and they made an agreement to not attack each other.

Chapter I – “Threats”

After many years, the situations have changed and the Jabernauts have gotten involved in their affairs. They then made several agreements with the Jabernauts, one of which is that the Sha’kif was none of their concern. The Jabernauts after seeing what has happened to the Sha’kif wanted a new agreement promising protection for the Sha’kif. The Republicans have agreed with the new treaty, but the Rouges have decided the latest agreement between the Noxtroni Republic and the Jabernauts was not a good idea, especially since they both have agreed to help the Sha’kif. They at once have agreed to attack the republic and to finish of the Sha’kif once and for all. They decided to contact them and to make their views known. First, the rouges have sent a message to call off the agreement and to hand over the Sha’kif. The republic responded thusly, “Since you have disavowed the republic, you have no say in how it is governed. Because of your assertion that you would have nothing to do with this republic, we decided that your complaints mean nothing. And with that, if we want to make peace with our old enemies, we will do it without your say, and if you interfere, we will strike back.” With this message, the republic went ahead with the treaty and the Jabernauts agreed with it because they saw it as a chance to get on the good side of the Sha’kif, whom they abandoned long ago

due to a squabble.

Days later, the republicans were worried about the threats they got from the rouges. They wondered if they got the weapons to hold them off and if the Jabernauts were ready to aid them. They asked the republicans to whether the Sha'kif was under any danger. The answer was they are indeed in big trouble. So they make their preparations for battle and to make a notice to the Imperial Government asking for action against the invasion. The Government at that point asked for proof. The republicans gave the Government the message that was sent to them, they wanted more proof, so they told them the history of the conflict, saying that the Rouges wanted to destroy them since the day they created the republic. Still the Government was not impressed, so as for their one last effort, they asked to come to their country to see the situation for themselves. The Government agreed and had representatives go down and look at the situation first hand. While they were reviewing the situation, the Rouges were launching attack on the Zeta and Gamma Empires, destroying several planets and killing thousands and thousands of people while looking for the Sha'kif, but when they did not find them, they almost destroyed the empires, but they were fought back and they were going towards the United Empire and that is when the Zetas sent a warning message about the rouges. The message has reached the Imperial Government and what they saw is horrendous. After the mission, they

convened another meeting and decided to set up defenses and to hold them off while they can think of another plan.

As the alarm went off all over the empire, armies were assembled and starships were being outfitted with weapons. All commercial traffic were alerted to the situation and were told that they might have to “make other plans” in case of contact with Rouges. After the ships were in position, the Rouges made their attack and while the Empire lost a few ships, the rouges have lost a great number of ships and even had a few captured with the crews taken as prisoners. With these captures they started to make a database for analysis and finding their weakness. Even with the progress, the Rouges have continued their attacks, but with the armies fighting back, total extermination was delayed and hope is still there.

Chapter II – “Find and Relocate”

While the oncoming invasion was being checked, the Imperial government has decided to relocate the Sha’kif to safer locations, but there is a problem. They have no idea on where to find them. So they made a team with Gaslatore Montier as their leader. Montier was chosen because this is his last assignment with the Empire Korps and he closely resembles their squirrel-like structure. The team is assembled and they escaped detection by the Rouges and made trips to several planets before they found the Sha’kif on a pleasant medium-sized planet where they set up colonies.

Once they got there, the task of finding all the Sha’kif and convincing them to leave to safer places has begun. As the team split to find the groups knowing that the Rouges might eventually find them and destroy them and their work, they have found several groups and explained to them their situation. Some were angry that anyone had found them; others did not know what they were saying and ran the teams off. After some rethinking and language analysis, they have found a better way to convince them to leave. After some planning and a change of clothes, they set again and had better success with telling of the situation, but still are no better telling them to leave. One Sha’kif told to a translator then told the group, “Why should we

leave when we are safe here and the rouges don't know where we are?"

The lead member said to the translator, "They will find you and have you killed no matter where you go, they will find you."

"Why should we leave when you know they will find us?"

"Because if you leave you will be split up, be harder to kill in a single swipe, and be with people that have better methods of protection. So do we have a deal?"

"Let me talk it over with the chief."

Montier was having his own luck with the mission. The first time that he approached them, he was wearing his usual clothes, the other members were appalled. After hearing how the other groups had to change clothes and blend in, they were wondering why he had kept his same clothes on. After the rejection by the local Sha'kif, especially about his shirt, he went back and asked for a change of clothes. He then returned, apologised and resumed his mission. Other groups were having similar luck in getting them moved and all they have to do now is to report back to government about their progress and some places for relocation. When the government read the report, they decide to find some countries that are willing to protect them.

The news was wonderful, there were plenty of countries willing keep them hidden, but they had asked for plans to protect them en route. They then sent for several fleets of fighters to protect the convoy. The trip only met with a few interruptions and since they had either killed or captured any Rouge that interfered, the other Rouges did not know about the relocation or where they were being sent to, but somehow they know of the transfer and the convoys did not catch them because they were cloaked and did not attack. After the transfers were made, the locations of the Sha'kif were to be known only to certain people and no Jabernaut can know of the locations. With those points made clear, the Sha'kif were kept safe in undisclosed locations. Those cloaked ships were to prove that they are still trouble and capable of unleashing untold damage.

Chapter III – “Agents”

The Rouges think they know the locations, but to be sure they must capture people that may know exactly where the Sha’kif were taken to. The problem is that only a few people knew where they are and they had no idea the Jabernauts were taken out of the loop. First, they have captured several citizens from various planets. They then interrogated them, but found out that they had no idea about the project until that moment. They were later killed and they then started to do their hunting on military bases hoping to find people that can help find the Sha’kif. The mistake they made is that they captured a Jabernaut. The horrible part is that he was in a hospital for an operation. The person captured was Wolfstar and he went in there to have his eye replaced after having it punched out in a fight with a crew member on another starship. The abduction took place after Claris, the half-Raconian daughter of Raco, and Rannock, a red Jabernaut from the Rainy River colony, went to Ravenhurst Hospital to visit him. That’s when the abduction happened as a burst came from his room and blasted a hole that caused some moderate damage to the structure. The hospital was reinforced and the patients were evacuated to other hospitals as the explosion was being investigated. Claris and Rannock were brought to another room to repair

their injuries. When they came into the wreckage, the room was a mess and Wolfstar was nowhere to be found.

Meanwhile on a Rouge ship, Wolfstar was being interrogated by them to see if he knew the location of the Sha'kif. What the Rouges did not know that he as a Jabernaut was not privy to that particular information, but none the less they try to extract that info. When they found that he did not know their location, they tried to ask him did he know anybody that did. He told that he did not know but he can find out for them. Upon that answer, they put in several implants and sent him on his way. His first stop was the hospital that he had disappeared from and to see who knew, but that was not his plan. No, his plan was to tell them about the abduction and to warn them that the Noxtroni rouges were in the area. He found the staff busy trying to keep the hospital in one piece and then he found Nightbird, Dark Cougar's "pet" robot and told him about his abduction and their plans to find the Sha'kif. Nightbird laughed at the idea, but Wolfstar told him about the implants and wanted him to follow him to the X-ray room to see for himself. They did and Nightbird was convinced and warned the forces about the invasion. The resident Noxtroni told them that the ships might be cloaked and had them to set up machines to detect the cloaked devices and defensive weapons to shoot any that came near the bases. No sooner that the devices were installed that they got their first test. Several Rouge ships came

towards the base and the air patrol warned the base and held them off while the troops got their planes scrambled and in the air. The Rouges were fought back and the base was secured.

Back at Ravenhurst in a rebuilt section of the hospital, they analyzed the parts taken from Wolfstar, they found out that it definitely was Rouge technology and kept them for further study, while they sent the subject into another room for recuperation and recovery. They still have to give him dishonorable discharge for starting a fight on another ship, but they gave him a small break for supplying them with the information. All they have to do now is to notify his new family that he is ready to live with them. With Wolfstar leaving, they have to concentrate on the matter at hand; destroying the Rouges, but Wolfstar has to settle the score with the Rouges by himself, at least for a while. They both have problems ahead for them. Wolfstar has to deal with his on Strocia with a new group and the resident Noxtroni were traded in for experts from the Noxtroni Ministry of Information.

Chapter IV – “Nightmare Children”

During a dream fight against the Rouges, Wolfstar witnessed a horrible creature was going for him. He had no idea what the creatures were until he has an idea after seeing one up close that it was a “nightmare child”. He had heard in the legends that if a Jabernaut is known to have mated with a Noxtroni and created a child, that the child would be nothing but trouble and brought certain doom to its relatives on the Jabernaut side. He also noted that the creature was particularly nasty-looking and mean and wants to have its victim. Wolfstar proceeded to fly towards the creature and try to kill it. But the battle was over before he got the chance and had to let it go.

Some time later, the imperial armies arrived at distant point of the empire where they met an armada of Rouge ships. The battle went on as usual with several ship on both sides getting blown up and the Zeta Empire coming in to aid and they managed to thin the armada, but then their ship were being boarded. Something was different about this particular boarding; they were not firing their weapons or killing crew, or stripping the ship of parts, but kidnapping Jabernaut females. They later found that the kidnappings were for the purpose of making more ‘nightmare children’. They also discovered that the other women were still on board and some that are

known to be Jabernaut were also still on board, but undetected because they were known to be **part** Jabernaut. The women were liberated moments after their disappearance was discovered and were sent to a Zeta hospital ship where they were checked to see if they were inseminated. Delzi Talzirokiiera was one of those abducted on the Noxtroni ship and told of the horrors that unfolded there. She said a few of them were and had to stay a year so the development can be studied. But she also said that so far, no troubles have been discovered and the fetuses can be destroyed at any moment. But as they were talking, they were developing problems with those fetuses attacking their birth mothers and trying to kill them. They were too late for some, but for some others, the fetuses had to be destroyed. While they wait for the nightmares to be born, the Empires were too busy holding off an ever closer horde of Rouge ships that were looking ever more powerful with every advance.

Unfortunately for the Empires, they already had some 'nightmare children' from previous incursions ready for use. After this announcement was made, the children were unleashed onto the unsuspecting alliance resulting in hundred of deaths, especially from the Jabernaut and Noxtroni armies. They fought their way through the onslaught, managing to bag a few live specimens for their labs, but mostly corpses for autopsies. After fighting against them for a few weeks, they found that they, for one, can shoot out

poison that is capable of killing a soldier in two shots. They also saw that they resembled some of the groups that were eliminated on their march. They felt sorry for the ones that were lost, such as Gammas, Pis, Betas, Zetas, etc... They have some clue of what they are up against, but they also needed ways to defeat them.

The first question posed by the Imperial labs is can the same tactics that worked on the regular soldiers work on the children or do they have to come up with different strategy for dealing with them? The answers did not come easy as they continued to fight their way through the cosmos, but a few ideas did come to put a dent in the Rouges' invasion plans. But then, an orange-skinned Venar wearing a traditional fighting suit and wielding a strange, burning sword. They then saw their answer as Mitka "Junior" Wazhir came to them as a fiery warrior with a fire sword. The Empire Korps were surprised about his appearance; they knew that he died as a result of Venga's strangulation. He explained, "There was nothing any of you could do to prevent my death and so coming back as this warrior as you see here is actually an improvement. I am ready to prove my service to you."

As soon as he finished, several 'nightmare children' appeared and he sliced through them with the greatest of ease and leaving barbecued carcasses everywhere. They were pleased with the results and they were glad that he came back. He then prepared himself to join their fight.

But no sooner said that done, a massive attack came their way and they sprang to action. They were quite a few 'children' and several mechs. The 'children' were getting easier to defeat and their corpses and severed limbs were saved to be used to develop another method to destroy them. With only the mechs remaining, Junior wanted to go attack the mechs but something told him to leave the mechs to someone else. Out from nowhere, the Ga'an with their biometallic bodies were flying straight into the mechs and were fighting with their operators and causing the mechs to shoot each other. They were worried the Ga'an would kill each other, but they flew out the mechs before they exploded. They have fended off another attack, but they collected bodies, parts and prisoners to take back for examinations.

Chapter V – “The Damage”

After the attacks, they moved their base to an area called “Cienfuegos” to get a different fighting theater. After they rebuilt the base, they took the prisoners to a holding cell for examination and they performed some tests on them, but the ones they really wanted to perform they were not allowed to do due to the Convention. But the same rules do not apply to body parts, so they perform the experiments with those instead. What they found out is while the ooze did not destroy the Noxtroni components, it did destroy the robotic components. They did know it had a similar impact during the Chaos wars when they sprayed several Niradreadd ships with the stuff.

Later, on a reconnaissance mission, Nadan and Rannock were attacked by several airships and small fighters. They went on and alerted the forces while holding off the assault. They did manage to destroy several fighters but had to go into *megas* mode to finish off the ships. Unfortunately, as they were fighting, they overloaded their circuits and crashed to the ground and returned to their normal modes. By the time of their crash, the reinforcements had arrived and took them back to base to be repaired. When they were brought back to base, Felipe Getorax and a few other doctors began to work on them. All they needed for Nadan is a few replacements and he is

off for rehab, Rannock, on the other hand, had to have a major rebuild. As he was lying on the operating table with his innards sprawled all over the operating table, he communicated to Felipe via a makeshift voice synthesizer. He was keeping tabs on his operation and doing a lot of talking. When Rannock asked Felipe if he was going to make it, he said that he would and not to worry. Rannock then said, "If I get out of here alive, how well can I fight?"

Felipe said, "You can fight, but you will compromise yourself when you go into *megas* mode. I advise you not to use that mode unless it is necessary."

"Well, that's a little spooky, but until you can find a better way, it'll have to do."

"I see that you understand."

The operation continues as Felipe and his team of doctors search for replacement parts for Rannock. They did find some but they are not sure that they can do it if he needs to do the operation again. They are desperate as they try to repair him, but as they were working, Rannock was received by a strange anomaly. It said, "I have a way to help you get better. All we have to do is to reinforce your body with special mechanisms."

Rannock then said, "You can do that? How wonderful! How long would it take?"

"Not long at all, and you will be pleased with the results."

“Glad to hear it, looking forward to using it.”

“Don’t be surprised if we meet again, but we must part for now.”

While Rannock was gone, Delzi decided that she wants to marry him. She had been looking for the right one, but decided that he would have to fill that role. She cannot wait to tell him the news. After a while, she went to where he was lying on the table waiting for his repairs and told him the news. When he heard, he said through the synthesizer, “Are you mad? Do you see me? You ask me while I have no way of kicking your butt? Why did you think that now is the best time to ask me that question?”

Delzi said, “I’ve wanted a guy, couldn’t find anyone else, so I went for you. I hope that this will be a happy moment.”

“Before you go any further on this crazy mission, sit back and think about and tell me when I’m back in one piece. Besides, there’s Kranje, Kreido, Crablaw, Megaraco, Graywine, etc... So, what do I have that they don’t?”

“I’ll surprise you. Bye!”

After a few moments, the repair work proceeded after finding a few more parts from other suppliers and Rannock is going to back in a fortnight. In midst of a potential recovery, there was the ooze experiment that is still being conducted. After the Imperial technicians knew the properties of the ooze, they tried to reproduce it, but to no avail. The lead technician, Abdul

As-Samari, a Koalastani native, has decided to take to himself the task of analyzing the ooze. First, he labeled the specimen "Robot death ooze" and stored it in metal barrels. He knows that the barrels do not have the same reaction as an actual robotic part. But since they cannot synthesize the ooze, he had told them only to use it as a last resort and wait till they are able to get more. They are also hard at work looking at ways to tell a republican from rouge. But then they remembered how Fyrsed, a mysterious hybrid, interacted with Jevor, a republican loyalist, by looking at each other's eyes and gaining information in that manner. They looked for Fyrsed and to figure out if his method can be used to separate the Noxtroni combatants. But knowing where he is stationed is a big mystery because they don't know where he is or for what country he is working for.

Chapter VI – “The Search Is On”

While they were looking for Fyrsed, a research ship was captured by the Rouge Skalion and its crew were held hostage. The news took some time to reach the troops, but once it did, they went on to devise plans for various search and rescue operations. But first, the ship has to be located and reached in time to save the crew. But delays to finding them including figuring how to get them out once they find them and finding them. At one point, they thought that they found them, but it was a false alarm and they had to run in order to save themselves. They also at one time thought of sending recon units to find them, but as that train of thought was going, it got derailed by a ceasefire. As they wait through the ceasefire, they weigh their options and see how they can find and rescue the hostages with minimal loss. Meanwhile, both sides wanted to know the condition of the POW's, so they agreed to have representatives from each side to inspect them. The Rouges have been told to go to an empty field to meet their prisoners at noon. They agreed and they were led to the field where their prisoners were waiting. At once, the inspections were under way and they saw that all the prisoners were there and were told that they had been treated well. The Rouge representatives wanted to take the prisoners back with them, but they

told them that they are waiting for reports on their prisoners. While these proceedings were going on, Imperial representatives were led to several ships to see their prisoners. As they went to ship to ship, they saw that the prisoners were alive and not harmed since the ceasefire, but several were killed and they allowed for the bodies to be removed on the condition that they not seek revenge for those deaths. Agreement was struck and the bodies were removed. The imperial representatives also secretly noted where the prisoners were held, so that further retrieval is possible. Now all they can do is to wait to get the other prisoners. As they waited, the real reason for the ceasefire was being developed by the Rouges. They are building new weapons to secure and to regain their dominance over the republicans and the Empire. They only made the ceasefire to buy time to rebuild their weaponry.

Right now, in addition to freeing their prisoners, they would also try to find their leader and to put an end to the Rouges' thirst for blood. They then asked the republican government for any new information on the Rouges. They found out that Rouges had been making the Nightmare Children for years and they do not advance their age, so it means that it take at least 15 years before they can be used. They were also told that unlike the R.O.T. troops that were reprogrammed in the last war, the rouges cannot be used for the same purpose, for as soon as they have the chance, they will kill their new masters and try to return to their old ones. Therefore, as soon as they can,

they must be killed.

Even if they did know the real reason, would they defeat them only to find out the POWs were killed in the process? Or would they try to make even more effective weapons for a more thorough defeat? Even if they do save the prisoners, can they find the ringleader and kill him?

Chapter VII – “The Rouge’s Decline”

After several weeks of waiting, the Rouges are nearly ready to unveil their plan and have also planned to announce the end of the ceasefire. Then a tall, dark figure came down a lighted hall towards a meeting room to hand his comrades the master plans. The figure is Gen. Nihinzho, one of the most powerful Rouges involved with the Rouge Skalion and he has a plan to get the tide to turn in their favor. He proposed an all-out attack on the center of the empire and to wipe out its people. But as soon as he put it to the table, they decided to hold off on it and make it as a “last-ditch effort” instead. Raas Skerilli leader Inribbi instead suggested that they create troops of robots and to rebuild their lost infrastructure. Nihinzho said, “Why are you making my proposals secondary?”

Inribbi responded, “Do you want a good fight or ‘chicken out’ and try to end the war early?”

“True that we don’t want a quick end, but we would also want to win. Besides, did you want the Sha’kif dead or not?”

“We wanted them as our slaves, not as target practice, but if they do step out of line, we will destroy their entire village. The others are just in our way and I don’t care if they are alive or not.”

Serraikure, another Rouge high official, then stepped in and argued, “Do we want a war or a massacre?”

They agreed to the war and they backed off and were off to develop more soldiers. The soldiers needed must be able to withstand any attempts to connect them to the hierarchy. They know that any soldier captured is directly linked to them, what they need is a way to sever the link at any moment to escape detection. To put this plan forward, they recruited some of their best men to sneak in and to steal plans. Knowing if they are successful, they could get in and out without being detected and have done it without breaking the “ceasefire” and if they fail, they would know it after receiving a few volleys and a series of rescue squads headed for their positions. As they were formulating their plans, several squads were approaching the prisons where the POW’s were being held. What the rouges did not suspect is that the notes that were being made were eventually passed to the Gammas and they decided to launch the rescue. After failing to detect the operation, failing to stop it, and losing all the prisoners that they caught, the Rouge leaders were enraged about the failures and decided to build their war machines, that is in what is left of their infrastructure. At that point their world has started to crumble around them and there is little they can do to stop it. Unfortunately, they have failed.

Meanwhile the empires are celebrating their success and sending the

rescued home. They were amazed that only a few prisoners were actually killed the whole time that they were there and only a few rescuers lost their lives in the operation. They also stated that the Rouges took on moderate losses to crew and equipment. They also wondered why that went so easily and as they pondered that question, they knew that they would want to respond once they found about the rescue. As a result, they order that all rouge vessels to be destroyed on sight and backup, if not otherwise engaged, can be requested to carry out the destruction. The ease of the battle was because the Rouges, although wary of a counterattack that will violate the ceasefire, never saw them coming and the ones that did were vanquished before they could respond. Their defenses were not prepared for such an attack and they knew that they could respond, so they decided to eliminate any chances of a revenge attack.

With all of their plans falling apart, the Rouges need a big plan to turn the war back in their favor. The leaders then met to decide how to get the war going their way and what they decided is that they need to make a surgical strike. Now with that decided, what they need to know is where to make that strike. Some of them have decided to hit their people, and some have decided to hit the government centers and others wanted to go for an all-out strike instead. Whatever they decided to do has to be decided in a short order because at any moment a major offensive by the empires is headed for

them and the best option then is for the leaders to disappear. The attack ships are being assembled for what could be their final assault, but their plans have started to come unraveled when they found out they cannot make enough ships and weapons for the planned attack and the ones that they did make were ineffective for any sort of battle. They realized that during the time that the prisoners were rescued, their war infrastructure was also being destroyed leaving any new machinery that were waiting to invade the United Empire in ruins. Inribbi then said, "How come we couldn't get our infrastructure repaired in time? Why our defenses are so weak? We are supposed to be the most feared entity in the universe, but we are getting smashed to bits. We have existed for thousands of years, but it seems to be collapsing in a very short amount of time and we see no way to come back from the ruins. Our ceasefire was nothing but a cover to relieve us of our prisoners and our factories and bases are destroyed and captured. Is there anything left that we can use to mount a great attack? Do we have anything left to put a big dent in those arrogant empires? The answer is that we now have nothing."

Nihinzhō said, “We are sorry to overestimate how much of a fight we had left and to underestimate the power of the empires. I’m afraid that we are gone and there is nothing that we could do about it. Any attack we launch now will end in failure and the stealth ships are no longer effective, they simply lost their edge. Either we surrender and hope for the best or fight and be exterminated. I am sorry.”

So the only options that they have left are either to flee or to face the empires themselves. Nihinzhō then decided that he would face them alone since he is the big boss and the others must flee and go their own separate ways. They knew that all they can do from this point forward is to get their remaining troops together and to have them harass the troops that gave them this horrible fate and to attack them in small troops. He has decided to sacrifice himself for he wants the others saved and for them to continue the fight from their hiding places. His last instruction is for them to rebuild from scratch once they moved to something else and to take out the Sha’kif once they let them out of hiding. Nihinzhō is on his own from here on out. He has sensed that the great Rouge system has finally come to an end.

Chapter VIII – “The Capture”

It has been several weeks since the collapse of the Rouges and now that Nihinzhoh is out on his own and waiting for his final doom, he tries to radio his tormentors his whereabouts so that they can meet for one last time. Finally, he gets a response and they agree to send a couple of small units to meet him. The units that were sent out were led by Lieut. Raco Vectorias and Sgt. Radzhik Zirrim. It took them several days to reach the rendezvous point, but once there, they had set up camp and awaited further instructions. A few days later, Nihinzhoh was ready to talk and was also ready to prove that he had nothing to hide.

Nihinzhoh then proceeded to say, “As you already know you have beaten our forces and have greatly compromised our programs, we would like to say that it might not be over yet. We may not have any great armies, but we do have soldiers that can shoot and run and are able to strike at any place at any moment. Although we are defeated, we are not as of yet finished fighting the republic and attaining our goals. We still want the Sha’kif dead, but it will take us a while to achieve it, but they will be achieved and you will have little power to stop it.

“As for my personal appearance, you can clearly see that I’m actually

here and not a hologram and I'm here by myself. I can also say that there are no troops waiting at the castle or surrounding you waiting for their chance to kill. Oh no, I am really here by myself and I am capable of defending myself. I'll be waiting for you at the castle. Whether we fight or we negotiate, I will be willing to help you and I am willing to negotiate.”

As soon as he left, they packed the camp and followed the path that he left for them. Raco is convinced that if there were any boobies, they would be in the castle, not on that path. Sure enough, the path to the castle was the easy part, but once they got to the castle, there was a surprise. Everywhere they looked; there was not a soldier in sight, no tripwires, no guns, no weapons, nothing but the empty walls and some equipment. Raco and Radzhik both tried to signal Ninhinzho, but to no avail. This is because he was busy preparing his meeting with them, but once he had noticed that they were there, he acknowledged them and told to make themselves at home, but not to ruin any of the machinery. Not knowing of what to make of it expecting a big fight and lots of destruction, and not a lot of quiet, they settled down and looked around to see if they missed any surprises. But as far as surprises went, Ninhinzho did give them food and guaranteed that it was not poisoned. They were surprised because he thought he would poison them, but he said that since they were going to eat the same food, that he had no reason to poison them. Raco then asked that if this was a diversion to get

them separated from the others. Ninhinzho then answered that the only thing that he knew is that they were leaving and he did not send troops to ambush them.

What Ninhinzho did not know that they gave the coordinates to their current position and have sent for some backup units to aid in the capture. While they were waiting, Raco went to him and told him that they were ready to talk. Ninhinzho said, “What do you want to talk about? Our surrender, my life, my cooperation, our fate? Raiko, what do you know about us besides making life hard for your people, huh? When did you suspect that I was willing to talk to you, besides I just said that just to keep you here longer. And the poisoned food, I meant that part, there never was any poison in your food, besides I’m not sure that if I did, that I would find the antidote to cure myself and make a clean getaway, leaving you here to die. There’s not much left of the rouges, but enough to make trouble and to give you a hard time.”

Raco then said, “Oh don’t worry, you will have plenty of time to talk at the place we have planned for you. You will love what we got in store for you.” He was momentarily interrupted by a soldier with some information and then continued to say, “Where were we? Oh yes, my associate just told me that your ‘ride’ is arriving and will be here very soon and we will be escorting you. Have a nice time.” Afterwards he got the troops to restrain him and to be brought outside. A few moments later, the backup has arrived and Raco told

him to search the castle and to get a transport ready. He then had Radzhik radio headquarters and then to tell them the good news.

After several weeks of waiting and watching, they have Ninhinzho in custody and just in time too. For weeks the Empire Korps were preparing to pullout and to give their post to a Gamma battalion. After they unloaded, they were told about the pullout and Nightbird debriefed the groups. He said, "I'm glad you have finally captured a high ranking official and an officer with significance such as Ninhinzho. What I'm about to tell you is that he and the other prisoners will be staying with the new detachment while we head for home. Any questions?" Radzhik then noted, "Why do the prisoners have to stay here while we go home?"

"Because we do not want any ships that they got left to attack us and free their men. Now you are dismissed, go pack your bags and thanks for your service." Now all they got left is to fight the guerrillas.

Chapter IX – “Winding Down”

As they hunt down any remnants of the rouge forces, they are reminded of these words: “There are no civilians, there are no innocent bystanders, there is no such thing as ‘collateral damage’ and each Rouge is as guilty as the next.” With these words, they are free to kill every last Rouge that refused to surrender. In the territories that they occupied, they have set up offices in which anyone with tips to the whereabouts of any rouge official can come in and report them and if they are correct, they will get a ‘generous’ reward. Meanwhile as the war slow to a crawl waiting for the remaining ringleaders to reveal themselves, the Sha’kif were allowed to temporarily to leave their hiding spaces knowing they must return when hostilities pick up again. They know it was safe because all the news they were hearing was that Rouge fragments were picking off at the troops, especially if they can find republican troops. As they fend off guerrilla attacks, they are waiting for a break that can turn the war around and finish off the Rouges once and for all.

That break came several weeks later when some unknown person came in and told the Zeta troops that in a town several miles from the base that he saw what could be the Rouge leaders’ bodyguards and he have sent in a friend to see if what he had though was true. It was true; it seems that Inribbe and

other high Rouge officials have been located. The informant waited to see if they were going to act on the info. A sergeant walked to him and said, "We will look at it to see if you were telling the truth. If so you will be rewarded, if not, you will be placed in the brig for misleading officials. So are you ready to lead us?"

He agreed and off to the town they went and when they finally arrived the troops were shown the building with the officials. Just as they arrived, the informant's friend arrived and warned them about the bodyguards. They saw the bodyguards and stayed out of sight. The friend then told the troops what he had seen and told them where they were. A couple of troops were ordered to the back side and enter the building to see if they can gain entry. After a few minutes, the troops in the building radioed the commanding officer, "We have made entry, should we try to capture them alive or have them killed? Over."

The commanding officer then said, "We want alive if we can, but if we can't, then take them out. Remember, killing them is our last resort, over." After that he had heard only silence when the troops tried to respond. The bodyguards have gotten them and they are wary of their presence. Once the bodyguards had warned Inribbe of their presence, he then told them, "Go outside and see if there are more, if there are, kill them too." As the bodyguards went outside, the Zeta troops were trying to figure their next plan

of action. What was troubling him was at the same time he wanted them alive, he also wanted his troops to stay alive as well. At that moment he had a plan, he then told his troops to surround the structure and to pin them down. They finally did kill a few bodyguards, but until they get the signal to enter, they will not know if the officers are still in the building or have found a way out. A few moments later, they got a signal to shoot tear and knockout gas into the structure. The gases made its way in and for what they had seen, the enemy is knocked out and the signal for entry had now been given. They then asked if they have permission to drag out the bodies, he affirmed it they also dragged out any bodies they found and tied them up. All went well until they reached the inner rooms where they believed the Rouge officers were hiding. What they saw is unlike the bodyguards, the officers are still alert and ready to attack. Some of the troops tried to fight them and others ran out and radioed for assistance. One of the troops radioed the commander, "Sir, we have a situation. Not everybody was knocked out. The officers, including Inribbe, are still alert and attacking our comrades. What shall we do? Over."

The commander responded, "Talk to them to see if they know anything, but most importantly, try to capture them alive. We know they have information, but having them actually tell us what it is will be our problem. Get them soldier, over and out."

“Over and out.” He then relayed the information to the other troops and they then tried to capture them, but the Rouges wanted to go out fighting. Inribbe knows that surrender is not an option and is ready to kill as many as possible just for him to stay alive. But somebody has managed to use some of the leftover knockout gas on the leaders and they were finally dragged out to be captured.

With the capture a success and the main leaders captured, they felt that it was time to announce the capture and for the Sha’kif to temporarily leave their hiding places. They were looking forward to getting information needed to eliminate the remaining Rouges and to end the war. As the days stretched into weeks, they kept watch on the prisoners hoping that they will yield important information and at the same time not kill themselves. With the Cienfuegos camp nearing capacity and other camps facing the same problem, they are trying to find ways to house them knowing that they can’t be sent to Digitron until they have been tried. All they can do is to sit, watch and wait until they find a way to try them. Then one strange night, the moment they been waiting for has arrived. Several Gamma and Zeta officers rushed to a holding cell as soon as they heard that one of the prisoners was willing to talk. It was Inribbe and he had just agreed to say something startling. A guard said, “What is this big announcement?”

His superior interrupted him and said, “Let him talk!”

Inribbe then said, “Where was I? Oh yes, I was going to say something that will help you in this war. There is someone else that you must capture, someone that is above even me and Ninhinzho. He is Zurun Hak’ and what he does is when the number of rouge armies have been dwindled, he is there to unite the remaining forces and to take for one last battle. He is really tough and he will not be as nice as any of us. He will fight to the end and will not hesitate to do so. That is all that I go to say to you. Bye.”

The officers wondered where he got the information and also why he decided to share that information. They then decided to go around the prison to verify the story and what they found is that either they do not know, they refused to talk, or in some cases, actually knew about the subject but thought they were fairy tales. With this new information, they have to contact the other armies and tell them the disturbing news.

Chapter X – “Zurun Hak’, the Last Threat”

When the news is relayed that Zurun Hak’ is their next target and more information is needed to verify the threat, everybody was scrambling to find about the threat and to see if it was for real. While they check on that possibility, they also look for other threats and ways to neutralized them, but despite of all of that, the danger scale has not been raised or the conditions had not returned to what it was during the early stages of the war. They may not know that he is out there, but they will soon receive a sign.

To prove that he actually a threat, he sent some of his storm troopers to invade the minds of their victims in hopes that with their minds destroyed that they will no longer pose a threat. They at first had an advantage as their victims’ move did not faze them, but when they started to get newer moves, their days were numbered and their minds were safe. The same scenarios had been played out, but when they got to Wolfstar, they though they got an easy mark. The reason that they really chose him is because he is the ‘agent’ that unraveled a previous plan to find the Sha’kif and in trying to get him out of the way will satisfy their revenge. Meanwhile, the recent activities were being monitored and the Empire was actually taking notice and came up with a plan that involved bringing out a couple of ‘antiques’ from

storage.

Mortalika then arranged for two proposals to the Imperial Senate for the release of the 'antiques'. His first proposal called for a test to see if they are battle ready and the second called for them to be put into service. He then asked Gen. Zamtu if it was alright and he agreed with the plan. He then wished Mortalika good luck and hoped the plan worked. Mortalika later went to the Imperial Senate to get his first proposal passed. After a few days, he arrived at Deimos to meet with them. When he arrived, he pressed his case to the senate for a possible plan to help end the Rouges' plan for destruction. What he presented to them was the plan to reactivate a couple of former enemies that they had captured in the last war and have them fight for the Empire. The senate listened as he talked about the plan and the hopes that they will be able to help them get rid of the rouges. The council then asked, "What if they still think that there's an R.O.T. and want to try to destroy the Empire?"

Mortalika then responded, "That's why I've presented my proposal in two parts. The first part, which is before you, is to get the two dragonbots, which by now you have assumed are the things that I'm after. With the released and reprogramming required for the first part, the second part is to press them into active service and to have the finish off Zurun Hak' and his army."

“Let’s hope the first part is successful. You got the machines and you better hope that you can get their loyalties switched. Thanks and do not fail us.”

“Thanks.”

After getting approval for the dragonbots to be released, he delivered the good news back to the base and asked for some technicians to go with him to get his new acquisitions. He later went to Felipe and asked for some technicians and received several for his troubles. After briefing them on their mission, they went to the storage facility where the dragonbots are stored and they started work on them.

The technicians were then shown the two dragons and were also shown their schematics and were told to start work on upgrading them. The technicians were also told that someone else will be in charge every once in a while he delivers progress reports to the Imperial Senate. One of Mortalika’s progress reports is detailing how he assured the dragons’ loyalties by threatening to blow them up if they did not obey his commands or tried to attack the wrong troops. Insuring the dragons’ loyalty, a remote destruct device is implanted into each dragon. When either or both try to go against his orders, he activates the detonator and can blow up either or both dragons with one push of a button and he made sure that there was enough explosives to do a complete job of destroying them. For the other parts of the plan, they

were granted new weapons and skills and were told why they were being awakened. Their reaction was of shock that they bothered to awaken them and to the fact that there is a new enemy that they must fight and his name is Zurun Hak'. He then told them who he was and why it was important for them to stop him. So after a few decades of sleep, the cyberdragons are once again active and ready to fight. The next phase is to see if they are ready to accept commands from a new master, their old enemy and if they can carry out mission to help destroy the rouges once and for all.

Chapter XI -- “Hits From the Past”

While the two dragons were being prepared to fight, Zurun Hak’ launched an assault on the empires hoping to find the Sha’kif and to eliminate his enemies. His ships have stepped up their attacks on the forces, but those attacks never brought them any closer to their goals. But it seems that they are only there to buy them time until they can come up with a bigger plan.

Meanwhile, from an undisclosed training facility, Mortalika and the technicians are observing the prowess of the cyberdragons and their new weaponry to see if their plans will come into action. Sakhalin’s flying prowess has increased and the new weapons have managed to hit moving targets, while Siberitron’s icy breath is very effective against air and mechanized units. While they were doing their test runs, a few Rouge airmen have discovered their location. The cyberdragons’ weapons and enhancements worked and the invaders never had a chance to relay the location to their headquarters, nevertheless, they relocated to another secret location and continued with the training.

On a dark planet, the Empire Korps have found a destroyed city and Rouges nearby waiting to attack. While some of the Rouges were surprise, the rest did manage to turn back the troops, sending them underground,

giving the Korps the advantage to re-enact the Gaslatore War. That meant shooting from hole in the ground, blowing up buildings from below, and surprise attacks whenever possible. Cougarian Gen. Zadmarza has been leading this underground effort since Gen. Zamtu is in a secret location developing more plans to find and destroy Zurun Hak' and his troops. To further quell the Rouge numbers, they transmitted the dreaded drone and while they were too occupied to put up a decent resistance, they were captured or slaughtered. And this was the way that they fought for several weeks as they went from city to city capturing Rogues as they go.

Meanwhile at Zurun Hak's secret base, he was in a meeting with his two of his most trusted aides discussing on how to complete their mission. As they were talking, they decided to record the meeting on a few *infoqubes* knowing that he is they only one that could make and playback the recording on the cubes. They first suggested that a huge gunship would go around and destroy the planets wiping out the Sha'kif and anybody else that stood in their way. It was voted down because they wanted a powerful weapon that can be built in a short time. So they again kept passing around ideas that are either too time consuming, too complex, takes too many troops, or too many ships. The only thing that they decided on so far is whatever weapon it is, it will be pre-fab and it will be built from several locations. Hak' decided on the manufacturing locations that will not be easily found and any guards that are

captured are instructed either fight to the death or commit suicide in order to keep the location secret. Since they could not agree on a weapon, they decided to reconvene at a later date and not to tell any of the troops of their plans.

Several weeks had passed with little progress from the Empires' front, but they are piecing together some clues about where their boss is, but it is not getting them any closer. While they were waiting for answers, a weapon appeared in space overlooking the Noxtroni Republic. The weapon looked like a huge gun and it was ready to destroy its central pain, but before it can do any serious damage, a volley of ooze was aimed towards it and the weapon was disabled. With the weapon disable, the Rouges started to fly out for repairs until they realized that they were about to be trapped and have no way to avoid it. They tried to fight it out, but they lost the rest of the weapons and their propulsion, meaning they were ripe for destruction, but instead, they took the weapon and its occupants to an undisclosed part of Gamma space for analysis. The empires were proud of the capture and the new ooze.

The captured weapon and its occupants are being analyzed for structure, capabilities, strengths, place of origin etc.... The information gathered from the weapon will be useful in countering any new ones and finding the place of origin so that they cannot make any new ones. With the

information gathered so far, they will also will see if any more weapons are threatening their security and to gather info from them as well. After some time, it was decided to upgrade the wormhole shields to fight against Rouge ships and their armor. Several ships were chosen for the upgrades and testing of potential new weapons and along with the new weapons were possible sites for Rouge hideouts. They were briefed on the possible ships, weapons, and tactics to be expected.

At an undisclosed location, Zurun Hak' must be wondering how his experiment has been going because he has not received any word on how his experiments has been going nor has heard form the people who were conducting the experiment. He then sent for his generals and questioned them about it. They had no idea either on what happened to their weapon and they were getting frustrated because they have no idea what they are up against and every time that they send out spies, they either were killed or got captured. He is still determined to complete his mission no matter what happens to him or his resources. He then decides to launch his new stealth warships to the battlefield and try to force the empires to surrender. But his plans have developed serious flaws. For one thing, the empires have developed stealth detecting and disabling sonar which found and uncloaked their fleet and made them as plain as daylight. Another thing is that Siberitron and Sakhalin have now joined in the fight and are ready to test

their new weapons on the ships. The stealth ships fought back, but their weapons were disabled within a few minutes after attacking and Siberitron simply froze them for easy capture. Yet another mistake he had made is that he actually decided to board one of the ships and lead them to battle convinced that they were invincible. And they also had the bad fortune of choosing to fly within imperial space and especially next to the some jabernaut strongholds and planets were they were regularly patrolling anyways. Zurun Hak' was pissed that he was taken down that quickly and without a decent opportunity to defend himself and he also knew that he is close to being captured himself and being questioned by his enemies. He simply could not risk it because he knew that once he fell, the rouges will no longer have a reason to exist and might as well surrender to the republic. Mortalika is impressed with the results and cannot wait to face Zurun Hak' once he finds out where he is. He does not have long to wait as the stealth ships are being chipped out of the ice blocks. It is a pity that they were too distracted to try to make an escape.

Chapter XII – “Towards the End”

After capturing the ships, the engineers proceeded to thaw out the ships. And after several hours of thawing and securing the ships, they have reached the point that they can actually enter the ships and to see what's inside and to gather what they can of the ships. They also know to gas out the crew inside to prevent any surprises and to tell anybody who goes into those ships to wear protection because of the gas and any crew that they have missed. As the ships continue to thaw out, the engineers are starting to be replaced with soldiers. The anticipation grows as the ice water continues to soak the floor wet and wet vacs continue to suck up the mess, Mortalika had them to come up with plans to retrieve the data that is within these ships. He also thanked the dragons early for capturing the ships thinking that he might not even have the chance to do it later. Later on, he told the troops to position guns and men outside the ships in case anybody inside escaped and tries to free the ships.

A few hours later, their preparations came into place as the crew were dragged off the ships and placed into a holding chamber to further prevent their escape. Zurun Hak' almost made his escape plans work, but he met Mortalika who easily put him into a private holding cell while he awaits his

fate. Since the ship have been emptied, they contacted the empire and told them that they have some valuable treasure and in the process of inventorying it. Amongst the inventory is the database stored on hundreds of medium-sized blue glowing cubes only known as *infoqubes*. As they found the cubes they would also have to find a way to access the information that is supposedly stored on them. Since they did not know how to use the devices, they started to look n the ships on how to use these devices while others have started to question the captives for whom the effects of the gas has worn off and were conscious enough to respond. The willing captives were then escorted back to the ships to show them how to use their *infoqubes*. An Imperial solider said to the captives, “Now which one of you will tell us how to work these devices?”

One solider then rose and said, “The devices that you have in your hands are call *infoqubes*, Q-U-B-E-S. You are wondering why it is spelled that way. It is because a technician needed a catchy name for the devices and be careful; they hold ‘tons’ of information.”

“Thanks for the info, now who is going to tell us how to use one of these ‘*infoqubes*?’”

A second solider told them, “In order to use an *infoqube* one must first know how to insert on into the machine. There is only one way to insert an *infoqube* into a machine is to line the spikes at the bottom of the cube with

the holes in the *qube drive*. Once that is done, the machine should be able to recognize the *qube* and start reading the data instantly.”

With that information they started to work on gathering the info and they left the captives with them in case they can figure out some of the information. They now have amassed great amounts of information including weapons, ships, bases, troops, defenses and the weapon that they were planning to use to wipe out the empires. What they have is the information needed to put the Rouges into extinction and to make them history. The information was then sent to the empires so that they can carry out its destruction. One of those people that received that info was Zagrata, who spotted what looked like a Rouge city on a desolate planet.

When her crew spotted the city, she landed the ship nearby and got her crew to examine the city. Zagrata, an skaratti male robot named Skibaar, Kranje, two double-headed jabernaut priests Targa and Varga, and a Noxtroni female named Nezzara left the ship and approached what they thought was a city. From the first glimpses, they saw highly advanced buildings with most of them climbing toward the sky and covered in glass. Nezzara was scared to go into the city for some reason, so she had Skibaar to fly in and examine it for her. He did and he went on to have the equipment connected and the stealth mode activated and Nezzara on the other end seeing what Skibaar sees. With the equipment in working order, Skibaar

flew into the city undetected and did a few circles until he came upon a structure that could pass for a factory. He then was told to fly towards it and to see what was inside. He then found a huge window and what he saw inside amazed him. The thing on the floor looked like it could a piece of weaponry. It looked like it could be some sort of loading chamber. He then flew away from the factory and back to the landing site with the rest of the crew. He found out why she was afraid to go inside the city herself, she was afraid that they would capture her and have her branded as a traitor. They then reported their findings back to the Empire and they checked it with the recent information and confirmed that it was a weapons factory. They thanked them and sent troops to destroy it. Skibaar went back in to mark the targets for the troops to destroy and when he came back, he saw a big surprise that arrived amongst the troops, Junior and Rosaline decided to help out in the attack.

Somewhere out in space are Hak's loyal generals in their ships scanning the known galaxy looking for their leader and to try to free him from his fate. They have all of their resources used just to find their leader and repeatedly used their weapons to defend themselves. They have encountered several ships, none had him and none knew where he was. When they got disappointed, they got their weapons and destroyed them. When they finally figured out what happened to their boss, they went

straight to a nondescript asteroid where they hoped that they can find him.

Meanwhile, inside the asteroid, Mortalika has been warned about an approaching Rouge ship looking for Zurun Hak'. He knew then that he has to prepare himself for a fight that could be his last. When he decides to fight, he does not back down. He then stepped out and told the engineers and other present personnel, "I have received news that there are several ships approaching this location looking for their leader and it is my duty to tell you that I'm going to fight them and while I'm engaging them in the fight, I want all of you to leave this place and take as many of the prisoners with you. Except for Zurun Hak' because that is the one that they are looking for and if they find him one of your ships, they will go for you instead of me, so leave him here so you can make a clean getaway. I also want you to leave Siberitron with me and take Sakhalin to defend your ships. That is all."

After the speech, Mortalika was briefed by one of his generals about the odds of him surviving the fight. He was made aware of the odds and decided to leave a message only to be played when his death is confirmed. He then placed the message in a probe and told Siberitron that his and Sakhalin's controls can be released from his control and handed over to his colleagues and they will have their fingers on the detonator. Siberitron then spoke, "Why are you telling 'me' this?"

Mortalika then said, "Because after this fight, you will be the only one

left. Don't tell them that you knew this. Just tell them that I have a message to send them and the coordinates to this site." Mortalika saw the ships breaking in and knew that a horrific fight is about to be underway.

Chapter XIII – “...And There Is None”

As the Rouges started to approach the asteroid, Mortalika prepares himself for battle and then tells Siberitron to be prepared to launch the probe and to follow it. He understood the instructions and waited to leave. He also pleaded to Mortalika that he wanted to defend him but was told that he is more valuable alive.

While they were waiting to fight to the finish, Nadan is started to get worried about his brother and started to prowl the bases to get answers. He then heard that Felipe's engineers had just arrived from a secret assignment and then proceeded towards that direction. Once he got to the engineering building, he questioned several engineers and got no response from them. They told him about Mortalika's plans but did not tell him where it was taking place. He had to force the answers from them and then only an idea where it was taking place. What he got was an approximate location for his plan. With this information and a spacecraft, He went to the aforementioned coordinates and to see if he can save his brother. Meanwhile, several MPs were alerted to the missing spacecraft and tried to figure where it had gone. But by the time they have figured out about the situation of the missing spacecraft, Nadan was long gone and on his way. Once he had found a way to

enter the asteroid, he leaves the ship and finds that the place is crawling with armed Rouges. He blasted his way through heavy Rouge fire and when he finally made his way to Mortalika, they had a short conversation and he was shocked when he saw Nadan had come to help him. Mortalika said, "Why are you here?"

Nadan responded, "I am here to help you."

"You can help me by leaving."

"I have no intention of leaving you, besides, when you leave, I would be the only one left. But with me fighting by your side, we all get to go." As they traded volleys with the Rouges, they continued their conversation. He then said to Nadan, "Cover me; I've got something very important that must be done."

"Will do."

While Nadan held back the Rouges, Mortalika threw in a few amendments to his plan and told Siberitron to follow the probe back to the home base. With that completed, He knew he is going to commit suicide, but he will be remembered as a martyr. He came back to Nadan and told him of his plans and asked him not to let them leave the place. He agreed and he continued to fight off the Rouges.

As Mortalika was putting the finishing touches on his plan, Nadan was blasting his way through the rouge onslaught. There were a couple of

soldiers that tried to capture him, but he used his blast wave on them. He then saw a couple that tried to find his brother but they were cut down. As he was continuing to defend the base, he heard somebody heading towards Mortalika, but he was too busy trying to defend himself to help him. A few moments later, Mortalika and Zurun Hak' meet for their final showdown. He knew that it was almost over, and so he then launched the beacon and told Siberitron to follow it and to deliver the message. When Zurun Hak' saw his prey and thought that killing him would weaken the empires' resolve and that his cause would be victorious. When Mortalika saw Hak', he thought that killing him would finally finish the Rouges and make the empires' victorious and have one less scourge to worry about and then fighters gathered their weapons and their strength and took to their positions. At first, they were shooting and missing each other, and then they tried to do hand-to-hand combat, but just fired at each other when they got too close. They fought like this for some time until Hak' got upset and wanted to end the fight once and for all, so he decided to overload his main weapon, a blaster gun that he mounted on his right forearm and held his fire until he was at some distance from his opponent, but when Mortalika figure out what he was doing, he did not run away, instead he ran towards him and Hak' was trying to get his distance, but when he fired his gun Mortalika was a few meters from him and when he took off his weapon to throw at him he was in his face and tried to

run away.

Nadan and the Rouges heard the blast and figured that the fight was over and they were victorious, but they then found out that the blast was still growing and is about to engulf the asteroid. Some of them tried to see who won but they were the first to die and since the others, including Nadan could not find the exit in time, they too perished. Siberitron, who already left before the fighting started saw the explosion and knew that the end had arrived and Mortalika had perished. It was up to him and the beacon to deliver the message. And so he left to follow the beacon to its destination.

Chapter XIV --“The Battle Rages on Despite the Loss”

As Siberitron was trying to figure where the beacon was going, a ship saw them and flagged them down. The ship is a friendly vessel, but it was too small for him, so they took the beacon in instead and he followed them. The Venar ship then installed a communications relay around his neck so that he could talk to them. He then proceeded to talk and when he found out that the communicator was working, he then told them what happened. He then said, “Is there a chance that you can take me to Mortalika's home base?”

The ship's commander responded, “You mean Fort Venture?”

“Yes! Take me there.”

“Will do. Is there anything else that I need to know about?”

“Not until I've told his comrades.”

“OK! I'll take you there.”

The ship then changed course and headed towards Chargos. It must be headed in the right direction because the beacon was emitting high-pitched, happy-sounding beeps. As it continues on towards Chargos, the bases were still trying to figure what happened to Nadan and why he was interested in going to that site. They were still looking for answers when an

announcement rang out, “Special notice, repeat, Special notice, There is a ship approaching this location and apparently Siberitron is flying behind it, be prepare for possible combat. That is all.” When that announcement finished, everybody was rushing to battle stations expecting a fight, but only to find him sitting in the field next to the ship trying to calm everybody down. Gen. Zadmarza then arrived on the scene demanding an explanation. He then said,” What’s going on here and why is Siberitron is doing here?”

Siberitron then spoke, “Remember when we were on that asteroid and Mortalika has us to leave?”

“Why yes, yes I do. Why?”

“I think I know why he wanted us to leave. There is a beacon on board that ship that will tell you what you need to know.”

“Fine then. Bring out that beacon.”

Siberitron told the commander who then told his crew to bring out the beacon. After the beacon was brought out, the crowd was told to disperse. Siberitron then followed Zadmarza to his office. Zadmarza then send out a few officers to the ship telling it was cleared for departure.

At the office, the general had the beacon placed on the floor in front of his desk and had the men dismissed. He then asked the cyberdragon what was inside the beacon. He told him it was safe to open and suggested that a few engineers are present as witnesses. He then summoned the engineers

from Felipe's workshop to his office. The investigators came as well to observe the probe. The general then ordered the engineers to open the beacon. It was opened and they saw a case. The case was removed from it and it was opened and inside was some paper and a small audio disc. The items were handed over to Zadmarza and as he read the letters, he found out that Mortalika was dead and that his command is to be transferred to him. Amongst those duties is to speak in front the Imperial Senate to propose that part two of his plan to be enacted, hire someone to tell his family the bad news, the cyberdragons' destruct switch. The investigators then cut in, "So this is where Nadan went to. As soon as he comes back with his story..." Siberitron had to interrupt them, "If what I saw in that explosion was correct, Nadan is also dead, and so were the Rouges that were attacking them."

The investigators then asked, "What about Zurun Hak'?"

"I'm guessing that he was dead too. I've only remembered that he was still on that asteroid when I left."

"Was there anybody else here that can prove that he is dead? In that case, the suspect is still declared a living suspect and will be prosecuted."

Gen. Zadmarza had another idea; he wanted to play that audio disc. When he played the audio disc, a voice was emitted form the disc. It was Mortalika and the disc started playing his final requests.

"If you have received this disc, it means that I have perished and you

need a new commander. I will name the new commander, but first, I will tell you why I was on that asteroid and the plans. As you know, I was conducting a training mission for Siberitron and Sakhalin. The training mission is successful. But as you know only the training is approved, not the part which puts them into actual combat. That will be left to the new commander.

There are also a couple of controllers in the package and they are for the control of the dragons. As you know already, the control is in my name only, but there is a way to transfer control. I will give the instructions later.

“Also if you notice that any person that knew of my plans died with me. Neither Siberitron nor the Engineers that went with me knew of the full plan, only the fact that there were several ships looking for a certain prisoner and when they freed that prisoner I will fight him to the finish and to hopefully to a better ending to the war.

“And now the time to which you all are waiting for, the name of the new commander. The name that I’ve picked out is Zadmarza. Yes, I’ve chosen him to take over the operations and for him to continue my role in the war. He is going to implement part 2 of my plan. He will implement this plan in time to end this war. The dragons should be ready for combat and the codes for the controllers are stored in a small yellow envelope with the other stuff. They are to be used only when the time is right. By my destruction and disintegration, I have saved you from picking out my burial spot, which I

know would be a big problem. And since this is the last time that you will hear from me, may this war be ours to win.”

After the message was read, Zadmarza dismissed the troops assembled and reached for the envelope. He then opened it and stared at the instructions and studied them for a while. As he was reading the instructions, a message came up on his intercom.

The intercom blared out, “I have a message for Gen. Zadmarza. A message for Gen. Zadmarza.”

He then answered the intercom and said, “Who is this message from?”

“It is from Gen. Zamtu. He has some breaking news for you.”

“What is it, then?”

“You will have to go to his office to find out. I’m sorry, but he didn’t tell me saying it was a secret.”

“I will go and see him, then. Bye”

“Bye.”

After he ended the conversation, he then went over to Gen. Zamtu’s office to receive the news. Once in the office, the generals sat down and looked on as Gen. Zamtu read the latest war news. He then said with great sorrow, “We have terrible news, it has seem that the Rouges have managed to launch their weapon, a very destructive war ship that can bring doom to the empire. Even though we have done everything to slow it down from

destroying the factories to capturing the architects, it has seemed that the ship has been completed. There are forces in the vicinity of the ship and they will tell us if there are any further developments. You are all adjourned.”

As the bad news was told to the troops, the Rouge battleship was making its way through the “underbelly” of the Empire hoping to surprise them. But what they got is a small waiting party consisting of a few Dimandi ships and an Earth cruiser with Venar backups. The Rouges saw that defense and thought nothing of it, assuming it would be an easy target. The waiting ships knew of the attacks on the Rouge troops and factories and wanted to see what effect it had on the ship's construction. They asked the ships to scan the vessel to see what weapons they got. The captain the Earth cruiser, Roger Sherba, then relayed the scan results back to command central. Moments later, he has got the scans back and they were compared to the stolen plans for the ship and they found out that they were two different vessels. The outsides looked the same and were capable of holding the same number of crew, but the ship that they saw did not have the full crew complements, meaning that they are several hundred men short. They also found out the shielding and the weaponry is vastly lacking indicating that all of the hits on the factories had an effect on their war effort. So what they saw is not a vastly superior war machine marching towards victory leaving trails of destruction in its wake, but a jalopy marching towards oblivion with parts

of itself floating around in the cosmos. They know what to do, try to destroy the ship and warn the others of its approach.

And fight they did, but at first it looked liked that the ship was moving too fast for them to hit it. Capt. Sherba then told the VRS Venar Republic-A to track the ship and to try to disable its propulsion units while he took the VRS Waigoral and tried to corner the now disabled Rouge ship and targeted its weapons. The Rouge ship fired back, but thanks in part to the destruction of the factories responsible for building them, its weapons were below the original standards set for the ship and therefore, not as effective as the should be. Capt. Sherba easily deflected the shots and the Dimandis then caught up to the action, which is by now moving away from the Rouges' original flight path and away from the empire. The ships then traded weapons blast that did more damage to the Rouge's war machine than to the defending ships. As the ship drifts away due to its damaged engines, the Rouges tried in vain to repair all the destruction that they received, but they were boarded and were taken off the ship. The ones that refused to go were killed in battle and their bodies were analyzed. Sherba then radioed back telling them that the ship was captured and did not put up much of a fight. Without that ship, the Rouges' chances of victory have diminished and they knew that defeat was on its way. They have only one thing left to do and that is to...

Chapter XV--- “...Tell Your Friends, the War's Over”

With the Rouges' best weapon not even an option, they had no other choice but to tell the empires involved that their quest is over and they have been vanquished. With this news, the empires briefed each other to see if this qualified as the end of the war. On November 18, 2024 (Earth time), they decided to meet at the council halls in Zeta territory and told their troops to look for holdouts. Once everybody arrived at the appointed place, the meeting was underway.

Just about everybody had arrived except for the Zeta military commander, who is seeking advice of one of its most prominent conquistadors, Marcus Rainier, and Generals Zadmarza and Zamtu who went to the United Empire legislature to place Siberitron and Sakhalin into active service and to help with the war effort. Months later everybody has done their task and has now assembled to decide the postwar path of the Noxtroni. They also have to decide on what to do with the captured soldiers and their generals.

The topics that are planning to discuss are; how to integrate the rouges into their society, how to resettle the Sha'kif, deciding Noxtronia's future, and how to settle future conflicts amongst the empires. While everybody has different ideas about these issues, everybody agrees that something must be done to ensure that events similar to this one can be prevented in the future.

On the subject of the Rouges, they were clambering on what to do with the captives and how should they be treated and under whose jurisdiction should be they tried under. Several have suggested that they should be tried under common rules and have their fate decided using whatever rules are common to the empires involved.

While the empires are deciding the fate about the prisoners, the troops are wondering about their future. Jevor is wondering about the fate of his sister, Nezarra and whatever she was hurt while under Zagrata's command. And everybody was wondering if their families were harmed in any of the battles and invasions. A few of the soldiers stationed at Fort Venture have also tried to figure who and where is Fyrsed and how does he manage to communicate with Noxtronis just by looking at them. They all tried to talk to him, but he was not ready to reveal his special trick just yet and he was also wondering if Wolfstar will be available to tell his part of the secret. They told him that it is up to the generals if they want him to tell his part of the story. He was satisfied with the answer and he then went back to his work.

As for looking for remaining Rouge hideouts, most either disappeared or were destroyed and most of Rouges' infrastructure was no more. What little was left of the system cannot be used for military purposes. So the verdict that as handed to the on Wednesday March 5, 2025 is that the war is over. The Sha'kif are now confident that they now return to their home and

live in peace, even if it is an uneasy peace. They now looked forward to resettling on their home worlds knowing that the worst is behind them.

When they realized that in order to figure out how Fyrsed communicated with the Noxtroni, they need to find him and find Wolfstar and get him back on the active roster. They know that getting Wolfstar back is the easy part; all they have to do is to convince him to come back to Chargos and to the Empire Korps. That would be difficult because in the belief that he was dismissed, he got another job and started college. Two agents were sent to his location to try to retrieve him. After they arrived, they looked all over the country for him, discovering that he lived in the state of Durantes where he was staying in a walled neighborhood. Like it was said before, finding him was the easy part.

The hard part was convincing him to go with them. The objections that he raised was that he had a new house, a new job, going to college, a friend to watch over, and a girlfriend and he had no immediate plans to leave them right away. When they quizzed him about what he knew, he said that he still knew the stuff and would only go if the stay was temporary. They agreed hoping that one day he would return for a more permanent visit. He accepted and brought a few people with him and leaving his “brother” and friend behind to watch the place. They agreed and after they made arrangements, they traveled to their waiting shuttles that would later take

them to Chargos.

Once they arrived at Chargos, they were then driven to their final destination, Fort Venture where Wolfstar would then tell the Empire Korps about his experiences during the war. He and Gansta' Boy were summoned into a nondescript building where their guest were waiting for them. Before they told the story, the commanders explained,

What you are about to hear has been declassified for the current company only and cannot be disclosed to anybody else including the media. The information will be disclosed to the general public at the date chosen at the organization's discretion. Anybody who reveals the information to an unauthorized person will be imprisoned for 10 years.

After hearing the warnings, they then tell the circumstances behind Wolfstar's troubles. What they are about to hear is what he had found out about the Rouges. The records were obtained from him on two separate occasions, once where he was fighting the 'nightmare children' and the second time were he was abducted and was made into a spy. One of the things that he noticed was their fighting style. They were the most vicious of the rouge soldiers and because of that they were the most feared. They were known for hacking their victims to pieces and for showing no mercy. And according to other reports, they are also capable of picking up the abilities that were picked up from their victims. Thanks to this and similar reports, the 'nightmare children' were exterminated. The other report detailed the

circumstances surrounding the abduction. The incident did start form Ravenhurst Hospital where Wolfstar was staying and was beamed into their awaiting ship. He then told the officers what happened next,

“After I was abducted into the ship, I saw several rouges moving around this huge room and I was brought into a small chamber where I was asked several questions about the location of the Sha'kif and they reminded me that if they do not get the information that they wanted that they were going to kill me and find someone that can. With that in mind, I've told them hat I can find the people that knows the needed info and bring them to the ship and I can also go around and access files where the info was kept. Knowing that I couldn't do those things, but I really wanted to stay alive, so I've said those things. They reluctantly agreed to use me as their agent. That's when I left the room to go to the big chamber where it sits a large and hideous machine. I was taken to a table that was positioned under the machine and then they sedated me. What implants or where they put them, I did not know at that point, but when I was brought back, they reminded me that they can still kill me whenever they want. Satisfied that they my cooperation, they let me go and you already knew what happened next.

“Oh, you wanted to know how I've managed to shake off their control? It wasn't simple, but as I was going through the hospital, I've passed by the imaging room and I've remembered that you got my internal schematics on file and it was important that you knew why you're grabbing it. But as I continued to search for information as I originally told them, I then found out the hard way that some of the implants were deflective and the mind control devices did not stay on as they should, so I've used those facts and I've hurried to the first person that can help me. It was Nightbird. I then proceeded to tell him what happened and he took care of it. And that is how you knew of the 'agent' plan.”

With the rest of the 'Agents' plan filed away, they were satisfied with the information that they were given and filed it in the archives. But they

still wanted to know one more thing, how did he know that the implants were not working and how did he still have control of his own thoughts. All he could say is that the particular batch that was used was faulty and he knew when the link was offline. They also knew that he was not the same machine that they first knew and his military days are winding down and his politics are getting louder. So his future involvement in the organization is undecided.

Meanwhile the personal relationships of Jevor Estin and Rannock Zederu are yet to be decided since they wanted to date their co-workers and are not sure how to go by doing legally. Rannock has been seeing Delzi Talzirokiiera for quite some time and is trying to figure out how to say that he loves her without getting mushy or getting in trouble. He also had to tread carefully due to the earlier incident during the Rouge War when she was captured and was to have been used to incubate a 'nightmare child.' Jevor's problem with Kirrin Zirido is that at one point she was his boss and stating a relationship with someone that was once one's boss is very difficult. The relationship is a very hard one to define, but it must be done. They had a long discussion and they decided since that they're still co-workers is to define their relationships as 'just friends' meaning that even though they can still talk to each other, they cannot engage in dating. When they tried to respond with a kiss, they were held back by the response, 'friends don't do that, only

lovers,' they accepted and responded with 'until the difference.' meaning that they will wait until the situation has changed before they will redefine their relationships. Jevor is satisfied, if it were only that easy to deal with Nezzara, his sister, the same way.

The first thing he needs to do is to find when Zagrata is scheduled to land on Chargos and to see if his sister is also on board at the time. The tricky part is that her schedule is not that definite and it does change constantly. Another hard part is to convince them to get her to bring her ship his way.

As he was waiting for his opportunity to contact Zagrata, he did some battle practices with his buddies and went around and chatted with the other members. He did this for weeks and he also was looking for someone who can contact her ship. After weeks of waiting, he got his chance to contact Zagrata. He asked if she had any plans to be anywhere near Chargos and they said yes. He then made arrangements for her to visit him at the base. He then got reassurances she will visit while her ship gets checked out. Jevor then tell his friends the good news.

After Zagrata's ship had arrived at the airstrip, the crew left the ship and ran towards the waiting people. Zagrata then saw Jevor and started to rush towards him. Once they met, Zagrata asked him, "Why did you call me over here?"

Jevor responded, "Because I wanted to see Nezzara and because I miss her."

"So that's all, then I'll tell her that you wanted to see him."

After the exchange, Jevor said hi to Zagrata's husband and rushed over to see his sister. Judging by the expressions on their faces, they were happy to see each other. She then checked his head for any problems and it seemed to be better. After the greetings, the crew is on their way back to the base. Once back on the base, one problem resurfaced with Kreido continued to battle with Kranje. Radzhik had to enact Cura's edict and had the two separated for the duration of the visit.

The visit had a few bumps, but overall, it went well and they all had a good time. Before Zagrata was to leave, she found out a nice surprise was at hand for one of her friends. They said their goodbyes and she then told Jevor and his friends that they are to leave with her. Once on the ship, she told them the news; since Jevor is known a war hero, the Jabernauts want him and his friend to tour Strocia as a goodwill gesture between their peoples and to show their appreciation. Once he had heard about the trip, he wondered whether it is for real or not. Nezzara went to check up on the deal and to see if there were any ulterior motives. There were none and the trip checked out as legitimate. After hearing that the trip checked out, they all agreed to go and enjoy the rewards.

THE END