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THE TRANSFORMERS REANIMATED



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THE TRANSFORMERS: REANIMATED.
"CHARLATAN, DECEIVER... PRETENDER, PART 1."

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Youseph "Yoshi" Tanha.

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Dan Khanna.

Based on the original cartoon series, The Transformers:
ReAnimated, bridges the gap between the seminal second season and
the 1986 Movie that defined the childhood of millions.

PAGE ONE:

PANEL 1:

EXT. SPACE

The rocket-mode of OMEGA SUPREME cruises through the black emptiness of SPACE.

CAPTION: Somewhere in the cosmos...

BUMBLEBEE
(captioned)
Once again, I really have to thank
you, Omega...

PANEL 2:

INT. OMEGA SUPREME'S COMMAND CENTER

BUMBLEBEE sits at the HELM of Omega Supreme's INNER CONTROL ROOM, talking to its computer panels as though they were Omega Supreme, himself.

CYBERTRON and its MOONS appear on a nearby DATA SCREEN.

Behind Bumblebee, in their robot-modes and looking entirely too impatient, stand the five DINOBOOTS: GRIMLOCK, SLAG, SWOOP, SLUDGE and SNARL.

Grimlock, in particular, stands with ARMS FOLDED, appearing as INDIGNANT as ever.

BUMBLEBEE
... It's very kind of you to give
us a ride to Cybertron before you
go back into deep space again.
Where **are** you headed, anyway?

OMEGA SUPREME
Gratitude: Unnecessary. Future
destination: Confidential.

BUMBLEBEE
Oh. Well, thanks for the ride
anyway.

PANEL 3:

EXT. CYBERTRON'S FIRST MOON - NIGHT

JAZZ and CLIFFJUMPER stand on a WIDE-OPEN CYBERTRONIAN PLAIN. Each of them gazes into the sky to see that Omega Supreme's rocket-mode is DESCENDING towards them.

CAPTION: Cybertron's first moon...

BUMBLEBEE

(captioned)

I'm just excited to see these Moon Bases Cliffjumper keeps telling me about.

OMEGA SUPREME

Enthusiasm: Appropriate.

CLIFFJUMPER

Well, there they are. Right on time.

JAZZ

Hey, man, you know if anyone was ever gonna be on schedule, it'd be good ol' Omega Supreme.

PANEL 4:

WIDE SHOT, FROM BEHIND Jazz and Cliffjumper - Omega Supreme's rocket-mode has now landed.

STEAM billows from his ENGINES, while Bumblebee and Grimlock step off the extended EXIT RAMP to greet their allies.

Swoop and Slag appear in the background, still standing in the exit's DOORWAY.

BUMBLEBEE

Jazz, Cliffjumper! Good to see you!

JAZZ

Hey, little Bee. You made it.

OMEGA SUPREME

Transportation: Complete.
Departure: Imminent.

PANEL 5:

Jazz and Cliffjumper stand opposite Grimlock, while Bumblebee WAVES to Omega Supreme as he RISES INTO THE HEAVENS.

BUMBLEBEE

Bye, Omega! Thanks again! Safe journey!

JAZZ

All right! Let's head back to base before we attract any unwanted bogus attention. And maybe on the way, Bee can tell us what's been happenin' back on Earth.

GRIMLOCK

Why Jazz want to hear about Earth? Me, Grimlock thought Cybertron be more exciting?

CLIFFJUMPER

Not so much, big guy...

PAGE TWO:

PANEL 1:

EXT. THE TRENCH - NIGHT

Suspended by what appears to be CYBERTRONIAN ABSEILLING GEAR, BANZAI-TRON and STRANGLEHOLD descend the sheer cliff face of a DARKENED TRENCH.

NOTE: Stranglehold appears as his non-Pretender, inner robot.

CAPTION: Meanwhile, elsewhere beneath the very same moon...

CLIFFJUMPER

(captioned)

... Been real quiet lately.

STRANGLEHOLD

Are you sure about this, Banzai-Tron?

BANZAI-TRON

Hey, **you** wanted to do this, right? **You** wanted to find these guys, right? **You're** the one so eager to reclaim that ancient Pretender tech, right? **Right?**

STRANGLEHOLD

Well, yeah.

BANZAI-TRON

Why, exactly? You think those fancy suits are gonna let **you** take over and be the new big-bad-bot?

STRANGLEHOLD

Of course not. But, if I can help **retrieve** that tech, surely it gets me a seat at the table, *right?*

PANEL 2:

Both Stranglehold and a now-very-sarcastic Banzai-Tron rest on a LEDGE.

BANZAI-TRON

Riiiiight. Well, last time I saw 'em, they were headed down this way*.

CAPTION: *See issue #62.

PANEL 3:

Banzai-Tron PEERS over the edge of the ridge to gaze down into the trench's ENDLESS NOTHINGNESS.

BANZAI-TRON (CONT'D)

All the way down.

STRANGLEHOLD

(off-panel)

Are we even going to make it down there? It's too far to climb and if we fly down, we won't have enough Energon to get back out.

PANEL 4:

Banzai-Tron and Stranglehold LOOK UP to see the jet-mode of STARSCREAM approaching from above.

BANZAI-TRON

Don't worry that pretty little head of yours, Strangles. Our 'interested third party' is on his way. Oh, look. Here he comes now.

PANEL 5:

Starscream TRANSFORMS to robot-mode to land on his feet before Banzai-Tron and Stranglehold.

STARSCREAM

Greetings, fellow adventurers. It's okay to be impressed.

STRANGLEHOLD

Impressed? You flatter yourself.

BANZAI-TRON

Hey, I'm impressed, Mr. Screamer-of-Stars. This is gonna be so much fun.

PAGE THREE:

PANEL 1:

Starscream stands opposite Banzai-Tron.

STARSCREAM

Spare me the charm, Banzai-Tron. You're certain this is it? This is the final resting place of **Thunderwing** and **Bludgeon**?

BANZAI-TRON

As sure as sure can be. This is where they sank when that supercop, Ricochet took 'em out, all those millions of years ago*.

CAPTION: *Again, as seen in issue #62.

PANEL 2:

OVER STARSCREAM'S SHOULDER - Banzai-Tron lifts his fists like an OLD-TIMEY, BAREKNUCKLED BOXER.

BANZAI-TRON (CONT'D)

But, now I have a question for **you**. Did you bring it? Part of me hopes you did, so we can be friends. But I ain't gonna lie... a **little** part of me hopes you didn't, so we can duke it out like the heroes of old!

PANEL 3:

Starscream lifts a TRIANGULAR-SHAPED DEVICE into view, causing Banzai-Tron to raise his arms above his head in TRIUMPH.

STARSCREAM

Right here. Stole it from Shockwave's lab.

BANZAI-TRON

Well, well, well. Look at that.
Screamer comin' through like a
champ! And stickin' it to ol' one-
eye to boot!

PANEL 4:

Banzai-Tron and Stranglehold now stand either side of Starscream and his device.

STRANGLEHOLD

All right, let's do this.

STARSCREAM

We need to be careful. This thing
works, but there's only enough
power for two, maybe three jumps.

BANZAI-TRON

Whatever you say, pal. You're the
scientist...

PANEL 5:

All three Decepticons VANISH in a FLASH OF TELEPORTATION.

BANZAI-TRON (CONT'D)

(speech bubble only)

... Yowzah!

PAGE FOUR:

PANEL 1:

EXT. MOON BASE ONE, CYBERTRON'S FIRST MOON - NIGHT

MOON BASE ONE sits alone on the surface of Cybertron's first
moon.

CAPTION: Moon Base One...

SWERVE

(captioned)

Chromia, check this out!

PANEL 2:

INT. INSIDE MOON BASE ONE, CONTROL ROOM

SWERVE sits at a computer terminal, SCRATCHING his metal
head.

Behind him, CHROMIA looks over his shoulder with CURIOSITY.

SWERVE

An unknown energy surge, coming from deep below the surface.

CHROMIA

What is it?

SWERVE

I don't know. It was there for a micro-second and then it was gone. I've never seen such a cluster of so many spatial-displacement tachyons in the one place before.

PANEL 3:

Swerve looks up at Chromia.

Behind Chromia, FIRESTAR has turned to take notice of the conversation.

SWERVE (CONT'D)

Must've been some kind of matter-transporter. But, who's gonna be transporting matter from **beneath** the surface?

CHROMIA

Can you get a fix on its location?

SWERVE

Yeah. It's out near what used to be the Scientia District.

FIRESTAR

Wait, didn't Jazz and Cliffjumper head out that way to greet Bumblebee and the Dinobots?

PANEL 4:

Chromia now looks on at the computer's DATA SCREEN and its digital image of Jazz.

CHROMIA

Chromia to Jazz. Come in, Jazz.

JAZZ

(through the data screen)
Jazz here. What's up, Chromia?

CHROMIA

We're picking up some odd energy readings near your current location. You think Bumblebee and the Dinobots are keen for a little mystery solving?

JAZZ

You know it!

PANEL 5:

Chromia and Swerve watch as Jazz gives a THUMBS UP on the data screen.

JAZZ (CONT'D)

(from the data screen)

Send us the co-ordinates and we'll get to the bottom it.

SWERVE

Sending them to you now.

JAZZ

(from the data screen)

All right! Jazz, out.

PAGE FIVE:

PANEL 1:

EXT. THE BOTTOM OF THE TRENCH - NIGHT

At the bottom of the abyss, the DILAPIDATED PRETENDER SHELLS of BLUDGEON and THUNDERWING lie in DISREPAIR.

Both of them appear as though they have not been disturbed for MILLENNIA.

CAPTION: Meanwhile...

PANEL 2:

Starscream, Banzai-Tron and Stranglehold TELEPORT into the scene with a FLASH.

BANZAI-TRON

Boom! And we're here! Licketdy-split! Love your work, Screamer.

STARSCREAM

Quiet, you buffoon. Is this the place, or not?

PANEL 3:

Banzai-Tron stands POINTING to the inactive Bludgeon and Thunderwing, while Stranglehold KNEELS DOWN beside them.

BANZAI-TRON
Oh, it's the place all right.

STRANGLEHOLD
Amazing.

STARSCREAM
(off-panel)
Yes, indeed...

PANEL 4:

WIDE SHOT - Banzai-Tron and Stranglehold turn to look at the background, where Starscream now stands gazing at FOUR MORE INERT PRETENDER SHELLS.

STARSCREAM (CONT'D)
... Truly amazing!

STRANGLEHOLD
Whoa.

NOTE: Each of the other Pretender Shells are those we would typically assign to G1 Jazz, Bumblebee, Grimlock, Starscream and Stranglehold.

PANEL 5:

Banzai-Tron and Stranglehold watch Starscream raise his teleportation device over his head.

STARSCREAM
A treasure trove of ancient technology! And it's all mine! At least, it **will** be once we get out of this pit.

PANEL 6:

SMALL INSERT PANEL - The panel is filled with more TELEPORTATION FLASH.

STARSCREAM (CONT'D)
(word balloon only)
Ha-Ha-Ha-Ha-Ha-Ha!

PAGE SIX:

PANEL 1:

EXT. THE SURFACE ENTRANCE TO THE TRENCH - NIGHT

Jazz, Bumblebee and Cliffjumper (in vehicle-modes) approach what appears to be a GIANT SINKHOLE, surrounded by the shattered remains of a once-robust CITYSCAPE, now reduced to rubble.

Bedraggled husks of HIGH-RISE BUILDINGS line the background; all that remains of the SCIENTIA DISTRICT.

Overhead, all five Dinobots fly above Jazz, Cliffjumper and Bumblebee.

CLIFFJUMPER

Swerve's co-ordinates line up with that tunnel.

BUMBLEBEE

Wow, look at the size of that thing! Where does it lead?

JAZZ

It leads down, little buddy. That hole has been there ever since this place was known as the Scientia District. A long, long, **long** time ago.

PANEL 2:

Jazz, Cliffjumper and Bumblebee TRANSFORM to robot-mode, as Grimlock lands in front of them.

GRIMLOCK

Hmm. Me, Grimlock not impressed.

PANEL 3:

BIRD'S EYE VIEW - Jazz, Cliffjumper, Bumblebee and all five Dinobots stand around the perimeter of the tunnel's cavernous mouth, looking down into an ENDLESS CANYON.

BUMBLEBEE

Whoa.

CLIFFJUMPER

Another abyss. Wonderful.

JAZZ

Stay cool, Cliffjumper. All we got to do is navigate our way down there. So first things first...

PANEL 4:

A MASSIVE FLASH OF LIGHT explodes behind Jazz, Cliffjumper and Bumblebee.

BUMBLEBEE

What the heck?

PANEL 5:

Jazz turns to look over his shoulder, only to see Starscream, Banzai-Tron and Stranglehold now standing behind him.

JAZZ

Huh? Starscream?

PAGE SEVEN:

PANEL 1:

Banzai-Tron looks towards Starscream, who in turn, is looking at his teleportation device. The inactive Bludgeon and Thunderwing (as well as the other inert Pretender Shells) can be seen lying on the ground behind them.

Meanwhile, Stranglehold has drawn his CONCUSSION BLASTER to aim it towards Jazz and Cliffjumper.

BANZAI-TRON

Uh, not to be pick-pick-picky, Mr. Esteemed Scientist, sir... but this doesn't look like your secret evil lair to me.

STARSCREAM

Of course not. There isn't enough power in this device to teleport all the way to my lab from beneath the surface. We had to jump here first before we can...

STRANGLEHOLD

Hold that thought, Starscream. We've got company. Autobots!

JAZZ

Oh, man.

PANEL 2:

Cliffjumper and Bumblebee dive to the ground to avoid Stranglehold's blasts, while Jazz FIRES BACK with his PHOTON RIFLE.

Behind Stranglehold, Starscream appears ANNOYED.

STARSCREAM
Stranglehold, we don't have time
for this!

PANEL 3:

Grimlock, Slag and Sludge (now in their dino-modes) CLOSE IN on Starscream, Banzai-Tron and Stranglehold.

Stranglehold fires more blasts that harmlessly deflect off the metal hides of Slag and Sludge.

BANZAI-TRON
Oh boy, real live **Dinobots** ! Never
seen 'em in person before!

STRANGLEHOLD
And you won't see much of **anything**
in a minute, unless Starscream can
get us outta here!

STARSCREAM
Cool your jets, Stranglehold.

PANEL 4:

Bumblebee shields his optics with his forearm as all three Decepticons once again DISAPPEAR with a FLASH of teleportation.

STARSCREAM (CONT'D)
(word balloon only)
Everything is under control.

BUMBLEBEE
Uugh!

PANEL 5:

Jazz, Cliffjumper, Bumblebee and Grimlock stand before a WISP OF SMOKE. The Decepticons and their Pretender Shell cargo are GONE.

Cliffjumper SCRATCHES at his head, while a CONFUSED Bumblebee looks up at Grimlock.

CLIFFJUMPER
Okay. So **that** happened.

JAZZ

Somethin' tells me this wacko little mystery just got a whole lot more dangerous. We'd better check in with the others.

PAGE EIGHT:

PANEL 1:

INT. STARSCREAM'S LAB

Surrounded within the confines of a makeshift LABORATORY, housed within what appears to be an ABANDONED WAREHOUSE, SWINDLE turns to see a FLASH of teleportation light.

CAPTION: Soon after...

SWINDLE

Hrmp, about time.

PANEL 2:

WIDE SHOT - Swindle moves towards Starscream, Banzai-Tron and Stranglehold, now standing in the center of the lab with their Pretender Shell loot.

SWINDLE (CONT'D)

You made it. I was beginning to think you'd never crawl out of that hole.

PANEL 3:

Starscream watches as Swindle begins to hang the Pretender Shells up on a RACKING SYSTEM as though they were BUSINESS SUITS.

STARSCREAM

You should know better than to doubt me by now, Swindle.

SWINDLE

Oh, no doubts at all, boss. Just eager to see these things in action!

PANEL 4:

Banzai-Tron has CROUCHED between the Shells of Bludgeon and Thunderwing. He looks to a SCANNER-LIKE-DEVICE held in his hand.

BANZAI-TRON

Speaking of action, I don't think these two are as snuffed out as we thought. I'm picking up some ever-so-faint life signs.

PANEL 5:

Banzai-Tron STANDS to face Starscream and Swindle.

Behind them, all of the empty Pretender Shells hang at the ready.

BANZAI-TRON (CONT'D)

I don't know how, but they're still alive. Barely.

SWINDLE

The Pretender Shells must have protected them and placed them in some kind of long-term suspended stasis lock.

STARSCREAM

Really? How interesting...

PAGE NINE:

PANEL 1:

INT. INSIDE MOON BASE ONE, CONTROL ROOM

Jazz now stands with Chromia and Swerve before the control room's DATA SCREEN. This time, they are speaking with the digital image of ULTRA MAGNUS.

Grimlock and Slag watch on from the background.

CAPTION: Soon after...

ULTRA MAGNUS

(through the data screen)

I'm sorry, Jazz, but Optimus Prime is out in the field, and his team is currently out of communications range.

JAZZ

I hear you, Magnus. But, we've got to do somethin' about Starscream and those uncool Pretenders!

PANEL 2:

CLOSE ON the data screen's image of Ultra Magnus.

ULTRA MAGNUS

(through the data screen)

I understand. But, I can't deal with that now. Myself and the Wreckers are currently trying to fend off...

PANEL 3:

Jazz and Chromia swiftly step aside as Grimlock leans THREATENINGLY on the computer console to stare at the digital image of Ultra Magnus.

Slag and Swoop watch from behind Grimlock.

CHROMIA

Hey!

GRIMLOCK

Hmmm. Me, Grimlock not need help from Optimus Prime **or** this Ultra Magnus to smash Decepticons.

SLAG

Yeah. Me, Slag not see what so 'Ultra' about him.

PANEL 4:

On the data screen, Ultra Magnus appears ANNOYED.

Jazz is now standing between Grimlock at the data screen, trying to appease the Dinobot.

Slag and Swoop continue to watch from the background beside a frustrated Chromia.

ULTRA MAGNUS

Sounds to me like the Dinobots' reputation for insubordination is true.

JAZZ

Uh, yeah, you could say that. Take it easy, Grimlock. It looks like you're gettin' your wish.

SLAG

What about Slag? Me not get to make wish!

SWOOP

Rark! Me, Swoop no get to make wish
either! Raark!

CHROMIA

Ugh, they're even dumber than I
thought.

PANEL 5:

OVER JAZZ'S SHOULDER - Jazz looks back at the data screen, as
the image of Ultra Magnus WINKS OUT.

ULTRA MAGNUS

I'm sorry, Jazz. I wish I could be
more help.

JAZZ

No problemo, U.M., we'll take care
of Starscream and his shenanigans.
Just got to figure out how.

ULTRA MAGNUS

Good luck. Magnus, out.

MAINFRAME

(off-panel)

Jazz, if you're after a **scientific**
way to handle this...

PANEL 6:

Jazz turns to see MAINFRAME standing behind him.

MAINFRAME (CONT'D)

... I have an idea.

PAGE TEN:

PANEL 1:

INT. STARSCREAM'S LAB

Swindle and Banzai-Tron stand opposite Starscream as behind
them, Bludgeon and Thunderwing each stand in separate
RECHARGING STATIONS resembling something that the BORG might
use in *Star Trek*.

ENERGY crackles around their Pretender Shells, while
Starscream looks on with WONDER.

CAPTION: Meanwhile...

STARSCREAM

Excellent. The recharging station is working perfectly.

SWINDLE

Are you sure about this? I mean, I'm not so sure I want to see those two back to their best.

BANZAI-TRON

Oooh, **I** do. Who knows what kinda madcap adventure might spark from having oh-so-many power-mad, would-be despots in the same place at the same time?

STARSCREAM

The only one who's mad around here is you, Banzai-Tron, if you think this isn't going to go exactly as I plan.

PANEL 2:

Stranglehold stands opposite the Pretender Shell that we know to be his.

Banzai-Tron now stands opposite the Pretender Shell associated with Grimlock. Swindle does the same to the Shell usually assigned to Bumblebee, while Starscream stands before the Shell destined to be his.

STRANGLEHOLD

Well then, let's get on with it. If we're choosing Shells, I want this one.

BANZAI-TRON

Well, heck. In that case, I want **that** one.

SWINDLE

Yeah, and I'm taking this.

STARSCREAM

Excellent choices. But none compare to **this** magnificent beauty.

PANEL 3:

Starscream now stands with his hand on a LEVER, connected to the recharging stations containing Bludgeon and Thunderwing.

STARSCREAM (CONT'D)
Prepare the necessary arrangements,
Swindle. I want those Shells active
as soon as possible. But, first...

PANEL 4:

CLOSE ON Starscream's hand as it PULLS THE LEVER.

STARSCREAM (CONT'D)
... let's turn things up a notch.

PANEL 5:

OVER STARSCREAM'S SHOULDER - Energy CRACKLES around both
Bludgeon and Thunderwing, filling their Pretender Shells with
a massive POWER SURGE like FRANKENSTEIN'S MONSTER.

Each of the ancient villains' eyes LIGHT UP with activation.

STARSCREAM (CONT'D)
That's it! Welcome back to the land
of the living!

PAGE ELEVEN:

PANEL 1:

Now FULLY-REPAIRED, Bludgeon and Thunderwing step down from
their recharge stations to confront Starscream.

BLUDGEON
What is this place? Where are we?

THUNDERWING
Starscream? Is that you?

STARSCREAM
Indeed it is, old friend. Who else
would have dared resurrect you
after more than nine million years?

PANEL 2:

Bludgeon turns to Thunderwing, while Starscream stands
nearby.

BLUDGEON
Nine million years? I shudder to
think of what Cybertron has become
in our absence.

THUNDERWING

Yes, especially if Starscream has taken command.

STARSCREAM

Oh, yes... Cybertron has fallen into chaos. But it isn't because of me. I'm not in command of the Decepticons. I'm not the one who allowed our planet to decay into near oblivion. That notable blunder falls to the one known as **Megatron**.

THUNDERWING

Decepticons?

BLUDGEON

Megatron? Who is this Megatron?

PANEL 3:

CLOSE ON Starscream.

STARSCREAM

A pathetic egomaniac who allowed his personal crusade against the Autobots to sink Cybertron into despair. He knows nothing of honor or sacrifice. He only thinks of himself and his own personal gain. Why, right this moment he is busy engaging in yet another fruitless skirmish in the Ahnat Plains.

PANEL 4:

Starscream watches as both Bludgeon and Thunderwing LAUNCH into the air, BUSTING THROUGH the ceiling and into the sky above.

BLUDGEON

Then perhaps we should pay him a visit, Thunderwing? And restore honor to this world.

THUNDERWING

I agree. Once this imposter lies in pieces, **we** will decide the future of Cybertron!

STARSCREAM

Well, if that's what you think is best.

PANEL 5:

As Banzai-Tron continues to look up at the hole left behind by Bludgeon and Thunderwing, Starscream moves towards what will be his Pretender Shell, SHOUTING towards a nervous Swindle.

BANZAI-TRON

Well, they haven't changed a bit.

STARSCREAM

Now, Swindle... activate this Shell for me before it's too late.

SWINDLE

Yeah-yeah, sure, boss. But with this equipment, I can only activate two Shells at a time.

PAGE TWELVE:

PANEL 1:

Starscream now stands between the two halves of his open Pretender Shell. Beside him, Stranglehold does the same.

STARSCREAM

Fine. Just get on with it!

PANEL 2:

Swindle presses a button on a nearby control panel, while POWER cascades into Starscream and Stranglehold's ENERGIZED Pretender Shells.

SWINDLE

All right, you're the boss. Here we go!

STARSCREAM

Yes... yes! I feel it! I feel the power!

PANEL 3:

Banzai-Tron and Swindle turn to look behind them as the lab's rear wall EXPLODES.

SWINDLE

Hey! Now what?

PANEL 4:

SPLASH PANEL - Jazz stands pointing his photon rifle towards Swindle and Banzai-Tron, alongside Bumblebee, Cliffjumper and all five Dinobots (in dino-modes).

Behind them stands Mainframe.

JAZZ

Sorry to crash your party, Swindle.
But, we've come to shut you down.

MAINFRAME

You see, Jazz? I knew my equipment
would locate them.

PAGE THIRTEEN:

PANEL 1:

Jazz and Cliffjumper OPEN FIRE towards Swindle and Banzai-Tron, both of whom are now hiding behind the control panel as though it were a makeshift fort.

SWINDLE

Now whatta we do?

BANZAI-TRON

May I be so bold as to suggest a
daring, highspeed getaway?

SWINDLE

But, what about Starscream?

BANZAI-TRON

Somethin' tells me he'll be fine.
C'mon, time's a-wastin'.

PANEL 2:

Bumblebee and Cliffjumper LEAP to either side of the panel to avoid Swindle as he speeds away in his jeep-mode, dragging Banzai-Tron behind him like a WAYWARD KITE.

In the foreground, Jazz looks up as a MENACING SHADOW falls across his face.

BUMBLEBEE

Hey!

BANZAI-TRON

Sorry, losers. Another time,
perhaps? Ha-Ha!

JAZZ

Uh-oh.

PANEL 3:

Starscream now stands in his new PRETENDER FORM, flexing his arms like a BODYBUILDER before Jazz, Cliffjumper and Bumblebee.

Behind Starscream, Stranglehold (also in his Pretender Shell) stares at his hands with a SMIRK.

STARSCREAM

What do you think of my new suit,
Autobots?

JAZZ

To tell you the truth, it's a
little much.

PANEL 4:

Starscream POUNDS Jazz across the lab with one vicious PUNCH.

STARSCREAM

No, it's a **lot!**

JAZZ

Guugh!

PANEL 5:

Starscream holds Grimlock's T-Rex mode off the ground by the throat with one hand, while SWATTING Swoop's Pterodactyl-mode out of the air with the other.

GRIMLOCK

Me, Grimlock... uuurk!

SWOOP

Rark!

STARSCREAM

Ha-Ha-Ha! None of you can withstand
my new power!

PANEL 6:

Swoop CRASHES into Slag, while Starscream TOSSES Grimlock into Sludge and Snarl.

STARSCREAM (CONT'D)

Ha-Ha-Ha-Ha-Ha-Ha!

PAGE FOURTEEN:

PANEL 1:

Bumblebee fires his BLASTER into the chest of Stranglehold, with no effect, while Stranglehold STOMPS Cliffjumper into the floor.

CLIFFJUMPER

Ugh!

BUMBLEBEE

Hold on, Cliffjumper, I'll...

PANEL 2:

Stranglehold PUNTS Bumblebee across the lab to crash land beside Jazz.

STRANGLEHOLD

You'll do nothing, insect!

BUMBLEBEE

Aaagh!

PANEL 3:

Stranglehold stands beside Starscream, now posing TRIUMPHANTLY.

STARSCREAM

You've done well, Stranglehold. This Pretender Shell surpasses even **my** imagination!

STRANGLEHOLD

What about the Autobots? Should we finish 'em off?

STARSCREAM

I have better things to do with my time. Like watch Megatron get what he deserves, for example!

PANEL 4:

Starscream and Stranglehold TAKE OFF into the air, ZOOMING up and through the hole in the ceiling to fly off into the sky.

STARSCREAM (CONT'D)

I can't wait to show Megatron my new look! Ha-Ha-Ha-Ha-Ha!

PANEL 5:

Bumblebee helps Jazz to his feet.

Mainframe is caring for an INJURED Cliffjumper. Behind them, Grimlock looks over the rest of his BATTERED Dinobots.

BUMBLEBEE

C'mon, Jazz, we've got to go after them. If Thunderwing and Bludgeon are heading towards Megatron, then they're heading towards Optimus Prime too!

JAZZ

I hear you, little Bee. We can't leave Prime's squad to deal with those maniacs alone.

MAINFRAME

Not so fast, guys. Cliffjumper needs serious repairs.

GRIMLOCK

Hrm. Other Dinobots not quite ready to fight again either.

BUMBLEBEE

Then what are we going to do? We've got to get down to Cybertron and help Prime!

JAZZ

I know, I know. But how? Starscream just cleaned our chronometers, and besides Grimlock, we can't exactly fly. How're we **all** gonna get to Cybertron right now?

PANEL 6:

SMALL INSERT PANEL, OVER JAZZ'S SHOULDER - Mainframe now stands with the remaining Pretender Shells behind him.

MAINFRAME

Once again, Jazz. I believe I can help with that.

PAGE FIFTEEN:

PANEL 1:

EXT. FUEL REFINERY, CYBERTRON - NIGHT

SPLASH PANEL - Just outside what looks to be a DEMOLISHED ENERGON REFINERY, OPTIMUS PRIME is locked in a TITANIC GRAPPLE with none other MEGATRON.

Behind them, PROWL, ELITA-ONE, IRONHIDE and RATCHET fire various BLASTERS towards several airborne Decepticons: SOUNDWAVE, MISFIRE, SLUGSLINGER, SKYWARP and THUNDERCRACKER.

CAPTION: Meanwhile, down on Cybertron...

MEGATRON

Surrender, Prime. Your forces are outmatched! Yield at once and maybe I'll spare them.

OPTIMUS PRIME

You and I both know that will never happen, Megatron.

PANEL 2:

Megatron STEPS BACK as Optimus Prime is BLASTED in the back by a combined LASER ATTACK by the jet-modes of Skywarp and Thundercracker.

MEGATRON

Fine, have it your way, Prime! Ha-Ha-Ha-Ha!

PANEL 3:

Misfire and Slugslinger's aerial-modes DIVEBOMB Prowl, Ironhide and Elita-One with explosives, while Soundwave LOOKS UP to the sky from his position on the ground.

SOUNDWAVE

Megatron, we have incoming.

PANEL 4:

Megatron turns to see Thunderwing and Bludgeon land behind him.

MEGATRON

What? Who are you?

THUNDERWING

This is the warmonger we were told about, Bludgeon? I expected more.

BLUDGEON

I agree, Thunderwing. Most disappointing.

PAGE SIXTEEN:

PANEL 1:

Megatron fires towards Bludgeon and Thunderwing with his shoulder-mounted FUSION CANNON, while Slugslinger and Misfire charge into battle towards the Pretenders.

MEGATRON

Disappointing? It is you who will be disappointed when **Megatron** destroys you!

PANEL 2:

Bludgeon LEAPS to safety to deliver a FLYING KICK to Misfire's face, while Thunderwing BACKFLIPS out of harm's way to STOMP on Slugslinger.

BLUDGEON

Ha! They are even more pitiful than we were told!

PANEL 3:

Thunderwing ROCKETS into the air to PUNCH both Skywarp and Thundercracker's jet-modes out of the sky.

THUNDERWING

Indeed. It seems warriors have become brittle in our absence.

PANEL 4:

In the background, Thunderwing and Bludgeon continue to menace Megatron, while Prowl and Ironhide help Optimus Prime to his feet.

Elita-One stands nearby, POINTING into the sky.

IRONHIDE

Who in the wild well o' sparks are these bozos?

PROWL

I don't believe it! That's **Bludgeon** ! And **Thunderwing** ! They were supposed to have been destroyed millions of years ago!

OPTIMUS PRIME

Unfortunately, it would appear as though they're back.

ELITA-ONE

Optimus, look!

PANEL 5:

In the sky above, Starscream and Stranglehold approach.

ELITA-ONE (CONT'D)
(off-panel)
More of them!

PAGE SEVENTEEN:

PANEL 1:

Bludgeon SLICES Megatron across the chest with his ENERGO SWORD.

MEGATRON
Aaaaagh!

BLUDGEON
Bah! Pathetic!

PANEL 2:

Bludgeon drives a ROUNDHOUSE KICK into Megatron's face to send the Decepticon Leader HURTLING across the panel.

MEGATRON
No!

PANEL 3:

Megatron STUMBLES into Thunderwing's solid UPPERCUT.

MEGATRON (CONT'D)
Ugh!

PANEL 4:

Thunderwing brings both fists down upon Megatron to drive him into the ground with a THUD.

MEGATRON (CONT'D)
Urrgh!

PANEL 5:

Megatron is KICKED across the face once more by Bludgeon, as Thunderwing watches with PRIDE.

MEGATRON (CONT'D)
Uunnnf!

BLUDGEON
You are an embarrassment, Megatron.
Nothing more than a placeholder.

THUNDERWING

Yes, it's going to be fun restoring order to this planet once you're out of the way.

PAGE EIGHTEEN:

PANEL 1:

Bludgeon and Thunderwing look up to the sky to see Starscream and Stranglehold approaching from above.

THUNDERWING (CONT'D)

And now to... wait, what?

BLUDGEON

What is that fool doing here?

PANEL 2:

Megatron looks up from the ground as Starscream lands between Thunderwing and Bludgeon.

Stranglehold lands in the background.

STARSCREAM

Well? What do you think? Like my new look?

THUNDERWING

I see you're still the same braggart I've always known. Here to finally do your own dirty work?

STARSCREAM

Dirty work? This is my moment of triumph.

PANEL 3:

From the foreground, Optimus Prime looks on at the Decepticons in the distance, watching as Thunderwing, Bludgeon, Starscream and Stranglehold surround a beaten Megatron.

Beside Optimus Prime, both Prowl and Ironhide look to him with CONFUSION.

OPTIMUS PRIME

I hate to say this, but we need to help Megatron.

PROWL

What?

IRONHIDE

Have you lost your logic circuits,
Prime? Why would we wanna help **him**?

OPTIMUS PRIME

Because if these new enemies are as
powerful as they appear, once
they've finished with the
Decepticons, we Autobots will be
next.

PANEL 4:

Optimus Prime CHARGES FORWARD, firing his ION BLASTER.

Prowl, Ironhide, Elita-One and Ratchet follow close behind
their leader.

OPTIMUS PRIME (CONT'D)

Follow me!

PANEL 5:

Starscream lifts the battered and limp Megatron to his knees
by his head.

MEGATRON

W-Who...?

STARSCREAM

Farewell, 'mighty Megatron'.

PANEL 6:

An ENERGY BLAST strikes Starscream in the shoulder, causing
him to drop Megatron to the ground once more.

STARSCREAM (CONT'D)

Aaagh! Who dares?

PAGE NINETEEN:

PANEL 1:

Optimus Prime UNLOADS more shots into Starscream's chest, to
no effect.

Starscream instead stands LAUGHING with wicked merriment.

STARSCREAM (CONT'D)

Aha-ha-Ha-Ha-Ha! You're going to
have to do better than that, Prime.

PANEL 2:

Starscream BATS the ion blaster from Optimus Prime's hands.

STARSCREAM (CONT'D)

Much better!

PANEL 3:

Starscream drives a powerful PUNCH into Optimus Prime's midsection.

STARSCREAM (CONT'D)

Even **you** are nothing to me now, Prime.

OPTIMUS PRIME

Ooof!

PANEL 4:

Starscream lifts an UPPERCUT into Optimus Prime's chin.

STARSCREAM

I will show you what true power is.

OPTIMUS PRIME

Ugh!

PANEL 5:

Starscream punches Optimus Prime across the face once more; a blow that sends the Autobot Leader SMASHING into the ground.

STARSCREAM

Ha-Ha-Ha-Ha-Ha!

PANEL 6:

Starscream holds his new Pretender hand tightly around Optimus Prime's THROAT like a VICE.

STARSCREAM (CONT'D)

And now you see, Prime. This is the end.

BUMBLEBEE

(off-panel)

Uh, excuse me?

PAGE TWENTY:

PANEL 1:

FULL SPLASH PAGE - Still holding Optimus Prime by the throat, Starscream turns to see the arrival of Jazz, Grimlock and Bumblebee, each wearing PRETENDER SHELLS OF THEIR OWN.

STARSCREAM

No...

GRIMLOCK

Bumblebee right. This not end. This just beginning...

CAPTION: To be continued...

THE END

We want to thank each and every one of you who took the time to read our script. If you liked what you read here and would like to see more stories in the Transformers G1 cartoon universe, Greig and I would love to keep writing. You could help by contacting SkyBound Entertainment by E-Mail (info@skybound.com) or on Twitter (@SkyBound), and let them know you want to see Transformers: REANIMATED written by Yoshi and Greig Tansley as an ongoing comic book series. Thank You All!