

## **Grade 5 Winner**

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# **NANOBOTS**

Thorn Sorengate didn't expect microscopic robots to overthrow man.

Nor did she expect mechanical monsters to roam the London streets.

She didn't expect nanobots to sync with virtually every electronic mechanism on earth. But it all happened. And it happened in the space of a week.

The "invasion" started when the Londoners awoke to find a substance resembling powder littering the streets and drifting lazily down from the sky. It was tinted platinum blue, and soared high and low as if without a care in the world.

The London population attempted to open their doors but it was in vain, as the nanobots (as they would later discover) had torched them shut.

Thorn Sorengate was of the handful that shattered their window in a try for getting outside, but an unseen barrier stopped the first finger that entered the fresh air. Monday is when the chaos began.

Clumps of nanobots gathered and formed tinted beasts the likes of which had never been seen before.

By Saturday robotic horrors lumbered across streets and pillaged shops and malls as they liked.

## **NEXT TUESDAY**

The voice sounded like claws down a chalkboard as it boomed across London. "I'll give you a fair chance humans," it dictated. "But you will fail in the end!" The air shimmered and foreign looking weapons dropped out of the sky.

Thorn retrieved one from the ground. Something came over her, suddenly she *knew*.

"Everybody pick up a cannon!" she yelled. "Aim them at the machines! These are proton cannons and they can pulverize our 'friends' here!"

Her voice rang across London and in every corner, men and women alike fired at the blue masses. At last only one remained. Thorn aimed prepared to pull the trigger then faltered. In that split second the remaining beast suddenly, *opened* quite literally.

And out of it streamed out twice the number of horrors that had just been crushed.

Thorn as the Londoners after her turned and fled.

## **CHAPTER ONE**

*5 Years Later*

The world was unrecognizable to the eye of one who would have been raised here ten years previous. What had once been London was a ruin of mangled wire and derelict shops. In the heart of London one could find a five pointed star with a ragged X burned across it-the mark of the nanobots.

Rather than blue and green, the world image from space was platinum blue. Tinged with red, the color of a particularly nasty breed of nanobots.

"Drifter" colonies were scattered across earth. Groups of humans fighting the mechanized "gearmen" as (they now called the groups of nanobots that formed a shape).

Thorn Sorengate happened to be in the captain of one of these colonies. They had managed to replicate the proton technology, so the proton blaster supply never dwindled.

Thorn at this moment was engaged in an argument with E-dragon (a nickname he had acquired when he defeated a dragonoid gearman). E-dragon was second in command.

"No." said Thorn. "I know that the nanobots are communication creatures, but just releasing an E.M.P in a gearman cluster wouldn't help. It would neutralize a fair number, but twice that would replace them." "But while they're replacing, we could defeat more!" protested E-dragon. "The final answer is no E-dragon," retorted Thorn. "We need to find the heart of the nanobots. Then and only then will we detonate the E.M.P and hopefully wipe out the gearmen for good."

Thorn stood and exited the tent.

## CHAPTER TWO

Grumbling, E-dragon stood. *Thorn is stubborn. Who cares about the heart of the nanobots? We have enough E.M.P's to wipe them out all, he thought. But it's not like I could start a mutiny and then have myself become leader.* E-dragon suddenly stood stock-still. *Wait, a mutiny... maybe just maybe...*

E-dragon exited the tent, his mind wandering.

Thorn was off the drifter campus, a dangerous thing to do, but she needed time to herself.

*Where is the heart of the nanobots?* she wondered. *Just where could it be?*

Heavy footsteps betrayed the arrival of another being. Thorn stood up and drew her proton rifle and fired in one smooth movement. The beautiful thing about proton rifles was that they didn't harm humans, so Thorn shooting on impulse was a win-win.

She heard a gearman fall, and relief swept over her.

She crouched over the fallen gearman, it was neutralized.

She teased out its "brain" (the information microchip) from the electric socket and headed back to the drifter camp.

"E-dragon!" she yelled. "Come quickly!" She ran into the control room and opened the gearman microchip's data files. E-dragon stood at her side. "C'mon... where is it, please be there..." pleaded Thorn.

"What?" inquired E-dragon.

"The heart – yes! It's there!" Thorn didn't pay the two women and three men that entered the room any mind.

"The heart of the gearmen!" crowed Thorn triumphantly.

"Well done Thorn," praised E-dragon in the dim light. "Now if you would be as kind as to leave this drifter colony and never return." Thorn suddenly found cuffs around her wrists. She spotted E-dragon grinning evilly.

"What?" probed Thorn horror-struck.

"It's going to be me," said E-dragon, with a taunting smile on his face. "Me who will defeat the nanobots, not you. Me who the bards will sing and praise for eons to come. Not you, me. Me who will inherit riches, not you. I will be the hero! Not the shadow you cast. Instead, I will be the caster. Not you. I'll let you tag along, so you can recall it better. So the impression will last."

### **CHAPTER THREE**

"The orb pole, who would have thought?" mused E-dragon. The orb pole was made of discarded electronics. Game consoles, TV's, power cords, you name it.

Thorn was aboard the *THRONE*, a plane able to create wormholes to take it to places in seconds.

Thorn remained silent.

A robotic voice announced, "Wormhole opening in 5 ... 4 ... 3 ... 2 ... 1... 0." Suddenly Thorn found the plane next to the orb pole. E-dragon lugged her outside and positioned her so she could have a clear view of them. In theory the orb pole was not under heavy gearman guard, because that would draw attention and humans would instantly know where the nanobot's heart was.

Thorn was unarmed and bound tightly on her hands. There was nothing she could do.

The split-second before E-dragon placed the E.M.P on the orb pole, a wave of gearmen fell upon him and his five cronies.

A stray gearman laser burned through Thorn's bindings, and she scrambled away and hid in the bracken.

E-dragon put up a fair fight, but eventually was overcome by the gearman. Then the gearmen cleared away and apparently left.

Thorn stuck her hands in her pockets in despair and gasped. She had a spare E.M.P in her back pocket!

With mixed emotions of fear, anger, hope and overwhelming disbelief she dashed out of the bracken to try to reattach the E.M.P to the orb pole, a stray thought wondered why there was a magnifying glass right next to the E.M.P socket.

The gearmen were almost upon her when she attached the E.M.P to the socket. Then in a sudden movement they fell, the instant the E.M.P was placed.

*Ohmygosh, ohmygosh I did it I actually did it,* Thorn mentally cheered.

Then through the magnifying glass Thorn saw ...

*Nonononono,* it can't be thought Thorn.

Through the magnifying glass she could discern a single nanobot, which split into another and another.

Thorn retrieved a fallen proton cannon, aimed, and fired.

END