

# **Alien Hunter**

# **Conner Jones**

**IS HUNTING**

**SNORFLAG OF LAVATON**

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# **Follow Conner Jones on his other Hunts:**

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## THE UNIVERSE OF THE ALIEN HUNTERS

You've probably not met an alien before.

*(If you have report it to the police straight away)*

If you haven't then you've never heard of some of the alien races you will read about in this book. Take care to study and learn. You never know when you might be called upon to hunt some aliens.

It's best to be prepared.

## THE JUDGES OF THE UNIVERSE

In order to police and ensure peace throughout the whole of existence, the **Judges of the Universe** were created.

They write the laws of the cosmos and ensure they are kept by all.

Any civilised planet may request that they be protected by the Judges. They will then help that civilisation safeguard their world.

The enforcement arm of the Judges are millions of Guard Robots, built to track criminals and capture them for the Judges. The robots are loyal and bound by their circuits to carry out their duty, without hesitation or fear.

## **THE GUARD ROBOTS**

The Guard Robots are capable of capturing any alien from any planet in the known universe. They are strong and intelligent, with few weaknesses.

### **GUARD ROBOT NO. 3672**

One of the oldest robots, with many years of experience that many new Guard Robots seek to download and learn from.

However he is so old now that repairing him is very costly. He no longer tracks and captures alien criminals any more. Instead he transports prisoners across the galaxy for the Judges.

## THE ALIEN HUNTERS

**CONNER JONES:** A natural adventurer, often exploring the forest near his home. If there is a chance to do something exciting Conner will leap at the opportunity.

**ELISE ROBERTS:** One of the most compassionate people you will ever meet, always eager to help people in need. Her dream is to become a doctor when she's older.

**LUKE EVANS:** No one is keener on space than Luke Evans and he hopes to actually go there as an astronaut one day. He's a clever boy and usually able to outsmart his best friend Conner.

## THE TEN WORST CRIMINALS IN THE UNIVERSE

The Top Ten are a collection of the most vile, traitorous, mad, evil criminals in the universe. They all have many, many crimes to their names. One managed to forge an empire ruling over two whole galaxies. Another stole all the treasures in the Nebula Bank on Valisner 8. Three have committed such horrid crimes that records of their existence have been wiped from all known databases. Currently they are being transported to the penal facility on Bling Blab 7, an inescapable prison guarded by Space Dogs.

## SNORFLAG OF LAVATON

Height - 9 feet

Skin Colour - Grey and Red

Age - 120 earth years

Number of Eyes – 15

Snorflag committed his first crime at the age of 5 when he stole the crown jewels of the Lavaton Royal family. At the age of 15 he tried to usurp the throne of the Royal family entirely. The Judges of the Universe arrested him on the frozen world of Scicle, where he was attempting some sort of grand experiment that he said would allow him to rule Lavaton.

He refused to reveal what kind of experiment this was. The Judges have declared that he must never

again gain any technology that might help him complete his schemes.

As a member of the Lavaton species, Snorflag's body contains liquid rock that keeps him hot and moving. He can transform any landscape into a volcanic wasteland of ash with rivers of molten lava.



## PROLOGUE

“Alert, alert a asteroid impact has been detected.”

Guard Robot No. 3672 immediately rushed into the cockpit of his space ship when he heard the alarm.

The ship’s computer repeated its warning, “alert, alert a asteroid impact has been detected.”

3672 grabbed and wrestled with the flight controls in his strong metal hands, trying to stabilise his vessel that was shaking violently.

In response to the emergency the ship’s computer screens displayed information on the asteroid strike for him.

It was bad. His ship was heavily damaged and belching smoke and fire into space.

He had to land the vessel on the nearest planet soon, while it still had the ability to fly, or he was going to **crash** on the nearest planet.

But he didn't want to land either; he didn't want to give his cargo the chance to escape.

In his craft was a collection of the worst and most dangerous alien criminals from across the universe. They had all been sentenced to life imprisonment, and condemned to never again taste freedom because of their evil deeds.

Guard Robot No. 3672 had been built by the Judges of the Universe. They were peace keepers and jailers, ensuring order across the

cosmos. He was their enforcer, their policeman, his duty was very important. It was his job to ferry these criminals from prison planet to prison planet.

Befitting his role he was a large, well armoured machine.

He had stun cuffs, laser cannons, an emergency teleporter, gravity nets and advanced sensors built into a body that made him a match for any alien he had to arrest.

Currently though, the ship was full of ten criminals of the worst kind, all itching to be free and cause havoc on the universe.

If he crashed or even landed the ship it would be the perfect time for them to try for their freedom.

Although he could take on any one of them, against ten he wouldn't stand a chance.

Guard No. 3672 cursed himself for choosing to recharge his Fusion Batteries, his primary power source, while travelling through a solar system.

Systems are very hazardous. There are planets, suns, asteroids, moons, radiation and the occasional Black Hole to worry about.

If he had been paying attention to his piloting and not replenishing his energy stores, then maybe the ship wouldn't have been hit by the asteroid.

Guard No. 3672 looked over his shoulder at the ten cells the ship held. Each one contained a deadly alien and for now they were still secure.

He heard banging and shouting from the cells.

The criminals were awake and knew something was wrong.

“You are not escaping,” he promised them.

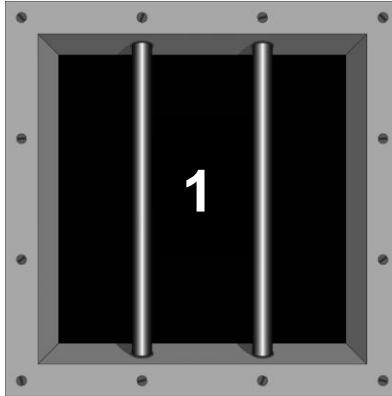
He struggled with all his mechanical strength to keep the ship in orbit of the planet beneath him.

It was a blue and green jewel, lush and full of life, a very beautiful world. He didn't want to put it in any danger.

Then another of his ship's engines stopped working.

He tried to reactivate it. However any attempt to start it up again failed to work. The ship was going down. It was too badly damaged to stay in space.

Guard No. 3672 just hoped he could land it with  
the prisoner's cells - still intact.



## **THE SHOOTING STAR**

Conner Jones was sitting in his parent's garden with his two best friends, Luke Evans and Elise Roberts. They had been together since the beginning of junior school and were inseparable. Over the years they had had lots of fun, supported each other through sadness and grown up together.

Conner always dreamed that they would be a trio forever, and nothing would come between them.

Elise, who was slightly older than him by about a month, had shiny brown hair that flowed like a river down her back.

Luke, who was blond and skinny, was younger than Conner, but he knew his friend was smarter, way smarter than any other boy his age.

The next day they were going to start year six of their education and Conner was actually looking forward to another great year with his friends.

Maths, English, History - they were so much more bearable with Elise and Luke around.

But school wouldn't start until tomorrow and at the moment they were all enjoying the last

evening of the summer holidays. They were spending this time sitting around a camp fire on some cut down tree trunks, toasting marshmallows.

Conner stared at his own marshmallow, willing it to cook. It was skewered on a stick and turning brown in the flames of the fire.

He briefly imagined what it might be like to be caught in such heat. Hopefully he would never have to find out.

As he stared, unblinking, at the fluffy white snack, a sudden burst of smoke from the fire stung his eyes. He looked away and wiped them with a free hand.

His garden slowly came back into focus. It was really just a thin piece of lawn, but it backed out onto a forest that surrounded his village. There was no back gate or fence, the grass just melted into the spaces between the trees.

They had been there all night swapping horror stories and jokes. The evening was cool and the sky was clear, full of stars and a large full moon.

“I think these are done,” Conner said, taking his marshmallow out of the fire and examining it closely. It was smoking and charred in multiple places.

“Put it between these,” Elise said, handing him two biscuits.

“Thank you,” Conner replied, taking the biscuits.

He then squeezed the marshmallow between them, creating a small sandwich, which he munched down very quickly.

“Delicious,” he said, licking his lips.

Luke wasn't listening, he was staring into the heavens.

“Wow the stars are really bright tonight, hey look at that shooting star,” Luke said pointing to the horizon.

They all looked and saw the glowing ball of rock travelling across the sky.

“I've never seen one before, look at the trail behind it,” Conner said.

He pointed at the star and traced the tail of the comet with his finger. It was huge, piercing the night sky like a laser for miles behind the glowing ball.

“We should make a wish,” Elise suggested.

“I wish that school didn’t have to start again tomorrow,” Luke moaned.

Conner and Elise laughed at his suggestion.

Then the back door to Conner’s house opened.

His mother, Caroline Jones, leaned out of the house. “It’s time for bed you three, I want that fire out and you inside your tents immediately.”

The three children groaned loudly.

“Oh Mum can’t we stay up for one more hour?”

“Get – to – bed,” Conner's mother repeated, “I’ll be back in five minutes to check up on you,” she added closing the back door.

“We’d better do as she says,” Conner said, he knew that whenever his mum made a decision, she never changed her mind.

“Yeah it is getting late after all,” Luke muttered and yawned deeply.

“I’ll see you guys tomorrow,” Conner said, and headed off to his tent and unzipped the entrance. He turned his head it to make sure Luke and Elise were doing the same. He saw Luke open his tent and take one last look into the sky before going inside.

Something caught his friend’s attention.

“Hey that shooting star is going to pass right over us,” Luke said, pointing into the sky as the star streaked across the blackness of space.

Conner and Elise turned to watch.

The massive stone hurtling through space was getting larger as it approached them.

Elise stared at the star, first with a confused, then a startled look on her face.

“I don’t think it’s passing over us,” she said.

“You’re right,” Luke gasped.

“It’s going to land right on us,” Conner added.

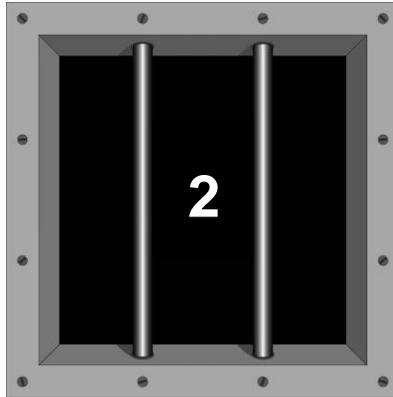
“GET DOWN!” They all said together.

Conner threw himself to the ground and Elise and Luke also ate grass as they too dived to the floor in terror.

Conner put his head in his hands thinking that in a second or two he was about to be crushed.

The shooting star roared overhead however, barely missing his house and garden.

The night sky itself seemed to be torn apart as a loud boom accompanied the rock's fall to Earth, and it crashed in the forest with a colossal bang.



## THE CRASH

The children got up in time to watch as trees from the forest were thrown into the air by the impact.

The ground shook and an explosion of dirt and stone reached into the sky above the canopy.

They all looked at each other in shock.

Conner's mother stuck her head out of the back door again.

“What was that noise? Thunder?” she asked looking into the sky. When she saw that there were no thunder clouds she shrugged her shoulders. “Now look stop mucking about and get to bed,” she ordered, then closed the back door.

Conner was breathing heavily. He felt his heart beating very fast and his muscles were tense. “Let’s go check it out!” he said with excitement pumping through his body. He had felt the shooting star fly overhead as it cut through the air, it had been extraordinary.

“Are you crazy it’s a shooting star and it just blew up the forest,” Luke said.

“We need to go to bed,” Elise pointed out.

“Come on guys how often do you get the chance to look at a shooting star up close?” Conner said. He couldn’t believe they didn’t want to go.

“What about your mum?” Luke asked.

Conner looked around their campsite for an answer. His gaze fell on the tree trunks they had been sitting on.

“We just put the fire out and put the tree trunks in our tents. My mum will think we’re asleep in our sleeping bags,” Conner said.

Elise looked into the ruined forest, then at the tents.

“Let’s do it,” she agreed.

Luke paused, biting his lip as he thought about his response, but eventually said, “Ok.”

They put the fire out with a splash of water from a bucket, and put the logs inside their sleeping bags.

They admired their cunning ruse.

“Perfect,” Conner said, and he dug around inside his tent one more time and pulled out a torch.

“Let’s go.”

They set off into the forest looking for the shooting star.



A minute after they had left, Conner’s mother poked her head out of the house again. She saw that the camp fire had been put out, but in the darkness couldn't see the three children.

Conner's mother knew that her son would try to stay up for as long as possible and was probably hiding, therefore not in his tent as he should be. She pulled out her own high powered torch and shone it on the tents. She was pleased to see the shadows of the three children inside their sleeping bags.

She went back into the house satisfied, not knowing the danger her son was heading towards.



## THE CRATER

The forest was very dark, but Conner had been exploring it ever since he was five, so he knew his way around with only a torch to guide him. He led Elise and Luke, past old gnarled trees, deeper into the woods.

The first thing they came across was not the shooting star. It was a long trench of ground-up earth filled with snapped and toppled trees.

“Wow, look at the trail it left behind,” Elise said.

“That’s weird,” Luke commented.

“What?” Conner replied.

“There’s nothing on fire, if it was a shooting star it should have been giving off lots of heat, so why didn't it set anything alight?” Luke said.

Conner and Elise nodded in agreement; they remembered Luke knew all kinds of things about space, his opinion could be trusted.

“Maybe it wasn’t a shooting star?” Elise said.

“What else could it have been?” Conner asked.

“Don’t know, maybe it was plane?” Elise suggested.

“If it was a plane crash then someone might be hurt,” Luke said.

“Let’s hurry up and get to the crash site then,”

Conner said, “maybe we can help.”

They ran through the forest following the trail of churned up dirt and collapsed trees.

“This thing must be huge,” Luke said

breathlessly, “this trail is at least 100 meters across.”

“Look there’s the crater,” Elise said pointing to a mound of earth ahead of them.

Conner made it to the rim of the crater first, climbed up it, and looked down into the hole.

His eyes widened in shock.

“I don’t think that’s a shooting star or a plane?”

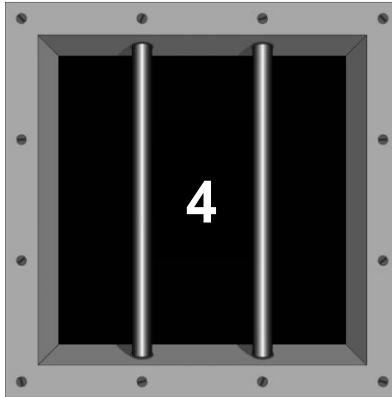
he said over his shoulder, as the other two joined him.

Elise and Luke climbed up to have a look for themselves, their jaws dropped in surprise.

“What is that thing?” Luke said.

The piercing beam of Conner’s torch lit up a vessel that was unlike anything mankind had ever built.

“I think - it’s an alien space ship,” Conner said.



## THE ALIEN?

“I think you’re right, it is an alien space ship,”  
Luke said. “Look at those oddly shaped wings  
and engines.”

“How is this possible?” Elise asked.

“Why did they crash?” Conner added.

The ship was half buried in the mud, and had  
dug itself into the ground at such speed that  
some trees were still standing, now with their

roots hanging down the sides of the vessel.

From what they could see of the ship that wasn't buried, the craft was very bulbous and shaped like a whale. Only it was a whale with wings instead of flippers and a cluster of rocket engines where the tail should have been.

“We should get down there and see if any aliens need help,” Elise said.

“Right,” Luke replied, and was the first to head into the crater.

“Someone's keen,” Conner said, following him, as did Elise.

Bits of the ship lay around the crash site, but the vessel itself was mostly intact. The rear of the

ship, that contained a nest of engines, had a gaping hole in it.

“This is so exciting we’re going to be the first humans to meet an alien,” Luke said.

Conner was thinking the same thing; he couldn’t believe this was happening; he was going to meet a real live person from another planet.

“Let’s go inside,” Luke said, already clamouring up the hull of the ship and through the hole.

Conner and Elise were right behind him.

The ship’s interior was filled with a light mist and there was lots of damage. Wires hung from the ceiling and pipes were bent at odd angles away from the walls. There was a central corridor running through the length of the ship to some

sort of control room at the front. Either side of the corridor were five large rooms each with a different kind of door. One of the doors was open and damaged. Strangely, it had half melted rock dripping from its handle.

The trio cautiously wandered down the corridor towards what looked like the control centre for the whole ship. When they got there Conner called out, “hello is anyone there?”

The Control Centre was triangular with one side of the room facing a giant window, which showed them nothing but mud and worms. Around the edge of the room were various computers and chairs.

In the biggest chair, that faced the window, was something even bigger.

“Hello?” Conner said, directing his question to the shape in the chair.

Suddenly the large, burly shape rose from the chair and screamed a terrible noise as if someone was tearing metal.

Whatever it was, turned around to look at Conner, and then it glared at Luke and Elise with beady red eyes.

It appraised them and they backed away in fear.

“We need to run,” Conner said.

They did, back down the corridor, fleeing towards the exit.

The creature screamed again and then gave chase.



## THE ROBOT

The giant figure pursued them down the central corridor of the ship smashing aside any wreckage.

“Run, run,” Conner called out, spurring his friends on. The doors to the rooms on either side of the corridor flashed past as they ran. They all had to sidestep to avoid the one that was almost completely broken off its hinges.

Conner glanced over his shoulder and saw the figure reach the broken door. For a few seconds the alien stopped by it and peered into the room. He saw it scratch its head as if trying to remember something important. Then the figure continued the chase.

“Watch out for the gap,” Luke called back, and he leapt from the hole in the ship down to the forest floor.

Elise followed him out and so did Conner who jumped, landed and rolled forward until he was back on his feet, then sprinted up and out of the crater.

The trio reached the rim of the crater and looked down at the ship, any second now the alien would come bursting out.

It did, but it didn't realise that there was a sizable drop down to the ground.

The creature tumbled out of its vessel landing face first. It struggled in the mud for a few seconds then lay completely still.

Conner, Elise and Luke looked at each other all wondering the same thing, *was it alive?* They all edged back towards it out of pure curiosity.

"Do you think it might be dead?" Elise said out of concern.

"It's not alive, look closely it's a robot," Luke pointed out.

Now that they could get a proper look at it they saw that it was indeed a robot. It had two legs and two sets of arms. Its head was square and had all sorts of attachments on it like small radar dishes. It was very large and was very well built, except for the back of the neck where some circuit boards had come loose.

“I think it’s broken,” Luke suggested, and he wandered up to the robot, reaching out for the damaged circuits.

“Careful Luke,” Conner warned.

Luke ignored him and pushed the circuit boards back into the robot’s head.

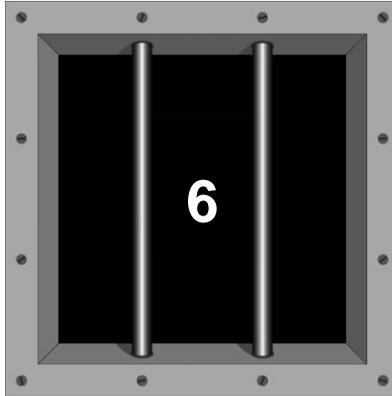
The robot suddenly came to life knocking Luke to the ground and standing up on its feet. Its arms,

torso and head all spun round really fast. Sparks flew from its mouth and eyes.

After a few seconds of frenzied behaviour it calmed down, slumping forward and groaning.

“𐄂𐄃𐄄𐄅𐄆𐄇𐄈𐄉𐄊𐄋𐄌𐄍𐄎𐄏𐄐𐄑𐄒𐄓𐄔𐄕𐄖𐄗𐄘𐄙𐄚𐄛𐄜𐄝𐄞𐄟𐄠𐄡𐄢𐄣𐄤𐄥𐄦𐄧𐄨𐄩𐄪𐄫𐄬𐄭𐄮𐄯𐄰𐄱𐄲𐄳𐄴𐄵𐄶𐄷𐄸𐄹𐄺𐄻𐄼𐄽𐄾𐄿𐅀𐅁𐅂𐅃𐅄𐅅𐅆𐅇𐅈𐅉𐅊𐅋𐅌𐅍𐅎𐅏𐅐𐅑𐅒𐅓𐅔𐅕𐅖𐅗𐅘𐅙𐅚𐅛𐅜𐅝𐅞𐅟𐅠𐅡𐅢𐅣𐅤𐅥𐅦𐅧𐅨𐅩𐅪𐅫𐅬𐅭𐅮𐅯𐅰𐅱𐅲𐅳𐅴𐅵𐅶𐅷𐅸𐅹𐅺𐅻𐅼𐅽𐅾𐅿𐆀𐆁𐆂𐆃𐆄𐆅𐆆𐆇𐆈𐆉𐆊𐆋𐆌𐆍𐆎𐆏𐆐𐆑𐆒𐆓𐆔𐆕𐆖𐆗𐆘𐆙𐆚𐆛𐆜𐆝𐆞𐆟𐆠𐆡𐆢𐆣𐆤𐆥𐆦𐆧𐆨𐆩𐆪𐆫𐆬𐆭𐆮𐆯𐆰𐆱𐆲𐆳𐆴𐆵𐆶𐆷𐆸𐆹𐆺𐆻𐆼𐆽𐆾𐆿𐇀𐇁𐇂𐇃𐇄𐇅𐇆𐇇𐇈𐇉𐇊𐇋𐇌𐇍𐇎𐇏𐇐𐇑𐇒𐇓𐇔𐇕𐇖𐇗𐇘𐇙𐇚𐇛𐇜𐇝𐇞𐇟𐇠𐇡𐇢𐇣𐇤𐇥𐇦𐇧𐇨𐇩𐇪𐇫𐇬𐇭𐇮𐇯𐇰𐇱𐇲𐇳𐇴𐇵𐇶𐇷𐇸𐇹𐇺𐇻𐇼𐇽𐇾𐇿𐈀𐈁𐈂𐈃𐈄𐈅𐈆𐈇𐈈𐈉𐈊𐈋𐈌𐈍𐈎𐈏𐈐𐈑𐈒𐈓𐈔𐈕𐈖𐈗𐈘𐈙𐈚𐈛𐈜𐈝𐈞𐈟𐈠𐈡𐈢𐈣𐈤𐈥𐈦𐈧𐈨𐈩𐈪𐈫𐈬𐈭𐈮𐈯𐈰𐈱𐈲𐈳𐈴𐈵𐈶𐈷𐈸𐈹𐈺𐈻𐈼𐈽𐈾𐈿𐉀𐉁𐉂𐉃𐉄𐉅𐉆𐉇𐉈𐉉𐉊𐉋𐉌𐉍𐉎𐉏𐉐𐉑𐉒𐉓𐉔𐉕𐉖𐉗𐉘𐉙𐉚𐉛𐉜𐉝𐉞𐉟𐉠𐉡𐉢𐉣𐉤𐉥𐉦𐉧𐉨𐉩𐉪𐉫𐉬𐉭𐉮𐉯𐉰𐉱𐉲𐉳𐉴𐉵𐉶𐉷𐉸𐉹𐉺𐉻𐉼𐉽𐉾𐉿𐊀𐊁𐊂𐊃𐊄𐊅𐊆𐊇𐊈𐊉𐊊𐊋𐊌𐊍𐊎𐊏𐊐𐊑𐊒𐊓𐊔𐊕𐊖𐊗𐊘𐊙𐊚𐊛𐊜𐊝𐊞𐊟𐊠𐊡𐊢𐊣𐊤𐊥𐊦𐊧𐊨𐊩𐊪𐊫𐊬𐊭𐊮𐊯𐊰𐊱𐊲𐊳𐊴𐊵𐊶𐊷𐊸𐊹𐊺𐊻𐊼𐊽𐊾𐊿𐋀𐋁𐋂𐋃𐋄𐋅𐋆𐋇𐋈𐋉𐋊𐋋𐋌𐋍𐋎𐋏𐋐𐋑𐋒𐋓𐋔𐋕𐋖𐋗𐋘𐋙𐋚𐋛𐋜𐋝𐋞𐋟𐋠𐋡𐋢𐋣𐋤𐋥𐋦𐋧𐋨𐋩𐋪𐋫𐋬𐋭𐋮𐋯𐋰𐋱𐋲𐋳𐋴𐋵𐋶𐋷𐋸𐋹𐋺𐋻𐋼𐋽𐋾𐋿𐌀𐌁𐌂𐌃𐌄𐌅𐌆𐌇𐌈𐌉𐌊𐌋𐌌𐌍𐌎𐌏𐌐𐌑𐌒𐌓𐌔𐌕𐌖𐌗𐌘𐌙𐌚𐌛𐌜𐌝𐌞𐌟𐌠𐌡𐌢𐌣𐌤𐌥𐌦𐌧𐌨𐌩𐌪𐌫𐌬𐌭𐌮𐌯𐌰𐌱𐌲𐌳𐌴𐌵𐌶𐌷𐌸𐌹𐌺𐌻𐌼𐌽𐌾𐌿𐍀𐍁𐍂𐍃𐍄𐍅𐍆𐍇𐍈𐍉𐍊𐍋𐍌𐍍𐍎𐍏𐍐𐍑𐍒𐍓𐍔𐍕𐍖𐍗𐍘𐍙𐍚𐍛𐍜𐍝𐍞𐍟𐍠𐍡𐍢𐍣𐍤𐍥𐍦𐍧𐍨𐍩𐍪𐍫𐍬𐍭𐍮𐍯𐍰𐍱𐍲𐍳𐍴𐍵𐍶𐍷𐍸𐍹𐍺𐍻𐍼𐍽𐍾𐍿𐎀𐎁𐎂𐎃𐎄𐎅𐎆𐎇𐎈𐎉𐎊𐎋𐎌𐎍𐎎𐎏𐎐𐎑𐎒𐎓𐎔𐎕𐎖𐎗𐎘𐎙𐎚𐎛𐎜𐎝𐎞𐎟𐎠𐎡𐎢𐎣𐎤𐎥𐎦𐎧𐎨𐎩𐎪𐎫𐎬𐎭𐎮𐎯𐎰𐎱𐎲𐎳𐎴𐎵𐎶𐎷𐎸𐎹𐎺𐎻𐎼𐎽𐎾𐎿𐏀𐏁𐏂𐏃𐏄𐏅𐏆𐏇𐏈𐏉𐏊𐏋𐏌𐏍𐏎𐏏𐏐𐏑𐏒𐏓𐏔𐏕𐏖𐏗𐏘𐏙𐏚𐏛𐏜𐏝𐏞𐏟𐏠𐏡𐏢𐏣𐏤𐏥𐏦𐏧𐏨𐏩𐏪𐏫𐏬𐏭𐏮𐏯𐏰𐏱𐏲𐏳𐏴𐏵𐏶𐏷𐏸𐏹𐏺𐏻𐏼𐏽𐏾𐏿𐐀𐐁𐐂𐐃𐐄𐐅𐐆𐐇𐐈𐐉𐐊𐐋𐐌𐐍𐐎𐐏𐐐𐐑𐐒𐐓𐐔𐐕𐐖𐐗𐐘𐐙𐐚𐐛𐐜𐐝𐐞𐐟𐐠𐐡𐐢𐐣𐐤𐐥𐐦𐐧𐐨𐐩𐐪𐐫𐐬𐐭𐐮𐐯𐐰𐐱𐐲𐐳𐐴𐐵𐐶𐐷𐐸𐐹𐐺𐐻𐐼𐐽𐐾𐐿𐑀𐑁𐑂𐑃𐑄𐑅𐑆𐑇𐑈𐑉𐑊𐑋𐑌𐑍𐑎𐑏𐑐𐑑𐑒𐑓𐑔𐑕𐑖𐑗𐑘𐑙𐑚𐑛𐑜𐑝𐑞𐑟𐑠𐑡𐑢𐑣𐑤𐑥𐑦𐑧𐑨𐑩𐑪𐑫𐑬𐑭𐑮𐑯𐑰𐑱𐑲𐑳𐑴𐑵𐑶𐑷𐑸𐑹𐑺𐑻𐑼𐑽𐑾𐑿𐒀𐒁𐒂𐒃𐒄𐒅𐒆𐒇𐒈𐒉𐒊𐒋𐒌𐒍𐒎𐒏𐒐𐒑𐒒𐒓𐒔𐒕𐒖𐒗𐒘𐒙𐒚𐒛𐒜𐒝𐒞𐒟𐒠𐒡𐒢𐒣𐒤𐒥𐒦𐒧𐒨𐒩𐒪𐒫𐒬𐒭𐒮𐒯𐒰𐒱𐒲𐒳𐒴𐒵𐒶𐒷𐒸𐒹𐒺𐒻𐒼𐒽𐒾𐒿𐓀𐓁𐓂𐓃𐓄𐓅𐓆𐓇𐓈𐓉𐓊𐓋𐓌𐓍𐓎𐓏𐓐𐓑𐓒𐓓𐓔𐓕𐓖𐓗𐓘𐓙𐓚𐓛𐓜𐓝𐓞𐓟𐓠𐓡𐓢𐓣𐓤𐓥𐓦𐓧𐓨𐓩𐓪𐓫𐓬𐓭𐓮𐓯𐓰𐓱𐓲𐓳𐓴𐓵𐓶𐓷𐓸𐓹𐓺𐓻𐓼𐓽𐓾𐓿𐔀𐔁𐔂𐔃𐔄𐔅𐔆𐔇𐔈𐔉𐔊𐔋𐔌𐔍𐔎𐔏𐔐𐔑𐔒𐔓𐔔𐔕𐔖𐔗𐔘𐔙𐔚𐔛𐔜𐔝𐔞𐔟𐔠𐔡𐔢𐔣𐔤𐔥𐔦𐔧𐔨𐔩𐔪𐔫𐔬𐔭𐔮𐔯𐔰𐔱𐔲𐔳𐔴𐔵𐔶𐔷𐔸𐔹𐔺𐔻𐔼𐔽𐔾𐔿𐕀𐕁𐕂𐕃𐕄𐕅𐕆𐕇𐕈𐕉𐕊𐕋𐕌𐕍𐕎𐕏𐕐𐕑𐕒𐕓𐕔𐕕𐕖𐕗𐕘𐕙𐕚𐕛𐕜𐕝𐕞𐕟𐕠𐕡𐕢𐕣𐕤𐕥𐕦𐕧𐕨𐕩𐕪𐕫𐕬𐕭𐕮𐕯𐕰𐕱𐕲𐕳𐕴𐕵𐕶𐕷𐕸𐕹𐕺𐕻𐕼𐕽𐕾𐕿𐖀𐖁𐖂𐖃𐖄𐖅𐖆𐖇𐖈𐖉𐖊𐖋𐖌𐖍𐖎𐖏𐖐𐖑𐖒𐖓𐖔𐖕𐖖𐖗𐖘𐖙𐖚𐖛𐖜𐖝𐖞𐖟𐖠𐖡𐖢𐖣𐖤𐖥𐖦𐖧𐖨𐖩𐖪𐖫𐖬𐖭𐖮𐖯𐖰𐖱𐖲𐖳𐖴𐖵𐖶𐖷𐖸𐖹𐖺𐖻𐖼𐖽𐖾𐖿𐗀𐗁𐗂𐗃𐗄𐗅𐗆𐗇𐗈𐗉𐗊𐗋𐗌𐗍𐗎𐗏𐗐𐗑𐗒𐗓𐗔𐗕𐗖𐗗𐗘𐗙𐗚𐗛𐗜𐗝𐗞𐗟𐗠𐗡𐗢𐗣𐗤𐗥𐗦𐗧𐗨𐗩𐗪𐗫𐗬𐗭𐗮𐗯𐗰𐗱𐗲𐗳𐗴𐗵𐗶𐗷𐗸𐗹𐗺𐗻𐗼𐗽𐗾𐗿𐘀𐘁𐘂𐘃𐘄𐘅𐘆𐘇𐘈𐘉𐘊𐘋𐘌𐘍𐘎𐘏𐘐𐘑𐘒𐘓𐘔𐘕𐘖𐘗𐘘𐘙𐘚𐘛𐘜𐘝𐘞𐘟𐘠𐘡𐘢𐘣𐘤𐘥𐘦𐘧𐘨𐘩𐘪𐘫𐘬𐘭𐘮𐘯𐘰𐘱𐘲𐘳𐘴𐘵𐘶𐘷𐘸𐘹𐘺𐘻𐘼𐘽𐘾𐘿𐙀𐙁𐙂𐙃𐙄𐙅𐙆𐙇𐙈𐙉𐙊𐙋𐙌𐙍𐙎𐙏𐙐𐙑𐙒𐙓𐙔𐙕𐙖𐙗𐙘𐙙𐙚𐙛𐙜𐙝𐙞𐙟𐙠𐙡𐙢𐙣𐙤𐙥𐙦𐙧𐙨𐙩𐙪𐙫𐙬𐙭𐙮𐙯𐙰𐙱𐙲𐙳𐙴𐙵𐙶𐙷𐙸𐙹𐙺𐙻𐙼𐙽𐙾𐙿𐚀𐚁𐚂𐚃𐚄𐚅𐚆𐚇𐚈𐚉𐚊𐚋𐚌𐚍𐚎𐚏𐚐𐚑𐚒𐚓𐚔𐚕𐚖𐚗𐚘𐚙𐚚𐚛𐚜𐚝𐚞𐚟𐚠𐚡𐚢𐚣𐚤𐚥𐚦𐚧𐚨𐚩𐚪𐚫𐚬𐚭𐚮𐚯𐚰𐚱𐚲𐚳𐚴𐚵𐚶𐚷𐚸𐚹𐚺𐚻𐚼𐚽𐚾𐚿𐛀𐛁𐛂𐛃𐛄𐛅𐛆𐛇𐛈𐛉𐛊𐛋𐛌𐛍𐛎𐛏𐛐𐛑𐛒𐛓𐛔𐛕𐛖𐛗𐛘𐛙𐛚𐛛𐛜𐛝𐛞𐛟𐛠𐛡𐛢𐛣𐛤𐛥𐛦𐛧𐛨𐛩𐛪𐛫𐛬𐛭𐛮𐛯𐛰𐛱𐛲𐛳𐛴𐛵𐛶𐛷𐛸𐛹𐛺𐛻𐛼𐛽𐛾𐛿𐜀𐜁𐜂𐜃𐜄𐜅𐜆𐜇𐜈𐜉𐜊𐜋𐜌𐜍𐜎𐜏𐜐𐜑𐜒𐜓𐜔𐜕𐜖𐜗𐜘𐜙𐜚𐜛𐜜𐜝𐜞𐜟𐜠𐜡𐜢𐜣𐜤𐜥𐜦𐜧𐜨𐜩𐜪𐜫𐜬𐜭𐜮𐜯𐜰𐜱𐜲𐜳𐜴𐜵𐜶𐜷𐜸𐜹𐜺𐜻𐜼𐜽𐜾𐜿𐝀𐝁𐝂𐝃𐝄𐝅𐝆𐝇𐝈𐝉𐝊𐝋𐝌𐝍𐝎𐝏𐝐𐝑𐝒𐝓𐝔𐝕𐝖𐝗𐝘𐝙𐝚𐝛𐝜𐝝𐝞𐝟𐝠𐝡𐝢𐝣𐝤𐝥𐝦𐝧𐝨𐝩𐝪𐝫𐝬𐝭𐝮𐝯𐝰𐝱𐝲𐝳𐝴𐝵𐝶𐝷𐝸𐝹𐝺𐝻𐝼𐝽𐝾𐝿𐞀𐞁𐞂𐞃𐞄𐞅𐞆𐞇𐞈𐞉𐞊𐞋𐞌𐞍𐞎𐞏𐞐𐞑𐞒𐞓𐞔𐞕𐞖𐞗𐞘𐞙𐞚𐞛𐞜𐞝𐞞𐞟𐞠𐞡𐞢𐞣𐞤𐞥𐞦𐞧𐞨𐞩𐞪𐞫𐞬𐞭𐞮𐞯𐞰𐞱𐞲𐞳𐞴𐞵𐞶𐞷𐞸𐞹𐞺𐞻𐞼𐞽𐞾𐞿𐟀𐟁𐟂𐟃𐟄𐟅𐟆𐟇𐟈𐟉𐟊𐟋𐟌𐟍𐟎𐟏𐟐𐟑𐟒𐟓𐟔𐟕𐟖𐟗𐟘𐟙𐟚𐟛𐟜𐟝𐟞𐟟𐟠𐟡𐟢𐟣𐟤𐟥𐟦𐟧𐟨𐟩𐟪𐟫𐟬𐟭𐟮𐟯𐟰𐟱𐟲𐟳𐟴𐟵𐟶𐟷𐟸𐟹𐟺𐟻𐟼𐟽𐟾𐟿𐠀𐠁𐠂𐠃𐠄𐠅𐠆𐠇𐠈𐠉𐠊𐠋𐠌𐠍𐠎𐠏𐠐𐠑𐠒𐠓𐠔𐠕𐠖𐠗𐠘𐠙𐠚𐠛𐠜𐠝𐠞𐠟𐠠𐠡𐠢𐠣𐠤𐠥𐠦𐠧𐠨𐠩𐠪𐠫𐠬𐠭𐠮𐠯𐠰𐠱𐠲𐠳𐠴𐠵𐠶𐠷𐠸𐠹𐠺𐠻𐠼𐠽𐠾𐠿𐡀𐡁𐡂𐡃𐡄𐡅𐡆𐡇𐡈𐡉𐡊𐡋𐡌𐡍𐡎𐡏𐡐𐡑𐡒𐡓𐡔𐡕𐡖𐡗𐡘𐡙𐡚𐡛𐡜𐡝𐡞𐡟𐡠𐡡𐡢𐡣𐡤𐡥𐡦𐡧𐡨𐡩𐡪𐡫𐡬𐡭𐡮𐡯𐡰𐡱𐡲𐡳𐡴𐡵𐡶𐡷𐡸𐡹𐡺𐡻𐡼𐡽𐡾𐡿𐢀𐢁𐢂𐢃𐢄𐢅𐢆𐢇𐢈𐢉𐢊𐢋𐢌𐢍𐢎𐢏𐢐𐢑𐢒𐢓𐢔𐢕𐢖𐢗𐢘𐢙𐢚𐢛𐢜𐢝𐢞𐢟𐢠𐢡𐢢𐢣𐢤𐢥𐢦𐢧𐢨𐢩𐢪𐢫𐢬𐢭𐢮𐢯𐢰𐢱𐢲𐢳𐢴𐢵𐢶𐢷𐢸𐢹𐢺𐢻𐢼𐢽𐢾𐢿𐣀𐣁𐣂𐣃𐣄𐣅𐣆𐣇𐣈𐣉𐣊𐣋𐣌𐣍𐣎𐣏𐣐𐣑𐣒𐣓𐣔𐣕𐣖𐣗𐣘𐣙𐣚𐣛𐣜𐣝𐣞𐣟𐣠𐣡𐣢𐣣𐣤𐣥𐣦𐣧𐣨𐣩𐣪𐣫𐣬𐣭𐣮𐣯𐣰𐣱𐣲𐣳𐣴𐣵𐣶𐣷𐣸𐣹𐣺𐣻𐣼𐣽𐣾𐣿𐤀𐤁𐤂𐤃𐤄𐤅𐤆𐤇𐤈𐤉𐤊𐤋𐤌𐤍𐤎𐤏𐤐𐤑𐤒𐤓𐤔𐤕𐤖𐤗𐤘𐤙𐤚𐤛𐤜𐤝𐤞𐤟𐤠𐤡𐤢𐤣𐤤𐤥𐤦𐤧𐤨𐤩𐤪𐤫𐤬𐤭𐤮𐤯𐤰𐤱𐤲𐤳𐤴𐤵𐤶𐤷𐤸𐤹𐤺𐤻𐤼𐤽𐤾𐤿𐥀𐥁𐥂𐥃𐥄𐥅𐥆𐥇𐥈𐥉𐥊𐥋𐥌𐥍𐥎𐥏𐥐𐥑𐥒𐥓𐥔𐥕𐥖𐥗𐥘𐥙𐥚𐥛𐥜𐥝𐥞𐥟𐥠𐥡𐥢𐥣𐥤𐥥𐥦𐥧𐥨𐥩𐥪𐥫𐥬𐥭𐥮𐥯𐥰𐥱𐥲𐥳𐥴𐥵𐥶𐥷𐥸𐥹𐥺𐥻𐥼𐥽𐥾𐥿𐦀𐦁𐦂𐦃𐦄𐦅𐦆𐦇𐦈𐦉𐦊𐦋𐦌𐦍𐦎𐦏𐦐𐦑𐦒𐦓𐦔𐦕𐦖𐦗𐦘𐦙𐦚𐦛𐦜𐦝𐦞𐦟𐦠𐦡𐦢𐦣𐦤𐦥𐦦𐦧𐦨𐦩𐦪𐦫𐦬𐦭𐦮𐦯𐦰𐦱𐦲𐦳𐦴𐦵𐦶𐦷𐦸𐦹𐦺𐦻𐦼𐦽𐦾𐦿𐧀𐧁𐧂𐧃𐧄𐧅𐧆𐧇𐧈𐧉𐧊𐧋𐧌𐧍𐧎𐧏𐧐𐧑𐧒𐧓𐧔𐧕𐧖𐧗𐧘𐧙𐧚𐧛𐧜𐧝𐧞𐧟𐧠𐧡𐧢𐧣𐧤𐧥𐧦𐧧𐧨𐧩𐧪𐧫𐧬𐧭𐧮𐧯𐧰𐧱𐧲𐧳𐧴𐧵𐧶𐧷𐧸𐧹𐧺𐧻𐧼𐧽𐧾𐧿𐨀𐨁𐨂𐨃𐨄𐨅𐨆𐨇𐨈𐨉𐨊𐨋𐨌𐨍𐨎𐨏𐨐𐨑𐨒𐨓𐨔𐨕𐨖𐨗𐨘𐨙𐨚𐨛𐨜𐨝𐨞𐨟𐨠𐨡𐨢𐨣𐨤𐨥𐨦𐨧𐨨𐨩𐨪𐨫𐨬𐨭𐨮𐨯𐨰𐨱𐨲𐨳𐨴𐨵𐨶𐨷𐨹𐨺𐨸𐨻𐨼𐨽𐨾𐨿𐩀𐩁𐩂𐩃𐩄𐩅𐩆𐩇𐩈𐩉𐩊𐩋𐩌𐩍𐩎𐩏𐩐𐩑𐩒𐩓𐩔𐩕𐩖𐩗𐩘𐩙𐩚𐩛𐩜𐩝𐩞𐩟𐩠𐩡𐩢𐩣𐩤𐩥𐩦𐩧𐩨𐩩𐩪𐩫𐩬𐩭𐩮𐩯𐩰𐩱𐩲𐩳𐩴𐩵𐩶𐩷𐩸𐩹𐩺𐩻𐩼𐩽𐩾𐩿𐪀𐪁𐪂𐪃𐪄𐪅𐪆𐪇𐪈𐪉𐪊𐪋𐪌𐪍𐪎𐪏𐪐𐪑𐪒𐪓𐪔𐪕𐪖𐪗𐪘𐪙𐪚𐪛𐪜𐪝𐪞𐪟𐪠𐪡𐪢𐪣𐪤𐪥𐪦𐪧𐪨𐪩𐪪𐪫𐪬𐪭𐪮𐪯𐪰𐪱𐪲𐪳𐪴𐪵𐪶𐪷𐪸𐪹𐪺𐪻𐪼𐪽𐪾𐪿𐫀𐫁𐫂𐫃𐫄𐫅𐫆𐫇𐫈𐫉𐫊𐫋𐫌𐫍𐫎𐫏𐫐𐫑𐫒𐫓𐫔𐫕𐫖𐫗𐫘𐫙𐫚𐫛𐫜𐫝𐫞𐫟𐫠𐫡𐫢𐫣𐫤𐫦𐫥𐫧𐫨𐫩𐫪𐫫𐫬𐫭𐫮𐫯𐫰𐫱𐫲𐫳𐫴𐫵𐫶𐫷𐫸𐫹𐫺𐫻𐫼𐫽𐫾𐫿𐬀𐬁𐬂𐬃𐬄𐬅𐬆𐬇𐬈𐬉𐬊𐬋𐬌𐬍𐬎𐬏𐬐𐬑𐬒𐬓𐬔𐬕𐬖𐬗𐬘𐬙𐬚𐬛𐬜𐬝𐬞𐬟𐬠𐬡𐬢𐬣𐬤𐬥𐬦𐬧𐬨𐬩𐬪𐬫𐬬𐬭𐬮𐬯𐬰𐬱𐬲𐬳𐬴𐬵𐬶𐬷𐬸𐬹𐬺𐬻𐬼𐬽𐬾𐬿𐭀𐭁𐭂𐭃𐭄𐭅𐭆𐭇𐭈𐭉𐭊𐭋𐭌𐭍𐭎𐭏𐭐𐭑𐭒𐭓𐭔𐭕𐭖𐭗𐭘𐭙𐭚𐭛𐭜𐭝𐭞𐭟𐭠𐭡𐭢𐭣𐭤𐭥𐭦𐭧𐭨𐭩𐭪𐭫𐭬𐭭𐭮𐭯𐭰𐭱𐭲𐭳𐭴𐭵𐭶𐭷𐭸𐭹𐭺𐭻𐭼𐭽𐭾𐭿𐮀𐮁𐮂𐮃𐮄𐮅𐮆𐮇𐮈𐮉𐮊𐮋𐮌𐮍𐮎𐮏𐮐𐮑𐮒𐮓𐮔𐮕𐮖𐮗𐮘𐮙𐮚𐮛𐮜𐮝𐮞𐮟𐮠𐮡𐮢𐮣𐮤𐮥𐮦𐮧𐮨𐮩𐮪𐮫𐮬𐮭𐮮𐮯𐮰𐮱𐮲𐮳𐮴𐮵𐮶𐮷𐮸𐮹𐮺𐮻𐮼𐮽𐮾𐮿𐯀𐯁𐯂𐯃𐯄𐯅𐯆𐯇𐯈𐯉𐯊𐯋𐯌𐯍𐯎𐯏𐯐𐯑𐯒𐯓𐯔𐯕𐯖𐯗𐯘𐯙𐯚𐯛𐯜𐯝𐯞𐯟𐯠𐯡𐯢𐯣𐯤𐯥𐯦𐯧𐯨𐯩𐯪𐯫𐯬𐯭𐯮𐯯𐯰𐯱𐯲𐯳𐯴𐯵𐯶𐯷𐯸𐯹𐯺𐯻𐯼𐯽𐯾𐯿𐰀𐰁𐰂𐰃𐰄𐰅𐰆𐰇𐰈𐰉𐰊𐰋𐰌𐰍𐰎𐰏𐰐𐰑𐰒𐰓𐰔𐰕𐰖𐰗𐰘𐰙𐰚𐰛𐰜𐰝𐰞𐰟𐰠𐰡𐰢𐰣𐰤𐰥𐰦𐰧𐰨𐰩𐰪𐰫𐰬𐰭𐰮𐰯𐰰𐰱𐰲𐰳𐰴𐰵𐰶𐰷𐰸𐰹𐰺𐰻𐰼𐰽𐰾𐰿𐱀𐱁𐱂𐱃𐱄𐱅𐱆𐱇𐱈𐱉𐱊𐱋𐱌𐱍𐱎𐱏𐱐𐱑𐱒𐱓𐱔𐱕𐱖𐱗𐱘𐱙𐱚𐱛𐱜𐱝𐱞𐱟𐱠𐱡𐱢𐱣𐱤𐱥𐱦𐱧𐱨𐱩𐱪𐱫𐱬𐱭𐱮𐱯𐱰𐱱𐱲𐱳𐱴𐱵𐱶𐱷𐱸𐱹𐱺𐱻𐱼𐱽𐱾𐱿𐲀𐲁𐲂𐲃𐲄𐲅𐲆𐲇𐲈𐲉𐲊𐲋𐲌𐲍𐲎𐲏𐲐𐲑𐲒𐲓𐲔𐲕𐲖𐲗𐲘𐲙𐲚𐲛𐲜𐲝𐲞𐲟𐲠𐲡𐲢𐲣𐲤𐲥𐲦𐲧𐲨𐲩𐲪𐲫𐲬𐲭𐲮𐲯𐲰𐲱𐲲𐲳𐲴𐲵𐲶𐲷𐲸𐲹𐲺𐲻𐲼𐲽𐲾𐲿𐳀𐳁𐳂𐳃𐳄𐳅𐳆𐳇𐳈𐳉𐳊𐳋𐳌𐳍𐳎𐳏𐳐𐳑𐳒𐳓𐳔𐳕𐳖𐳗𐳘𐳙𐳚𐳛𐳜𐳝𐳞𐳟𐳠𐳡𐳢𐳣𐳤𐳥𐳦𐳧𐳨𐳩𐳪𐳫𐳬𐳭𐳮𐳯𐳰𐳱𐳲𐳳𐳴𐳵𐳶𐳷

a cymbal. “I am Guard Robot No. 3672 of the  
Judges of the Universe, a pleasure to meet you.”



## THE ESCAPEE

“Who are you?” Luke asked again.

The robot’s salute slackened. “You don’t know who the Judges of the Universe are?” he asked.

The children shook their heads.

“What planet am I on?” the robot queried.

“Earth,” Conner answered.

The machine stared off into space for a few seconds; there were a number of clicks and whirling noises from inside its head.

“Planet Earth home of the Human race, Civilisation Level - Five,” the robot said, as if reading from an entry in an encyclopaedia. “Of course you haven’t developed space travel yet, no wonder you haven’t heard of the Judges.”

“Who are the Judges?” Conner asked.

“They are the force that keeps peace throughout the universe by hunting down criminals and imprisoning them where they can do no harm,” the robot replied.

“And you work for them?” Elise asked.

“I was built by them to serve as a guard, insuring that their prisoners never get free.”

“Were you going to pick some up in that ship of yours?” Luke asked pointing at the damaged vessel.

“No I was transporting prisoners...” the robot said, trailing off as something new seemed to enter his mind.

“What?” Conner, Elise and Luke asked at the same time.

“My prisoners I must check on them,” the robot said, and he quickly clambered back into his ship.

“He was carrying criminals,” Elise stated.

“Tough job,” Conner said. “My uncle is a policeman he says criminals are a handful.”

“But these are alien criminals, I bet they are more dangerous,” Luke pointed out.

The trio climbed back into the ship after the robot and found him kneeling next to the broken door.

“Snorflag of Lavaton has escaped,” he said in despair.

“Who is Snorflag?” Conner said, making a face as he said the name, like it disgusted him to do so.

“One of the most awful criminals in the universe, luckily the others are still imprisoned and secure,” Guard No. 3672 said.

Conner, Elise and Luke looked down the corridor at the other nine cells.

“Are those all full?” Conner asked.

“Yes they are, but they are still locked up tight,” the robot replied.

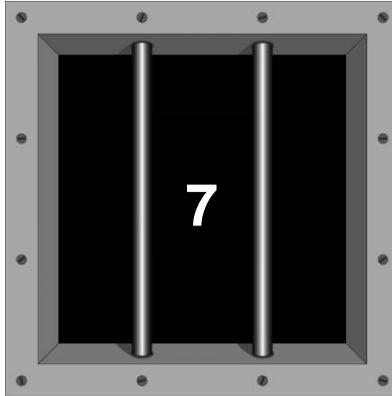
That didn’t make Conner feel better, this Snorflag sounded like a problem, he wondered what the robot was going to do about it.

“Listen humans you must do something for me,” the robot virtually pleaded.

Conner looked at his friends, they were all thinking the same thing, *what could this robot possibly want from them?*

“What is it?” Luke asked.

“I need you track down and recapture Snorflag of  
Lavaton.”



## **THE GALAXY WING**

“You can’t be serious,” Luke said.

The robot banged his head, as if trying to jostle his brain into place.

“I am,” the robot said.

“Who exactly is Snorflag of Lavaton?” Conner asked.

“A dangerous creature, imprisoned for conducting an experiment that would have

allowed him to conquer whole worlds. He will do terrible harm to your planet if he is allowed to roam free,” the robot said.

“You should go after him, you’re his guard,” Luke protested.

“I cannot leave my ship, the other prisoners might try to escape,” the robot replied.

“Then ask the government to help you,” Luke suggested.

“I cannot, your planet must not know I have landed here, the Judges have decreed that no class five planets can know about aliens until it is ready. Thankfully I can hide my ship from the governments of your world, which reminds me.”

The robot then opened a panel in his chest and pushed a button beneath. A purple light suddenly radiated out from him, encompassing the whole ship and beyond.

“What was that?” Elise said examining her body to see if something had been done to it by the light.

“A Memory Wipe, it will cause anyone else heading this way to suddenly forget all about my crashed ship. Only you three can know I’m here, which means only you can hunt down Snorflag. Now please you must help or your world is doomed.”

Conner, Luke and Elise looked at each other.

The idea of hunting an alien seemed very scary, however planet Earth needed them.

Conner's eyes suddenly lit up once again in excitement at the thought of meeting an alien.

"This is a bad idea," Luke said. "We shouldn't do it."

"We have to Luke," Conner said, "you can't say no."

Luke opened his mouth to object.

"Come on mate it will be fun and exciting, a real alien, just like you've always wanted to see,"

Conner said trying hard to convince his friend to accept this mission from the robot. He really

wanted to do this and he needed Luke, he had to convince him to help.

Luke looked this way and that, and squirmed on the spot. He was conflicted and trying to figure out a good excuse not to go. Eventually nothing occurred to him and he gave in and nodded his agreement.

“Elise?” Conner said.

“I want to see an alien,” she replied. “I just hope it isn’t too dangerous.”

“Very well we’ll capture him for you,” Conner said quickly, before his friends could change their minds.

“Excellent,” the robot said. “Follow me.”

He took them to the Control Centre and opened a box on the wall, inside were nine orbs. “By the stars, he has taken a teleporter,” he said.

“What is a teleporter?” Elise asked.

“It allows me to instantly transport a prisoner to anywhere with 10,000 miles, I use them to take them from their cells to their prisons, it’s safer than escorting them on a shuttle,” Guard No. 3672 answered. “There are supposed to be ten in this box and I have an emergency one built into my body, it’s only short range though.”

“So this Snorflag took one and could be thousands of miles away by now?” Luke asked.

“Yes.”

“Can you track him?” Conner asked.

“I can, I implanted a tracker in his body when I arrested him,” the robot replied, then he went over to a nearby computer. “I can locate him using this.”

“Ok give us one of the teleporters and we will go to where he is and bring him back,” Conner said. “If he hadn’t taken one I would, but his teleporter can detect when another is used nearby, if you teleport to where he is, he will know you’re there and simply teleport to somewhere else,” the robot said.

“Then how do we follow him?” Elise asked.

“You will need something fast and untraceable,” the robot said, and then it smiled as an idea

formed in his electronic brain. “I have what you need,” he said.

A minute later they were all standing in another room of the ship, near the back of the vessel.

The robot was pointing to something hanging from the ceiling.

It had two pairs of wings that looked capable of swivelling and even flapping. These wings were either side of a thin hull, shaped like a shark.

“This is called the Galaxy Wing you can use it to hunt Snorflag down.”

Luke, Elise and Conner stared up in amazement at what Guard No. 3672 was showing them.

“That is cool,” Conner said.

“That is awesome,” Luke said.

“It’s unbelievable,” Elise said.

“It flies like a Tamerian Sun Hawk,” the robot said.

Conner, Luke and Elise looked at each other after hearing his remark, they all shrugged.

“And we can fly it?” Conner asked.

“Yes you can.”

“Alright,” Conner said. Looking up at the sleek and beautiful space ship the robot was offering them the chance to fly.

He was almost drooling with excitement.



## THE WEAPONS

“Before you go you will each need one of these,”  
Guard No. 3672 said.

The robot used a set of keys to open a nearby locker that had thick doors and a complicated lock.

“This is the weapons locker, inside are powerful items that I am also tasked to transport so that they can be destroyed or sealed away.”

The robot revealed three items inside. One was a spear with an orb at the end. The second item was a shield of some sorts with six sides like a hexagon. The third item was a pair of gauntlets. “Choose your weapon,” he said to Conner.

Conner went for the spear with the orb at its end. As soon as he touched it, blue electric-like sparks shot into his hand, but he didn't feel any pain as they struck him. When he held the spear it felt like a part of his body, like another arm or leg.

Elise chose the shield and Luke took the gauntlets.

The same sparks hit them when they picked their weapons and they were different colours. Elise experienced red sparks and Luke green.

“The spear can create energy ropes to bind your opponents, the shield can protect you from anything and the gauntlets will allow you to jump higher and run faster than you ever thought possible,” Guard No. 3672 said.

“Thank you Guard No. 3672,” Elise said.

“I should have chosen the gauntlets,” Conner whined.

“If you are ever separated from them you can recall the items back into your hands.”

“No way?” Conner said, and immediately tested this by throwing his staff away to the other side

of the room. He then held out his hand towards it and the staff shot straight back to him and he caught it.

“Very cool,” he said.

“So where is Snorflag, Guard No. 3672?” Luke asked.

“Wait a minute I'm not going to keep calling you that,” Conner said.

“Pardon?” the robot replied.

“I'm not going to call you Guard Number 3672, it's a mouthful. Don't you have a proper name?”

“My designation is Guard Robot No. 3672.”

“Well you need a new designation,” Conner responded in an exaggerated robotic accent.

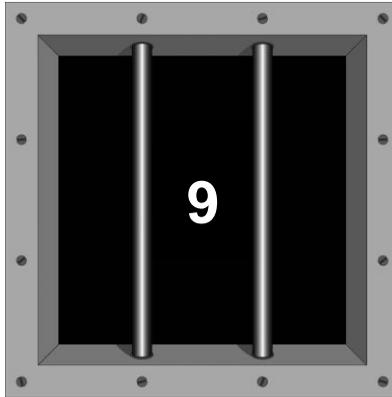
“How about Circuit?” Luke said.

“Or Wire?” Elise said.

“No wait I have it...Mach, short for machine,”  
Conner suggested.

“Mach,” Elise and Luke said, rolling the word  
around on their tongues. “I like it,” they agreed.

“Ok Mach leave it to us,” Conner said, heading  
for the Galaxy Wing, “we’ll hunt down and  
capture this Snorflag, and save the world as  
well.”



## THE LAUNCH

Conner, Elise and Luke were surprised to find that the cockpit inside the Galaxy Wing was bare and empty.

Conner poked his head out of the ship, “Mach there’s no seats or steering wheel, how do we fly this thing?”

“Give it a few moments and it will adapt itself so humans can fly it,” Mach replied.

Conner turned back to the empty cockpit and waited.

After a few seconds something started to happen.

The floor, ceiling and walls began to shift. Three chairs grew out of the floor as if they were being inflated.

In front of the seats, controls then extended from the walls. Each was slightly different to one another, tailored for each chair.

Everything had a smooth surface with no signs of screws or panels, completely moulded from the ship's floor and walls.

Conner stepped forward to examine the buttons, leavers and joystick in front of the first chair. “It’s just like my computer game controls,” he said.

A small screen then extended down from the ceiling and Mach’s face appeared on it. “There are three systems you all need to operate.

Defences, weapons and piloting.”

“I call Pilot,” Conner said.

“Weapons,” Luke said.

“Defences,” Elise said.

They all took their places, and since the controls were so familiar, the ship started up without a problem. “Let’s get going,” Conner said, taking the steering system in his hands.

“I’m opening the outer doors, and I have traced Snorflag to a big building one hundred miles away,” Mach said.

“He didn’t go far then,” Luke pointed out.

“Which troubles me,” Mach said. “I would have expected him to get as far away as possible; he must want something in that building.”

“What is the building called?” Conner asked.

“It’s called *Redwater*, according to my information, you call it a shopping centre,” Mach said. “It’s in the middle of your country’s capital city.”

“Oh no London,” Elise gasped.

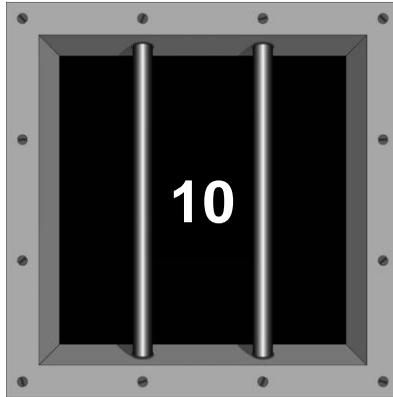
“Before you go remember he’s a dangerous criminal, and he, like all the prisoners on my

ship, can transform the landscape around them into exact copies of their home-worlds. This *Redwater* shopping centre won't be anything like you've seen before."

"Thank you for the warning," Conner replied.

"Let's go shopping," he added and he activated the ship's flight controls and it shot up into the night sky and out of Mach's prison ship.

The trio screamed their heads off in excitement as the Galaxy Wing soared into the heavens.



## THE FLIGHT

“This is incredible,” Conner said as he turned the ship to head in a variety of directions, getting the feel for the way it flies. “It’s just like my *Airborne Combat* computer game on the *X-Bo...*”

“I’m going to hurl,” Luke interrupted, grasping his stomach.

Conner steadied the ship as it cruised over the forest below, nipping the tops of the trees as it flew.

“Higher Conner,” Elise said, as branches hit the underside of the Galaxy Wing.

Soon the ship passed over Conner’s back garden. “There’s my house,” he shouted out.

“We’re not in this thing to see the sights we need to get to *Redwater*,” Luke said. “Turn left a bit and then we’ll be heading in the right direction.”

Conner took the ship left and increased the power from the engines. The ship sped up, covering miles in mere seconds.

“This thing is fast,” he said, “and easy to fly, like it knows exactly what I want it to do.”

“I wonder what’s beneath us?” Conner said as he could only see out of the front window.

In response to his question the ship suddenly made the floor see-through.

They all screamed in terror expecting to fall out of the ship.

They all then laughed nervously when they realised that the floor was still there, but like glass.

“Amazing,” Elise said, peering down at the landscape beneath them. “Look that’s London,” she said pointing down.

Beneath them familiar landmarks like the London Eye, Big Ben and Buckingham Palace flew by.

“How far to *Redwater*?” Conner said.

“We’re almost on top of it,” Luke said.

Conner slowed the ship down and saw the shopping centre known as *Redwater*. It was a huge, squat, circular building surrounded by car parks.

“What has he done to it?” Conner asked.

The shopping centre had been turned into a volcano. Lava was spilling out of the ground floor fire escapes, ash was everywhere and small cones leaking lava had punctured the roof of the building.

Strange volcanic formations had also appeared.

On one side of the building were pillars of hexagonal rock.

“That’s just like the Giant’s Causeway in Ireland,”

Luke pointed out.

“Thank goodness it’s night time and there’s no one shopping right now,” Elise said.

“I’ll land us on the roof,” Conner said, and the Galaxy Wing swooped majestically down to the top of the building and landed like an eagle.

The trio got out the ship and stood on the roof.

Smoke was everywhere and it made their eyes sting and their throats parched.

Each held their respective weapons nervously.

“We’re really going to do this?” Luke said.

“Yes we are, for the planet,” Conner said.

“We need to be careful remember this alien once tried to conquer his own world,” Elise said.

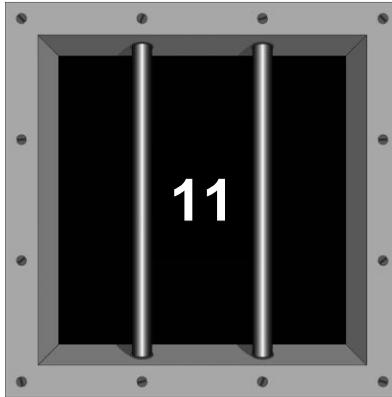
“I wonder how he was going to do it?” Conner asked. “He’s just one alien, how can he rule a planet on his own.”

“It had something to do with that experiment he was going to do, remember!” Elise pointed out.

“That’s why he’s here in this building,” Luke suddenly pointed out. “Think about it, a building full of all kinds of things - computers, technology, chemicals and machines. It’s the perfect place to gather materials and try his experiment again.”

“You’re right, we have to stop him here and now,” Conner said and the three of them used a nearby fire escape to enter the building. Smoke and heat issued from the door way when they pushed it open.

Conner thought, and he was sure his friends would agree, that it was like entering the gates of hell.



## THE LAVA RATS

“Where do you think he is?” Elise asked.

“I don’t know it’s a big place,” Conner answered.

*Redwater* was indeed a big place; the building had three levels that ran around the circumference of the centre. Shops were everywhere on every level.

Small streams of lava ran off balconies onto the levels beneath them. The ceiling was obscured

by a thick cloud of gases vented into the air by small volcanoes.

It was also hot, very hot. Conner felt his clothes damped with the sweat from his body. He now realised how his marshmallows had felt.

“Hey look at that,” Luke said.

“What!” Conner and Elise said together leaping forward and brandishing their spear and shield.

“It’s the new *Playstation*, it’s on sale already,”

Luke said, pointing at a nearby shop window.

Conner and Elise sighed.

“I thought we were about to be attacked,” Conner chided Luke.

“Sorry,” Luke said.

“We should split up,” Conner suggested.

“No way,” Luke replied.

“Why not?” Conner replied.

“Shush,” Elise said.

“Whenever they split up in the films someone is always hurt because they were all alone,” Luke said.

“I said shush,” Elise repeated.

“This isn't a film Luke,” Conner said.

“WILL YOU GUYS SHUT UP,” Elise shouted at them and they fell silent. “Listen,” she added.

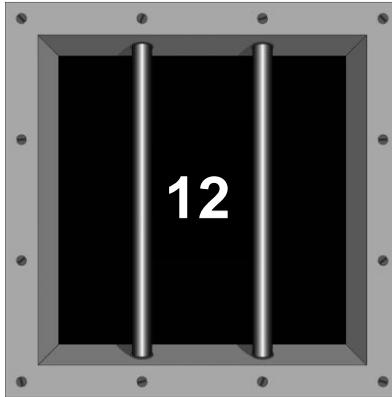
Luke and Conner lent their heads to one side to listen for what Elise was talking about.

They all heard a scrapping sound...no! Hundreds of scraping sounds, maybe thousands.

“What is that?” Conner asked.

“Them,” Luke said pointing at a nearby stairwell that was flooding with rats.

But not just any rats, rats made from rock and held together with scorching lava.



## THE KIDNAPPING

The first wave of rodents leapt up at Elise who raised her shield just in time and the rats struck it and either bounced off or shattered, spraying lava everywhere.

Another group of rats went for Conner who swung his spear without thinking. The orb at the end glowed blue as he swung and a long tendril

of energy lashed out from the end like a whip and hit the rats, scattering them.

Ten of the creatures went for Luke and he dodged their attack. As he moved his gauntlets glowed green and he jumped ten feet away from the creatures, further than he had ever jumped before.

“Incredible,” he said.

The rats kept coming at them though and their large numbers were separating them from each other.

“Looks like we do need to split up,” Conner yelled over the squeaking, molten rats.

“Meet up at the burger place,” Elise called out, pointing to a restaurant on the lowest level of the centre.

They all ran in different directions into different shops each chased by hundreds of Lava Rats.



Conner ran into a supermarket, a huge lava rat nipped at his heels and he turned around to dispatch it. He pointed his spear at the rat and willed it to produce more rope. Instead it fired a net made of energy at the creature, and it was sealed inside.

He raised his fist into the air in celebration and marvelled at his spear’s abilities. He then ran

deeper into the supermarket as more rats followed him.

There were too many for him to stop with his spear.

He couldn't destroy them all so instead he decided to trap them.

There was only one exit from this supermarket so he led the rats on a chase around the shelves of food until he was back at the entrance.

He dived out of the shop and fired another net of energy at the door frame of the shop.

The net spread out and completely blocked the exit.

The rats tried jumping through it, but it held against them.

Conner once again punched the air in triumph then headed for the burger place to meet the others.



Elise had run into a clothes store.

The rats followed her in.

She saw that this store had a flight of stairs that led down to the floor below.

The rats were closing in and she needed to get away fast. She grasped her shield to her chest and jumped head first down the stairs.

Using the shield like a board she 'surfed' down the stairs to the lower level. It was a bumpy ride as each step jolted her through the shield.

In desperation to catch her, the rats leapt after her and lost their footing and tumbled down the steps. Elise was followed by a wave of falling, white hot, squeaking rodents.

She shot from the bottom of the stairs into a rack of clothes that provided a soft landing for her.

The rats however, unable to control or slow their descent, hit the ground and all of them were crushed.

A small puddle of lava spread out from their broken bodies and melted the floor of the shop.

Elise took a moment to admire the sports clothing on sale then rushed off to join the boys.



Luke had chosen to enter a sports shop, and he knew he had made the right decision.

Luke, apart from being an expert on space, also liked to play cricket. He grabbed the nearest bat to hand and then tore into the rats that were chasing him. His gauntlets made him very fast and whenever the rats got close he would just jump away.

His gauntlets surrounded him with a green energy field as he moved. To Luke it felt like they were charging up his body, giving him more power.

Every so often he had to change bats as one after another they caught fire.

After a few minutes of frantic swinging, the last remaining rat jumped up to bite him on the arm and he hit it for six.

Luke held the last smoking cricket bat by his side and smiled at his handy work.

It was then, from behind, a large shadow loomed over him.

He only realised someone was behind him when he felt his back getting hotter and he smelled sulphur and brimstone. He turned just as Snorflag of Lavaton reached out to him with his giant, red hot hand.



## THE ERUPTION

Elise and Conner stood outside the burger restaurant.

“It’s so hot in here we could have a BBQ,”

Conner commented.

The floor of the centre was covered in a thick layer of ash. It reminded Conner of the remains of their fire back home. In boredom he drew patterns in it with the end of his staff.

He thought back to that campfire, he would never have guessed that tonight they would have ended up doing something like this.

“Where’s Luke?” Elise asked in concern.

“Relax, I’m sure he’s fine,” Conner said. “You saw how fast those gauntlets made him. He’s probably just out-running those rats.”

Elise nodded, reassured. “How is your spear?”

“It’s very cool, your shield?” Conner replied.

“It seems to be an ordinary shield, there’s nothing special about it,” Elise said, “good for surfing though.”

Conner just nodded, unsure what she meant by that, and then the two of them lapsed into silence and waited for their friend.



Luke woke up in the security office of the shopping centre. The walls were covered in screens, showing the whole centre through camera feeds.

He was strapped to a swivel chair in the middle of the office.

The office had almost been completely transformed, it now resembled a cave. Rock was everywhere and so were pools of lava.

Luke tried to struggle free from the chair, but he was bound securely.

The nearest pool of lava then started to bubble and froth and rising out of it came a figure.

Luke got his first proper look at Snorflag of Lavaton. The alien's body was triangular supported by two legs and he had two arms that reached all the way down to the ground like a gorilla's. His fifteen eyes stared back at Luke. Snorflag was completely made of rock held together by veins of lava. Molten stone dripped onto the floor from his body, sizzling and smoking where it landed.

"You're Snorflag," Luke said.

Snorflag chuckled. "So the robot sent you after me did it, told you all about me?" he asked.

Luke nodded.

"Did he tell you that I was almost ruler of a whole world," he said.

Luke nodded, “he said you were performing an experiment,” Luke replied.

“Yes, my greatest triumph, I will eventually expose your whole planet to its effects and I want you to be my test subject, to make sure it works properly.”

“Test subject?” Luke said.

“Yes but before that, let’s deal with your friends,” Snorflag replied.

The alien pointed at one of the TV screens, which showed Conner and Elise waiting outside the restaurant they had agreed to meet at.

Luke gasped; this alien knew exactly where they were.

“Do you know how hot lava gets,” Snorflag said.

“No,” Luke said.

“Very hot,” Snorflag answered and the alien dug his hand back into the pool of lava he had emerged from.

The ground shook and the lava bubbled like a can of coke that had been shaken really hard.

“What are you doing?” Luke said.

“Just watch,” Snorflag replied, smiling evilly.



“Let’s go find him,” Conner said.

“We have to wait here, what if he turns up and we’re somewhere else,” Elise pointed out.

Just then there was rumble from deep within the shopping centre.

“What was that?” Conner said.

“Oh my goodness,” Elise cried out pointing towards a wave of lava spewing through the corridors of the building, heading straight towards them.

Everything in its path was either melted or burnt by the molten stone.

Conner and Elise had no chance of out-running it.

They were doomed.



## THE SHIELD

“Run,” Conner said.

“We can’t out run that,” Elise said. “Quickly in here,” she ordered and pulled Conner into the restaurant.

She raised her shield.

“Please protect us,” she pleaded, hoping that there was more to the shield than it appeared.

The shield reacted to her plea and a red energy field, like a bubble, expanded from the shield encompassing her and Conner.

The lava wave hit the bubble of energy and was knocked aside.

The lava continued to flow across the shield, but didn't burn either of them.

Conner watched the liquid rock splash against the red barrier, he felt thrilled and terrified at the same time.

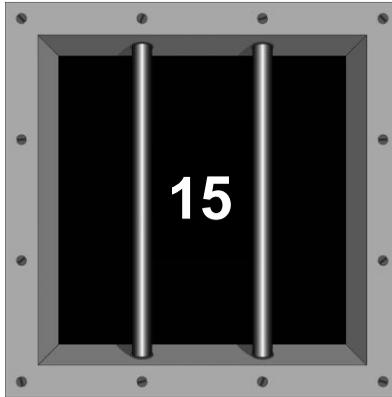
Eventually the wave ran out of lava.

Conner and Elise emerged from the shield completely unharmed.

The shopping centre was a right mess though; the lava had burned everything except the shop

they were in that had been protected by the shield.

“Well done Elise,” Conner said and they high-fived.



## THE EXPERIMENT

Snorflag the Lavaton frowned at the TV screens that showed Conner and Elise alive and well. He moved the camera with a control and zoomed in on the pair of them.

Luke exhaled in relief. He had been holding his breath ever since witnessing the wave of red hot rock.

“They’re not burned?” the alien said in confusion, then he zoomed in closer on the shield Elise carried. “Curse Lology’s devices,” Snorflag spat. “Who?” Luke asked.

Snorflag ignored him.

As Conner and Elise started walking away from their temporary shelter, Snorflag followed them with the camera.

Elise seemed to see the camera moving out of the corner of her eye and looked straight up at it. She then started pointing at it and talking to Conner.

Conner then went over to a map on a wall that showed the whole layout of the centre.

Luke was elated that they had figured out where he was.

“They’re going to rescue me,” he said.

“No matter, they won’t get here in time to stop the experiment,” Snorflag said.

Luke watched as the alien dug its hand into another pool of lava in the room and removed a small rock from within. Snorflag then crumpled the rock, which was actually more like an egg, with a thin shell and hollow. He revealed a piece of technology inside.

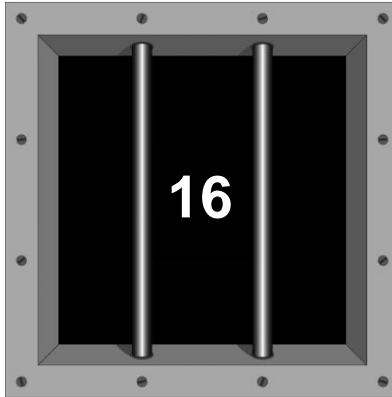
Luke was astonished, the device the alien held was cobbled together from *ipods*, Blu-Ray players and laptops; he wondered what on Earth it was supposed to do.

There was a small screen on the device and Snorflag positioned it in front of Luke's eyes.

There was a memorising glow on the screen and he became transfixed by it.

“Now then human you will do exactly as I say,”

Snorflag said.



## THE WEAKNESS

Conner and Elise burst into the security office brandishing their weapons.

They saw Luke strapped to the chair with a faraway look on his face.

“Hi mate we’ve been looking for you,” Conner said rushing over.

Luke just sat there and dribbled.

“What’s wrong with him?” Conner said.

“I don’t know,” Elise said.

“Where is the alien?” Conner asked.

“ALIEN,” Luke suddenly shouted, bolting up right in the chair.

Conner and Elise yelled back at him in shock.

“What was that about?” Elise said.

“The alien must have done something to him,” Conner concluded.

“Where is it anyway?” Elise said.

“I’m here,” they heard Snorflag call out, rising from the pool of lava where he had been hiding.

Conner and Elise gasped when they saw the alien in the ‘flesh’, it was like nothing they could have imagined.

He had no flesh, he was made of scarred black stone held together by molten rock.

Conner managed to rally himself first, “you’re going back to prison,” he said and he launched a net at Snorflag.

The net of energy closed around the alien and held, but only for a few seconds as the intense heat from the alien damaged the net and freed him.

Snorflag then gargled with something in his mouth and spat a chunk of molten rock at Conner.

Elise managed to leap between the two of them with her shield just in time, and deflected the attack.

“You can’t beat me,” Snorflag said. “Soon this world will be mine,” he boasted.

Conner threw his staff like a javelin at Snorflag, who ducked and the spear shot over his head.

“Too slow,” the alien said.

Conner smiled and held out his hand.

Straight away the spear flew back into Conner’s hand catching Snorflag on the legs from behind and sending him crashing to the floor. Part of the alien broke off and sent rock everywhere.

Snorflag cried out in pain and held the rocky stump that had been his left arm.

“Conner help me get Luke free - we need to retreat,” Elise said.

Conner helped her untie Luke and they both carried him out of the security office as Snorflag started to gather himself together.

Luke was awake, but unable to support himself, Conner found it hard to carry him through the shopping centre and away from the security office. His left leg was dragging, and his right was taking weak steps.

Snorflag burst through the door with a roar of anger, shattering it and setting it on fire. As burning pieces of wood fell all around him he spotted the trio limping away and gave chase. Conner looked over his shoulder in time to see Snorflag reach out with a clawed hand.

Conner bore Elise and Luke to the ground as the hand sailed over their heads.

The red hot right hand missed them by inches, singeing the hair on Conner's head. Snorflag ended up hitting a nearby wall. The marble squares crumbled under the impact.

All of a sudden water burst out as if someone had turned on a fire hose.

The trio were drenched in water, a welcome feeling in this hot environment.

"He hit a water pipe behind the wall," Elise said.

Her words were drowned out by Snorflag's howls of pain.

The water had cooled the lava in his hand and it was turning into solid stone.

Steam rose from his arm and the fingers there set into an ugly twisted shape.

Elise and Conner looked at each, and they both realised the alien's weakness.

"There's probably a sprinkler system in this building," Elise pointed out.

"Do you think it still works?" Conner said, gesturing towards the volcanic landscape around them.

"We have to try," Elise responded.

Conner looked around and saw on another wall, ten meters away - a fire alarm box.

He left Elise and Luke on the floor and started running to the box.

Snorflag looked up from cradling his remaining arm that was turning solid and saw what Conner was running for. He roared again, but not in anger, but fear and immediately gave chase.

The next few seconds seemed to happen in slow motion as Conner ran a few steps ahead of the angry alien.

He felt the alien's heated body gaining on him from behind - the thunderous booms of his footsteps.

Before Snorflag could reach him he dived for the box and punched it with all his might.

The glass broke and the button underneath was pushed in.

The result was immediate.

The alarms went off and the sprinklers came on.

Snorflag stood over Conner as the water fell from the ceiling down towards them.

The alien was just about to spit another chunk of molten rock at Conner, as a final act of defiance, before the water hit his rocky body.

He could only gargle; he had no time to spit.

Steam rose from Snorflag's skin as the water droplets touched his stony flesh.

He howled in pain and tried to reach around to sooth his back.

The alien moved away from the water to find shelter, but found himself becoming stiff and more rock like.

When the sprinklers were finally dry Snorflag was pretty much rock solid.

Conner and Elise picked themselves up and inspected the alien.

“When I heat up I will destroy you,” Snorflag managed to mumble through a mouth that was almost unmovable.

Elise and Conner high fived again and added a low ten for emphasis.

“We need to get him back to the Prison Ship,” Conner said.

Snorflag eyes revolved in their stone sockets searching for Luke. “You there boy, do it now,” Snorflag suddenly said.

“Do what?” Conner asked.

Luke got up off the floor and put his hand in his trouser pocket.

“What are you doing Luke?” Conner asked, turning to face his best friend.

Luke pulled an orb from his pocket.

Conner and Elise saw that it was one of Mach’s teleporters.

“No Luke don’t!” Conner cried.

They were too late Luke activated the teleporter and in a blinding flash he was gone.

Conner stared at the empty space where he had been standing, “WHERE IS HE?” he shouted at Snorflag.

“Oh he’s just gone off to spread a little freedom,”

Snorflag replied, and then the alien started chuckling.



17

## THE BETRAYAL

Mach was sitting in his chair in the command centre of his Prison Ship watching the screen that showed the status of his other prisoners. He was relieved to see that their cells were completely intact.

He wondered how the humans were getting on, and whether or not they were in danger. They

had seemed trustworthy and capable to him. He also thought that they were very brave for their age, he admired them for that.

Then he suddenly heard someone arrive in his ship using a teleporter.

For a moment Mach thought Snorflag had returned to the ship. When he turned round he saw that it was the human known as Luke so he dropped his guard.

“Since you have his teleporter I can assume that you have captured Snorflag,” Mach said.

Luke nodded.

“Give it to me and I will go fetch him,” Mach ordered smiling as warmly as his robotic features would allow. Luke gave him the teleporter.

Mach turned away from Luke and was just about to activate the teleporter when suddenly Luke jumped up onto his shoulders.

“What are you...?” Mach said, but he couldn’t say anything else because Luke pulled out the circuit boards exposed at the back of his neck.

Mach fell onto the floor, those circuits controlled his body, and without them he was helpless. He had back-up circuits, but they would take a minute or two to activate.

He watched helplessly as Luke went and grabbed all the remaining teleporters then went into the prison corridor.

Mach heard the sound of doors being unlocked.

He tried to scream for Luke to stop, but it was no good, his speech circuits had also been removed.

In just a few minutes nine more of the worst criminals in the whole universe had been freed and had teleported away.



**18**

## **THE AFTERMATH**

Conner and Elise were still in the shopping centre wondering what they should do.

“We need to get back to the ship,” Conner said.

“What about him?” Elise said pointing at the statue that was Snorflag.

“Why did he teleport away?” Conner asked trying to figure why his friend had abandoned them like that.

“The experiment was a success,” Snorflag said, laughing.

“What experiment?” Elise and Conner said together.

“My experiment, the one that will allow me to rule any world in the universe,” Snorflag said.

“What did you do?” Conner demanded.

“I brainwashed him, that’s what I did, my experiment was to see if I could force someone to do my bidding. I have successfully created a Brainwasher,” Snorflag boasted.

“Why didn’t he teleport you out here?” Conner asked.

“I did not expect to be frozen like this, it wasn’t part of the instructions I gave him, and so he left me.”

“What do you mean by instructions?” Elise asked.

“Your friend has just gone and freed my fellow prisoners, you now have nine more to contend with,” he said. “With your attention elsewhere I will escape again.”

Suddenly Mach appeared in the shopping centre, accompanied by a blinding flash.

“I’m glad this place is within range of my emergency teleporter,” the robot said.

“Ah it’s my jailer,” Snorflag said laughing again,

“my personal jailer,” Snorflag added.

“We have to go,” Mach said.

“What about Luke?” Conner asked.

“He’s gone, he used Snorflag’s teleporter to disappear,” Mach said.

“No, he wouldn’t,” Conner said.

“He did, he freed the prisoners and escaped,” Mach said.

“He brainwashed him to do it,” Elise said pointing at Snorflag.

“So that was your plan Snorflag,” Mach said.

“Yes I instructed that human to free and help the other aliens. If I had not been frozen like this, their escape would have distracted you long

enough to allow me to brainwash the whole planet. The boy will now seek them out and keep you from re-capturing them; he's not your friend anymore."

Conner literally felt his heart beat faster in anger, pretty much hitting his rib cage. He ran at Snorflag, brandishing his spear.

Mach blocked his path and Elise pulled him away from the alien.

"We need to get out of here quickly. The soldiers and policemen of your world are closing in on this building, we have to be gone when they get here," Mach said, changing the subject.

"What about the Galaxy Wing?"

“I have set it to auto pilot, it’s heading back to the Prison Ship right now.”

Mach activated his short range teleporter and all of them disappeared and reappeared in the Prison Ship.

Conner hadn’t felt any sensation at all from the sudden, near instant journey they had made. It was as simple as walking through a door.

He and Elise slumped into chairs in the Control Centre wondering where on Earth Luke was.

Mach picked up Snorflag and took him to his special prison cell. The alien was still immobile so he couldn’t resist.

“What are we going to do about Luke?” Elise asked Conner.

Conner stared at the floor; his best friend was under the influence of alien technology, and could be anywhere, helping the other alien criminals.

He blamed himself for all of this, it was his fault for convincing Luke to hunt down Snorflag.

Maybe he shouldn't do anything, he had done enough damage.

Then he realised that it was his responsibility to help Luke, he was his friend.

Conner decided not to give up on him.

He stood up raising his head high.

“We save him,” he said.

Elise smiled at Conner.

There was still hope.



19

## HOMEWORK

The next day Conner returned home from school. He rushed into the house and dropped off his school stuff and hurriedly changed into some old and more comfortable clothes.

“Hi mum, bye mum,” he shouted and disappeared out of the back door and into the garden.

Hold on Conner where are you going?” his mother said tearing her attention away from the television that was reporting the sudden appearance of a volcano in the UK.

“I’m meeting Luke and Elise,” he called back already sprinting away from the house.

“Don’t you have homework to do?”

*Yes I’m going to do it now*, he thought, but he said, “I’ll do it when I get back,” and he rushed off before his mother could stop him.

He ran deep into the woods following the long trench that led to Mach’s space ship.

Elise was already there looking glum. So was Mach, and far as his mechanical facial features would allow, he didn’t look happy either.

“He won’t let us hunt the aliens,” Elise said as Conner jogged up to her.

“What?” he said, turning and glaring at Mach.

“I have decided that you cannot be allowed to hunt these aliens,” the robot said.

“But why?” Conner asked.

“It is simply too dangerous, what has happened to Luke has shown me that I should never have let you attempt to capture Snorflag in the first place.”

Conner gritted his teeth and felt his blood boil,

“Luke is my friend I was the one who forced him to go to *Redwater*, it’s my fault he’s out there helping these aliens,” Conner said.

“When I first met you, you were the only humans to know I was on Earth. I had no choice but to trust you. But you are children, you cannot handle these criminals. I was wrong to get you involved,” Mach said.

“Mach, Luke is our best friend, and you can’t leave your ship to go and find these aliens, it has to be us who does it, not you,” Elise said.

Mach looked away from them.

“Please Mach, help me to undo my mistake, I got caught up in the adventure, I didn’t think and now my friend is suffering because of it, “Conner said.

Mach turned back to them, but was still silent.

“Well, what’s your answer?” Elise said.

No reply.

“Can we or can we not hunt these aliens, and bring our friend back home?” Conner asked, one final time.

Mach opened his mouth to respond...

**THE END**

**JOIN CONNER, ELISE AND LUKE ON THE  
NEXT HUNT**

**WHO IS THE ALIEN THEY ARE AFTER?**

**THE THIEVING MONSTER KNOWN AS...**

**KUTTERWOOD OF UNGLE**

**WATCH OUT SHE'S LEAF-ALL!**

## PROLOGUE

*Paris, probably the most famous city in the entire world!* That was what Philippe thought as he marvelled at its buildings and streets from on top of the *Arc de Triomphe*, a magnificent arch built by the famous Napoleon Bonaparte.

The *Arc*, perhaps the centre piece of the French capital city, was a monument to its greatness. It offered unrivalled views of the *Champs-Élysées*, a majestic boulevard of shops.

Philippe was a security guard at the *Arc* and he loved to go onto the roof of the building late at night and view his city.

Because of his love for the building, he took his duties as guard very seriously. He was well trained in keeping kids from spilling their soft drinks all over the polished stone. He also excelled at shouting at them when they dared to cross the velvet red ropes that cordoned off certain areas.

It was his duty to protect the magnificent structure and protect it he shall.

He left the roof and performed his rounds on the upper level of the *Arc*, and then he took the stairs down to the security office. He admired the art work on display inside the *Arc* and the busts of heroes carved into the arched roof.

He came to a sudden halt when he saw a woman standing on the stairwell. She was admiring the building and had her back to him. Philippe swelled his chest and straightened his back. He looked forward to these moments when he got to exert some authority.

His shoes made loud purposeful steps as he descended the stairs down to the woman. He saw that she was dressed in a long overcoat with the collar pointing up and covering her neck. A large wide brimmed hat kept her head from view. “Excuse me madam, the *Arc* is closed for the evening and you should not be here,” he said.

There was no response from the woman. The only sound coming from her was a faint rustling, like dry leaves.

Philippe raised his hand and placed it on the woman's shoulder.

“You have to...” he began and stopped mid - sentence when he felt her shoulder.

Something seemed to be writhing underneath her coat, it felt like hundreds of snakes.

Philippe stepped back as the woman turned towards him.

“Yes it will do nicely,” she said.

Philippe took his Nightstick, a foot long tube of metal, from his belt. He held it aloft, ready to

strike. “What are you?” he said in terror, when he saw what was beneath the coat.

The woman didn't answer.

Vines suddenly sprung from within her clothing and enveloped the guard, forcing him towards the far wall and holding him there. His nightstick clattered to the floor, useless against his foe.

The vines snaked their way over the walls of the *Arc*. One found a drinks fountain and pried it off the wall.

Water gushed out onto the floor and the vines soaked themselves, growing quickly as they drank in the liquid.

As the plants spread from the woman she raised her arms and laughed.

“Finally, a city that will be mine...forever.”