BIOLGICAL CHRONICLE

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and Turakii #1 Lavasurfer

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Book 2: Swarm
Clean it all… it must be cleaned.
The creature stirred and opened its eyes.
Clean it all… clean it all…
It felt confusion. It wanted, it needed to move. To clean.
It must be cleaned it must be cleaned it must be cleaned…
The creature pushed against the hard, silent objects surrounding it in the darkness. One of the objects shifted.
Clean it all, the second being’s mind offered sleepily.
It must be cleaned. It must be cleaned, the first agreed, strangely relieved. It must be cleaned.
All obstacles will be removed.
It must be cleaned. It will be cleaned.
The first creature’s panic faded. It was not time yet. The time would come – soon. But not yet.
It relaxed and fell silent again. All was dark and still.
For now.
The Toa couldn’t contain their joy. Finally! Out of the darkness of the tunnels, safe from Makuta and his minions, free to enjoy the sunlight and the beauty of the island. Except…

“I wonder what Makuta has in store for us next,” Gali, Toa of Water, said, and a shadow settled over the group.

Tahu, Toa of Fire, nodded. None of them knew much about the dark being known as Makuta. The six Toa had arrived on Mata Nui remembering nothing but their names and a few snippets of confusing and frightening dreams. But they soon learned of their duty – to protect the island and its people from the powers of darkness.

The Fire Toa touched his mask, feeling the energy humming beneath its golden surface. Each Toa wore a golden Kanohi mask just like his. The masks’ awesome powers had just helped the Toa defeat the fearsome Rahi.

“I bet Makuta is deep hiding now that he’s seen our fight power,” Lewa, Toa of Air, said, puffing out his green chest proudly. “He won’t soon fear challenge Mata Nui again.”

“Such bragging seems unwise and unnecessary,” said Kopaka, Toa of Ice, in a cold voice.

Onua, Toa of Earth, was about to agree – in a gentler way – when he sensed the ground tremble beneath him. “Quiet,” he ordered abruptly, raising a hand to the other Toa.

Tahu, Lewa and Gali paused and glanced at him. “What is it?” Lewa asked eagerly. “Do you feel something? Hear something? Is it Mata Nui awakening, do you think?” The Toa had never forgotten their ultimate goal: to awaken the spirit of Mata Nui. Now that Makuta’s Rahi had been vanquished, there seemed to be nothing standing in their way.

“I don’t know.” Onua frowned, focusing his mind on the earth below him. Now it came again – a shudder, as if the entire island were shifting in its sleep. Was it Mata Nui emerging?

The next tremble was stronger. “Whoa!” Gali shouted. “Brothers, if this is Mata Nui, I fear he’s in a very bad mood!”

The earth shuddered again, with a grinding of stone against stone and the creak and roar of falling trees and tumbling rocks. Onua braced himself against a nearby swell and closed his eyes as yet another spasm shook the land. Could this be Mata Nui? Or had they awakened something – else?
The creature deep in slumber, felt the trembling of the earth. It awoke. This time, there was no mistake. *It is time.*

As the thunderous vibrations rocked the cave, another creature stirred, and another. Dozens upon hundreds upon thousands. They shook off their long, deep sleep. Energy poured through them, along with absolute knowledge. Their duty waited. It was time. *It must be cleaned. It is time. Clean it all.*

*It is time. All obstacles will be removed.*

*Clean it all. It must be cleaned.*

*It is time.*

* * *
“Look!” Pohatu, Toa of Stone, shouted, pointing at a figure revealed by the falling trees. “It’s one of Tahu’s villagers!”

Tahu leaped forward, surprised to find anyone from his fiery village of Ta-Koro so far from home. The Matoran was lying on the ground, his legs trapped by a fallen tree branch. He seemed stunned, and was muttering one word over and over.

Quickly freeing the villager, Tahu leaned closer, trying to hear him. “Speak,” he said. “What brings you so far from Ta-Koro?”

The villager was still babbling, not making any sense. “What’s he saying?” Gali asked.

The Matoran seemed unaware of the Toa’s presence. He stared blindly ahead, his eyes clouded with terror.

“Bohrokbohrokbohrokbohrok,” he muttered tonelessly.

“What?” Pohatu stepped closer, looking confused. “What is it? What’s he saying?”

“Little brother!” Lewa said loudly, touching the Matoran on the shoulder. “What is it? What’s wrong? We’re here to help you.”

The Matoran didn’t react. He hardly seemed to pause for breath as he babbled on in the same rapid, frightened voice. “Bohrokbohrokbohrokbohrok…”

* * *

“This creature you have seen. It means that the day we have feared has come. The Bohrok have awakened! Send the news to every part of Mata Nu!”

“Only the Toa can help us now!”

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* * *
“What’s he saying?” Pohatu repeated.
“One word, over and over,” Tahu reported. “Bohrok. I must return to Ta-Koro immediately.”
“We’ll go, Tahu,” Gali spoke up.
Onua nodded. “If there is a threat to your village, it is a threat to all our people.”
Tahu accepted with a quick bow of his head. Then, slinging the Matoran over his shoulder, he gestured for the others to follow.
He raced through the trees and meadows toward the foothills of the Mangai. The others were close behind him.
“I have just one question,” Pohatu said after a few minutes. The Toa had quickly crossed the flatlands and foothills and were now climbing steadily toward the village perched near the topmost slopes of the mountain.
“What’s that?” Gali asked.
“What’s a Bohrok?” Pohatu wondered.
Tahu, who was still in the lead, skidded to a halt. He stood on a ledge overlooking the village of Ta-Koro.
“I fear we have just found out.”
The Toa gaped in amazement at the sight before them. In the distance, Ta-Koro rose against the rocky slope of the mountain, its stone gates and magma buildings unharmed. But the plain before it was in ruins.

Thick black smoke poured from piles of rubble and gouges in the earth. Trees and plants had been ripped out by the roots and tossed about like toys. Near the gates, frightened villagers milled around, shouting and crying with panic.

“What could have caused this?” Lewa whispered to Gali worriedly.

Gali pointed. “Them. Look!”

Dozens of strange creatures were moving across the plain – large two-legged armored beasts with powerful-looking claws. Some were silvery-white and some bronze, and a few were much smaller than the others, but all scuttled about like enormous insects. As Lewa watched, several of the bronze beasts gathered together, then stormed straight into a small hill, leveling it to the ground.

Tahu set the still-stunned Matoran on the ground. “Stay here,” he said firmly, hoping the villager understood. “We’ll deal with this!”
The others were already rushing forward to stop the strange creatures. Lewa reached one of the bronze-colored ones just as it headed toward a small clump of trees. “Let’s see how these things stand up to a cyclone!”

He leaped into the air in front of the creature and breathed in, preparing to summon the winds to his aid. But before so much as a breeze had stirred, the creature moved forward, letting out an unearthly screech.

Lewa reeled as an icy blast of cold air struck him. “What? Ice?” he cried, struggling to remain in the air. But it was no use. He was frozen in a block of ice, unable to move or even levitate. He crashed to the ground with a thud.

“Away from him, creatures!” Tahu cried, leaping forward and dragging Lewa out of harm’s way. Lewa shook off the ice, which melted quickly near Tahu’s sword. He jumped to his feet, ready to face the creature again.

But the creature showed no interest in him. Instead it uprooted a tree and then moved on toward a large lava hill.

“This is crazy,” Onua called from somewhere nearby. “They aren’t harming the villagers; they ignore us unless we get right in their way! So why all this chaos?”

“I don’t know,” Pohatu said. “But we have to stop them!”

Everywhere Lewa looked he saw more of the strange creatures. “But how?” he exclaimed. “There are so many of them!”

Tahu knew they had to do something fast if there was any hope of saving his village. Suddenly he had an idea.

“Lewa!” he cried. “Gali! Combine your powers!”

Raising their arms, Lewa and Gali summoned the winds and the rain. Soon a mighty storm raged above the peak.

KA-BOOOOOOM!

An enormous blast of lightning rocked the valley in front of the village. The destructive beasts were tossed high into the air, sparking and shrieking. As they landed, they scuttled for shelter. Soon all had disappeared.

All but one. It lay damaged and stunned, legs waving weakly in the air.

“They’re gone for now,” Pohatu commented, bending over the injured creature. “They left us a prisoner, too. But what’s in its head?”

The others gathered around for a better look at their new enemy. The sloping shield that covered its head had been thrown back by the impact. A glowing, green object lay inside.

Before they could figure out what it might be, a voice spoke from behind them. “I know the answers you seek, though I wish I did not.”

It was the leader of the villagers of Ta-Koro. “Turaga Vakama!” Pohatu said. “What is it? What are these creatures?”

The Turaga sighed. “We have known the legends of the Bohrok for centuries, and we prayed they were only legends. But the Bohrok are real – all too real. And they are swarming over all of Mata Nui.”

“Tell us more,” Tahu ordered, stepping forward to face his village’s Turaga. “We need to know what we face.”

Vakama nodded. “It is said the Bohrok sleep an eternal sleep, waiting to hatch. Once awakened, the swarms are unstoppable – a force so powerful, they can reduce mountains to rubble and turn rivers dry as the desert sands. These creatures do not work alone.”

“Right,” Pohatu said. “They have those smaller creatures with them – like little scouts or something.”

“Those are the Bohrok Va,” Vakama said. “And you are right – they are smaller, quicker creatures that act as scouts and couriers. But that’s not what I meant. You see, each Bohrok carries within it a krana.”
“That?” Kopaka asked, pointing to the glowing object inside the disabled Bohrok. “Is that the krana?”

“It looks like a mask,” Pohatu observed.

“Yes,” Vakama said. “It gives them purpose and power. Their krana are their greatest strength—but also their greatest weakness. Even the mightiest of Bohrok can be humbled if parted from its krana.”

“These krana,” Tahu said. “Do they come from Makuta?”

Vakama shook his head. “That we do not know,” he said. “The legends do not offer an answer.”

The Toa listened carefully as the Turaga outlined the different swarms of Bohrok. Those like the one that had blasted him with its icy breath were known as the Kohrak. The bronze-colored ones were the Pahrak, which could turn mountains to crumbling stone. The stealthy Gahlok hid beneath the waves and struck when least expected. The fiery Tahnok were capable of melting through any substance, while the powerful Nuhvok lurked below the surface and dug mazes of tunnels to weaken the structures that stood above. Most feared of all were the Lehvak, whose acid venom could dissolve even solid rock.

“All right,” Lewa said when the Turaga paused for breath. “Enough of the fear talking. What do we do to defeat these Bohrok?”

“Now that the swarms have awakened, only one hope remains,” Vakama said. “You must collect the eight breeds of krana from each Bohrok swarm. They will unlock the secret to the Bohrok’s defeat.”

“Eight breeds of krana?” Gali asked. “What do you mean?”

“Like the Bohrok themselves, the krana serve different purposes,” Vakama explained. “Each type looks slightly different. The one you see there is one of the Krana Xa, the swarm commander.” He pointed to the disabled Bohrok again. “You must gather one of each type of krana from each of the six swarms.”

“But why?” Pohatu asked. “What will that tell us?”

“The knowing will come,” Vakama replied. “That is all that has been foretold.”

Tahu grimaced. The knowing will come. The Toa had been hearing that phrase since arriving on the island.

He grabbed the krana inside the fallen Bohrok. It was warm and squishy, slightly heavier than it looked. He stared at it, wondering how something so small could cause so much damage and devastation.

“Return to your villages,” he told the others. “If gathering these krana will save Mata Nui, then that’s what we’ll do.”

“What do you mean?” Gali said. “We can’t split up now—not when a new danger threatens Mata Nui. Didn’t we learn anything from the fight against the Rahi? We are much more powerful when we’re all together. Unity—”

—Duty, destiny,” Tahu said impatiently, finishing the common Matoran saying. “Yes, I know. But if these things are all over Mata Nui, we need to meet them wherever they are.”

“Tahu is right,” Kopaka said. “My village needs me. I must go there.”

Gali was so surprised to hear Kopaka agreeing with Tahu that she couldn’t speak for a moment.

“All right,” she said at last. “Perhaps we should see to our own villages. But be careful. And let’s plan to meet again soon.”

As the others nodded, Vakama held up his hand. “A warning before you go, brave Toa,” he said urgently. “Beware the krana! When worn, they can steal the mind—and even the Toa might not be able to resist such terrible power.”
From the Wall of History…

Victory Party Canceled!
New foe surfaces in Ta-Koro
By Takua

Celebrations were cut short today when swarms of unknown creatures appeared in Ta-Koro, with the apparent purpose of leveling the village. “They came out of nowhere,” said Turaga Vakama, still visibly shaken from the encounter, “Luckily, we reached the Toa in time!”

During the attack, Turaga Vakama had the presence of mind to send for the Toa, who were still recovering from their remarkable victory over Makuta. Tahu, Kopaka, Lewa, Onua, Gali and Pohatu rushed to the aid of Ta-Koro just in time to avert certain disaster. The Toa managed to use their now legendary elemental powers to disable the swarm of creatures known as “Bohrok.”

“Before the Toa arrived to defeat Makuta,” explained Turaga Vakama. “we [the Turaga] couldn’t believe there could be anything worse than the Rahi. Today we were proven wrong.”

“Apparently, the Turaga have always known the legend of the Bohrok,” explained Lewa grimly. “Now we get to find out the reality of the swarms.”
Pohatu was the first of the Toa to reach his own village. Po-Koro was located in the barren, rocky desert. The Po-Matoran had built sturdy dwellings of rock and sand that blended in with the desert’s craggy peaks and blowing dunes.

As he drew near Po-Koro, Pohatu realized that the land before him looked much different than the last time he’d come this way.

“Bohrok,” he muttered grimly. The village was in danger — even from this distance, he could see the Bohrok swarms moving along the Path of Prophecies, closer and closer to the gates of Po-Koro.

Pohatu raced forward. “So we’re playing host to the Pahrak, eh?” he murmured. “Well, I’m not feeling very welcoming right now.”

He leaped over a fallen monument and looked around. Turaga Onewa was struggling against a Pahrak, trying to keep it from knocking over another monument. But the insectlike creature hardly seemed to notice the blows. It pushed past the Turaga and crashed against the tall carved stone.

“Stand aside, Onewa!” Pohatu cried, racing toward the Pahrak.

“Pohatu!” Onewa exclaimed with relief. “It is good to see you. Especially now.”

Pohatu flashed a rueful grin. “It’s good to feel so loved, my friend,” he quipped. “Quick now — the monuments are already lost. We need to focus on protecting the village itself.”

Onewa nodded. “I will alert the others. We will protect the village gates — whatever it takes.”

With that, he hurried off.

The Toa turned back to the Pahrak. They were everywhere — too many to count.

“Gather the krana,” he reminded himself in a murmur. “That’s the key. We need those krana.”

Pohatu leaped onto the back of a nearby Pahrak. He held on tightly as the Pahrak bucked and leaped, trying to dislodge him. Its moves were slow and easy to manage — until it marched toward one of the monuments, an intricately carved arching stone. The Pahrak ducked beneath, scraping the Toa off on the overhanging stone.

“Oof!” Pohatu cried as he hit the ground. “All right, so you want to play dirty, eh, Pahrak?”

The Pahrak took no notice of the Toa or his words. It was already trying to topple another monument. Dusting himself off, Pohatu raced past the creature. He stood on the other side of the Rahi Stone and leaned against it. The great stone trembled against his hands as the Pahrak on the other side shoved at it.

Taking a deep breath, the Toa of Stone stepped back and then leaped forward, aiming a powerful kick at the center of the stone. The great monument toppled forward immediately, and there was a shriek of surprise from the other side.

CRAAAAASSSSSH — KRUK!

The enormous stone crashed to the ground — with the Pahrak trapped underneath.

“Sorry, my ugly friend,” Pohatu said, stepping forward and wrenching the headplate off the creature. “I’m afraid you have something I need.” He carefully lifted the glowing green krana from within.
He was pleased to see that it was slightly different in shape from the one they’d found back in Ta-Koro. Good – that was one more toward the set of Pahrak krana they needed.

He tucked it into his belt and leaped back into action, heading for the next Pahrak.

Pohatu wasn’t sure how much time had passed when he heard a shout from above.

“More are coming!”

He glanced up and saw that the shout had come from the lookout post atop the village gates, where a villager was scanning the horizon.

The Toa of Stone swung himself up to the lookout. Another swarm of Bohrok was heading toward the village. They were Lehvak, judging by their bright green color and the way they melted everything in their path by shooting acid out of their curved claws.

“What should we do?” the Matoran asked.

Pohatu’s heart sank. Though he had been successful in gaining a few more krana, he’d been unable to drive off the Pahrak swarms. And now there would be more...

But his voice was steady as he replied, “What else can we do, little brother, but let them come, and fight them when they get here?”

Then he leaped down to meet the Lehvak, ready to defend his village and his people.
Onua was walking through a tunnel that led toward the village of Onu-Koro. These Bohrok will stop at nothing until Mata Nui has been completely leveled, he mused. But why?
He paused, hearing a faint sound from somewhere off to the left.

CHINNGCH! CHINNGCH! CHINNGCH!

Onua frowned. That didn’t sound like any digging or mining tool he knew.

“Bohrok,” he murmured. “I wonder where you are? Let’s see if we can find a shortcut.”
He listened for another second or two, and then struck with his fists. He broke through the tunnel wall, burrowing straight through the solid earth. He burst through a moment later into a cavern that lay just a few hundred yards from the arched stone gates of Onu-Koro.

The place was crawling with the dark, smooth shapes of Bohrok. As Onua watched, a pair of the creatures drilled a series of short tunnels into the wall on the far side of the cave. The wall shuddered and shifted.

“Hey!” Onua cried. But it was too late. The wall and the ceiling above crumbled and fell in on itself, raining debris onto the ground. The Bohrok moved on to another spot a few yards away. The rest of the swarm were drilling in other spots along the wall – if Onua didn’t stop them, they would bring down the entire cavern.

Nuhvok. That was what the Turaga had called them – swarms of Bohrok that tunneled deep underground, destroying the island from the inside out.
He leaped forward, grabbing the nearest Bohrok. It let out a hiss of annoyance and tossed him away.

Surprised at the creature’s strength, Onua resumed his attack. “Don’t think you can get away with that.”

This time he grabbed the creature by one of its legs, flipping it head over heels. The Nuhvok’s headplate struck a rock and flipped open.

“That’s more like it,” Onua said, grabbing the glowing green krana inside and peeling it free.
He left the Nuhvok and moved on, glancing at the krana he held as he did. Its shape was slightly different from the one Tahu had removed outside Ta-Koro.

Over the next few minutes, he managed to gather several more krana. It wasn’t an easy task – the Bohrok were strong, and whenever one came to another’s aid Onua quickly found himself overpowered. Several times, only the Nuhvok’s slow reactions saved the Toa from disaster.

“This is taking too long,” he said. As long as there were so many of them, so totally focused on destruction that they couldn’t be distracted…

Onua suddenly stood up straight. He had an idea – a way he might be able to use the Bohrok’s own focus against them. Glancing out of his tunnel, he noted that the Nuhvok were methodically taking down the dozen or so stone columns that helped support the cavern’s roof. They seemed determined to destroy each column and collapse the entire cavern.
Dodging the slow-moving creatures, which ignored him as usual, Onua raced to the center of the room, where a cluster of columns still stood.

I just need a few seconds…

He quickly dug a trench in the floor, a skinny moat surrounding the group of columns.

Then he waited.

It wasn’t long before several Nuhvok turned their attention toward the remaining columns. One moved toward them, pausing on the lip of the trench in apparent confusion.

Onua leaped forward and gave the creature a shove. It let out a shriek of dismay as it toppled over, skidding straight into the trench.

“Now, let’s just see if I calculated the width correctly,” Onua murmured.

The Nuhvok fell about halfway to the bottom of the trench before the narrow walls stopped it. The creature struggled, its limbs waving helplessly. But it did no good. It was stuck between the walls of the trench!

“This is almost too easy,” Onua said, stepping forward and yanking back the Nuhvok’s headplate. He jumped back as the creature’s clawed arm swung toward him, nearly connecting with his head. “Hey, I said almost,” he added, ducking back in just long enough to grab the Nuhvok’s krana.

Luckily the Nuhvok seemed to have more determination than brains. Several more fell for the same trick, and before long Onua had a full set of krana.

“There,” he said. “That wasn’t so –"

CHIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIYIYIYIYI!

A sudden scream echoed through the cavern. Onua spun around and saw a small Nuhvok Va careening toward him. He leaped aside, preparing to fight off its attack.

But the creature ignored him. It stopped in the middle of the cavern, still emitting its high-pitched screech. All the Nuhvok stopped what they were doing immediately and turned to face the Nuhvok Va. Then, as if with one mind, they all scattered in different directions. Within seconds, the cavern was empty except for Onua.

The Earth Toa stared after them in surprise. What had made them run away like that?

He hurried on until he reached the outskirts of Onu-Koro and gazed across the tunnel that encircled the village. The caverns he could see on the other side looked normal, and Onua let out a breath of relief, glad that his village had escaped the swarms.

“Whenua!” Onua shouted, calling for the Turaga as he raced into a spacious cavern. “Whenua, where are you?”

The Turaga appeared almost immediately. “Toa Onua!” he called out with a bow. “It is good to see you. The people are worried – we’ve heard terrible rumors –"

“What you’ve heard is most likely true. The Bohrok swarms have emerged, and they are on the move. I’m glad to see that Onu-Koro has so far been spared. And I intend to keep it that way if I can. I’ve just chased off a swarm of Nuhvok.”

“If anyone can protect us, Toa Onua, it’s you. Young Nuparu just left for the surface to see whether –"

“Shh,” Onua hushed him in mid-sentence. What was that? He’d felt a vibration, a sort of rumbling… SWOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOST!

With a blast of sound and fury, a raging tidal wave roared into the cavern from the next tunnel, sweeping away villagers, stones, and earth.

Onua was blown off his feet by the force of the first wave. It smashed him against the rock dwellings behind him, and he scrambled for a handhold as he felt the wild current yanking him away again.

Must – hold – on… he thought grimly as his hands slid across a smooth surface. He couldn’t see a thing – the water had knocked his mask askew, blocking his vision. But just as he felt his body being swept backward, the Earth Toa’s hands found a stone bar. Whatever it was, he gripped it tightly, praying that it was strong enough to withstand the rushing water.
After several endless seconds, the water receded as the flood thundered on into deeper tunnels. Onua clambered up the cave wall for a better look at the damage. What he saw made his heart sink – the water hadn’t had much effect on the basic structures, since they were carved out of the cave wall. But all the decorations and special touches the villagers had added to their dwellings had been swept away or destroyed. Lightposts had been knocked askew, their lightstones scattered. All sorts of debris floated on the water’s surface.

Whenua looked out from the doorway where he’d clung through the flood. “We’d better find out if everyone’s all right and get to the surface. It’s not safe to be here – if another wave of water comes, it could fill this cavern to the ceiling.”

Onua nodded. “Good plan. On the surface, we can seek out the other Toa and their villagers. The strength of these swarms are in their numbers – we need numbers on our side as well.”
Lewa bounded toward Le-Koro, hoping that the Bohrok hadn’t reached it yet. His villagers were courageous and capable, but Lewa knew that without him they would be no match for the Bohrok swarms. Landing easily in the highest branches of a Madu tree, Lewa peered ahead. Smoke was drifting lazily up into the sky from the vicinity of the village.

Quickening his pace, the Toa of Air leaped from tree to tree, wondering how to protect the treetop village from attack. Perhaps it’s as Tahu often says – the best defense is a good offense, Lewa told himself. I could gather some of the village’s best windriders and do a little cloudsneaking to find the enemy before it finds us.

A stray breeze wound its way through the trees as Lewa neared the village. Tipping his face up to feel it, he launched himself through the air, catching the breeze and allowing it to guide him softly to the ground.

He landed by a gnarled old tree at the edge of a clearing. As he straightened up, he was startled to see that the clearing was filled with Le-Matoran. Turaga Matau was standing at the head of the crowd. He was clutching his Kau Kau staff as usual. But – what was on his face, in place of his regular mask?

Lewa gasped in horror. It wasn’t just Matau – all of the villagers wore glowing masks over their faces, each pulsing from a sickly green to a hideous orange. Behind the masked Matoran, plumes of acrid smoke traced ugly patterns in the air, blocking the view of the village above.

Matau smiled as he stepped forward toward the Toa, the expression grotesque behind the pulsing, unfamiliar mask.

“Greetings, Lewa,” the Turaga said in a monotone voice. “We have been waiting for you.”
New Invention Saves Onu-Koro
“Boxor” drives Gahlok swarm from city
By Takua

After a vicious squad of Water Bohrok flooded Onu-Koro recently, a Matoran named Nuparu made an important discovery that may turn the tide against the Bohrok menace.

Nuparu, a tunnel engineer from Onu-Koro, constructed a vehicle called the Boxor that uses a swift punching motion to knock a Bohrok’s krana loose. The Onu-Matoran made the discovery when he came across a krana-less Gahlok while trapped with Onepu and Taipu in an evacuated part of Onu-Koro. Once Nuparu realized that the Bohrok were simply transports for the krana, he used his knowledge to give the Matoran an advantage. After constructing the Boxor, he beat back the aggressive Gahlok swarm, driving them out of the underground city and stopping the flood.

Onu-Matoran were delighted to return to their homes safely. “Finally we have a defense against these monsters,” Onepu said. “Maybe now we can rid Mata Nui of the Bohrok and go back to more peaceful times.”
The route to Gali’s village took her through Lewa’s jungle-covered range. As she entered the moist shade beneath the tree canopy, she paused to listen. She heard only the normal sounds of dripping water and rustling wind.

Still, Gali sensed that something was not right in the jungle. There were disturbances, she thought uncertainly. Strange pulsations…

Whatever it was, it was crashing through the underbrush, heading in her direction. A moment later she felt a blast of heat, and a dead tree trunk nearby burst into flames.

“Tahnok,” Gali muttered sourly as more than a dozen red figures burst out of the woods.

She paused, watching as one of them breathed a column of flame at a lush Vuata Maca tree. The intense heat scorched parts of the trunk, but the dripping branches didn’t catch fire. The Tahnok rammed the tree, but the Vuata Maca’s deep roots held against the assault. Other members of the swarm were having similar problems.

“Not so easy for you here, eh, my Tahnok friends?” Gali said with sly amusement. “This place isn’t suited for your brand of mischief.”

The Tahnok Va at the head of the swarm paused, and for a moment Gali thought it meant to turn and attack her. Instead, it stood for a moment with its firestaff held aloft. Then it turned and scampered off toward the northwest.

“Going to visit Pohatu, are you?” Gali said. “Somehow I don’t think he’ll appreciate the social call. Maybe I can thin the numbers a little before you get there.”

Grabbing a vine, she swung after the Tahnok. When she landed in front of them, they paused only momentarily before continuing on their way, clearly intending to bulldoze over her.

But the Water Toa was already gathering her energies, calling upon the elements to answer her. A moment later a rainstorm pelted down on the Tahnok, extinguishing their flame. The creatures gnashed their teeth furiously, darting beneath the trees for shelter. Soon the already swampy ground was puddled and soft.

The Tahnok at the head of the swarm scurried forward onto a particularly marshy spot. Gali held her breath, waiting to see if her plan would work. As the Tahnok took another step, she smiled as it began to sink, its powerful legs trapped by the sucking, wet soil.

The creature shrieked in annoyance, struggling to pull its leg free. As it did so, another leg got caught in the mire. Soon it was trapped, unable to move forward or backward. Every time it tried, it only sank deeper.

Now it would be easy for Gali to retrieve its krana. She wrapped a sturdy jungle vine around the Tahnok and lifted its headplate.

Soon she was holding the krana in her hand. It felt warm and alive, unlike the Tahnok itself, which had stopped struggling as soon as the Toa grabbed its krana.
“I see,” she murmured thoughtfully, staring at the Tahnok. “The Bohrok themselves do not really live – they are merely vehicles for the true life force of the krana.”

Gali wasted no more time. She raced for the coastline, anxious to see what was happening in her village. She resolved that once she had made sure her villagers were safe, she would return to the other Toa. Perhaps together they could figure out a way to stop the Bohrok invasion – before there was nothing left to protect.
Hafu, the famed carver from Po-Koro, was trapped outside the village today in a desperate attempt to protect his home and fellow Matoran from a rapidly approaching Tahnok swarm.

“The last I saw, the Fire Bohrok were closing in on him,” explained Huki, “but the smoke and the ash were so thick that no one was able to see what happened.”

Scouts from Po-Koro had spotted the Bohrok earlier, but the swarm was moving so quickly that Turaga Onewa had no time to evacuate his village. The only alternative was to block the entrance to Po-Koro by using the stone carvings on the Path of Prophecy. Hafu, the carver who created the Path, volunteered to topple the giant stones in order to save the village. Turaga Onewa was gathering Matoran to protect Hafu when he heard the commotion.

“The Tahnok reached us much faster than we anticipated,” said the Turaga. “Fortunately, Hafu kept his head and acted quickly. His bravery may have saved the village.”

When asked if he thought that Hafu would be found, Turaga Onewa reassured the villagers. “Pohatu, along with Gali and Kopaka, have been defending Po-Wahi against a particularly fierce group of Tahnok – which is why we had a much smaller swarm to face today. I’m confident that once Pohatu returns, he will find Hafu and bring him back to us safely.”
Lewa tripped over a Bula root, almost falling to the ground. He growled in anger. Clutter. It was all clutter – these roots, these trees, the leaves and branches and stems and trunks. The water and the rocks. The soil, the sucking, spongy earth beneath everything else. All of it. It all had to go.

Clean it. The words echoed in his head, clear and strong and right. *Clean it all. It must be cleaned.*

“It must be cleaned,” Lewa muttered.

He blinked, confused by the sound of his own voice. What had he just said? *It must be cleaned.* What did that mean? It didn’t make sense.

It’s a – a quest of some kind, he thought slowly. A duty. But I thought – I thought I already had a quest. A duty. Something I was supposed to – supposed to –

As his thoughts trailed off into bewilderment, he was startled to notice that he now held the tree root – the one that had tripped him – in his hands. How had that happened? He glanced down and saw the gouge in the earth where the root had been ripped free.

*Did I do that?* he wondered uncertainly. *Why?*

Before he could come up with an answer, he found himself raising his arms. A moment later, a howling gale was whirling around him. The wind tore the Bula tree straight out of the ground and tossed it aside.

*Clean it all,* Lewa thought, moving on. *It must be cleaned.*
From the Wall of History…

**Turaga Shares Knowledge of Bohrok**

*Vakama explains mysterious powers of krana*

*By Takua*

In recent days, Mata Nui has fallen prey to swarms of strange creatures called Bohrok. These Bohrok are said to be driven by the krana they carry inside them – but little is known about these krana. What do they do? Where did they come from? Can even the Toa overcome them? Turaga Vakama shared his vast knowledge of Mata Nui truth and legend in the hope of answering these vital questions.

T: Vakama, Turaga of Ta-Koro, what is a krana?

V: The krana are the true power behind the Bohrok swarms. They provide the direction and inspiration to each Bohrok. There are eight varieties, each having different powers. When placed inside a Bohrok, a krana drives the Bohrok to perform tasks. Krana can even be said to be the “brains” of the Bohrok.

T: Can the krana function independently of the Bohrok, or do they act more like the Kanoхи Masks of Power?

V: We have seen a number of instances where krana have attached themselves to their foes and taken control of their bodies. Perhaps the most tragic example of this was in Le-Koro, not so long ago? It seems that when a Bohrok senses danger, it sets its krana free, and the krana attempts to add its foe to the swarm. Whether there is any way to resist the power of the krana, I do not yet know.

T: These krana are truly a terrible menace to all who dwell on Mata Nui.

V: Yes, they are cunning and powerful. We can only hope that the Toa, in their wisdom, can find a way to end this threat to our land.

Vakama had more to share, but that will be revealed at a later time. For now, see to the defenses of your villages – there is no way to know where or when the Bohrok will next appear.
Staring down at the krana throbbing within the Tahnok’s bright red headplate, Kopaka fought off a shudder — not of cold, for the Toa of Ice never felt cold. Instead, he shuddered at the memory of what these creatures had done to his fiercely beautiful land.

After leaving the others, he had hurried to his village, Ko-Koro. Thanks to its hidden location beneath an enormous ice field, the Bohrok hadn’t come upon it yet.

But when Kopaka explored the region further, he quickly realized he was too late. The Bohrok were already there. The Three Brothers Bridge, an ice bridge spanning a deep chasm between three glaciers, was melted into a puddle. Nearby, a valley once covered in blossoms of snow moss had been charred, leaving only a black hole in the ground to show where it had been.

One word had burned itself into Kopaka’s mind — Tahnok.

Kopaka had trailed the Tahnok to the slopes of Mount Ihu. He had battled the swarm with every bit of power he had, eventually managing to freeze one’s fire shield into a block of ice while the others scattered in search of easier targets.

But it was only a matter of time before more Bohrok broke through to Ko-Koro and finished what they had started — melting away the village as if it had never been. Kopaka had been tempted to stay with his villagers and lead them into battle. But he had decided that if the other Toa had discovered any important information about the enemy, he should be sure to find out.

He had gone to Po-Wahi first, lingering there just long enough to lend some help to Pohatu, Gali and Onua, who were fending off a swarm of Tahnok. Now he was going to see if Tahu was okay.

*Who would have guessed I’d be rushing around checking on the others?* he thought with a smile.

As he continued on his way, he spied a red creature in the distance — much like a Tahnok in appearance, but quite a bit smaller. It was one of the smaller, more nimble beasts known as the Bohrok Va, which acted as scouts and messengers.

Kopaka glanced around, expecting to see the rest of the swarm somewhere nearby. But there was no other sign of movement — just the solitary Tahnok Va climbing down the mountain toward the interior section of the island.

“Odd,” Kopaka said to himself, watching the creature curiously. “I wonder where it’s going all by itself?”

He skied down the slope, keeping the Tahnok Va in sight. The rendezvous with Tahu could wait — for now, it seemed more important to see where this creature was heading.

Soon the Tahnok Va had led Kopaka down through the foothills of Mount Ihu into the area of cold, rocky plains lying between Ko-Wahi and Le-Wahi. It continued on until it reached a flat, low-lying area littered with enormous boulders.

*What is it doing?* Kopaka wondered, staying out of sight behind a boulder.

CHKCHKCHKCHKCHKCHK!
Kopaka spun around just in time to avoid a noxious stream of yellowish-green liquid. The stream hit a cluster of boulders instead, and within seconds the solid rocks had melted away into nothing but a bit of greenish steam.

*Acid*, Kopaka thought grimly. *So these are the Lehvak.*

The green-colored Bohrok were swarming toward him, destroying everything in their path with spurts of their deadly acid. Kopaka lifted his ice blade, preparing to defend himself.

But the swarms had no interest in him. They moved on to the east, straight toward the line of treetops visible in the distance.

*They are bringing their blight to the lands of Toa Lewa,* Kopaka thought. *I hope he is prepared to meet them.*

He turned to check on the progress of the little red creature he was following. But where was it? The Tahnok Va was nowhere to be seen.

Kopaka scanned the horizon, puzzled and annoyed. There was no way the creature could have moved out of sight so quickly - not in this mostly open area. Where had it gone?

He leaped onto the tallest boulder in the area, scanning the rock-strewn ground all around. He zeroed in on a cluster of especially large boulders, which formed a sort of ring - like a campfire circle for giants. There. It was the only place the Tahnok Va could be hiding.

Leaping easily to another large rock, Kopaka kept his gaze trained on the circle of boulders.

*There,* he thought, his head swiveling to focus on a flash of movement to the west. *What was that?* He stopped and stared. The movement came again - a flash of sunlight against polished bronze. A small creature came into sight - a Pahrak Va.

The Pahrak Va trundled over the rocky ground, heading straight toward the circle of huge boulders. A moment later, it squeezed into a crevice between the two largest rocks and disappeared.

Kopaka waited, but there was no further sign of the creature.

Kopaka knew that with every second, the Bohrok were destroying still more of Mata Nui. But he needed to know what these Bohrok Va were up to. So he waited. And waited. Unlike some of the more impulsive Toa, Kopaka understood very well that it didn’t always pay to be in a hurry.

His patience paid off. Soon more Bohrok arrived and disappeared within the circle of rocks.

*All right,* Kopaka thought at last. *There must be at least half a dozen in that circle by now. I think it’s time to see what they’re doing in there.*

He stood and glanced toward the ground, judging the distance. Then he prepared to jump – but stopped in shock with one foot held in the air.

Bohrok! Dozens and dozens of them came pouring out of the rock circle, scattering in all directions.

Kopaka blinked, wondering if his eyes were playing tricks on him. But no - just below the boulder where he stood, a swarm of Tahnok passed so close that he could feel the heat rising from their shiny red bodies.

Of course. There had to be some sort of cave or tunnel in the center of those boulders. But a tunnel to where…?

The stream of Bohrok stopped as suddenly as it had begun. Moments later, the creatures had disappeared, each swarm headed for a different region of Mata Nui.

Kopaka knew what he had to do. Leaping to the ground, he strode toward the rock circle.

When he reached it, he realized the boulders were even larger than they’d looked from a distance. Even the smallest rose many lengths above his head. Walking around the circle, Kopaka soon spotted an entrance burned straight through one of the rocks, large enough for several Bohrok to pass through side by side.

He stepped through himself, ice blade at the ready. But it fell to his side in shock when he saw it.

A tunnel.

Not just a tunnel, but an enormous, yawning chasm in the ground. It plunged straight down into the earth, neither narrowing nor sloping before its depths were lost in the darkness below.
And all around the walls, clambering up along steep channels carved in the stone, were more Bohrok. Dozens of them – no, hundreds. Ten times larger than any of the swarms he’d seen. Here and there a Bohrok Va scurried downward into the darkness, but the rest were moving in one direction only – upward, toward the surface. Toward the helpless lands of Mata Nui.

Kopaka gulped. This wasn’t what he had expected to find. And it changed everything…

He was tempted to climb down those rough, narrow trails to search for some answers – but no. There were too many of them for Kopaka alone. He needed to find the others.

He just hoped they weren’t already too late.
TO TRAP A TAHNOK

FOR SEVEN SUNS, THE BOHROK HAVE BROUGHT CHAOS TO MATA NUJ. LIKE A THUNDERSTORM THEY STRIKE, ONLY TO DISAPPEAR AGAIN.

NOW THE TAHNOK HAVE COME TO THE DOMAIN OF POHATU--
--TURNING MOUNTAIN RANGES TO MOLTEN MAGMA.

THEY MOVE SWIFTLY. CERTAIN THAT NOTHING CAN STOP THEM.

FOR NOTHING EVER HAS.
THE ENERGIES OF THE KRANA JA ALERT THE TAHNOK TO THE TOA LYING IN WAIT AHEAD.

THE TELEPATHY OF KRANA ZA SPREADS THE NEWS TO THE REST OF THE TROOP: "ALERT! OBSTACLES! AVOID OR REMOVE."

CHIKT-CHIKT-CHIKT-CHIKT

OTHER CREATURES MIGHT FLEE FROM THE MIGHT OF THE TOA AND SEEK A SAFER SITE ON MATA NUI. THE TAHNOK ARE NOT "OTHER CREATURES."
NO. THE TAWOQ ARE NOTHING LIKE ANYTHING ELSE THAT HAS EVER WALKED MATA NUI....

...EXCEPT PERHAPS FOR THE BEINGS WHO THRIVE DEEP IN THESE SHADOWS.

THE BOHROK CARRY OUT THEIR TASKS WELL.

YES. SOON OUR MISSION WILL BE COMPLETE, AND WE MAY REST AGAIN.

MATA NUI WILL BE AS IT WAS IN THE BEFORE-TIME.

MATA NUI WILL BE RESTORED AT LAST.

MANY KOHRAK AND PAHRAK HAVE LOST KRAKA THAT MUST BE REPLACED.

ACCIDENTS, ERRORS.

IS THE MISSION ENDANGERED?

NOTHING EXISTS ON MATA NUI TO INTERFERE WITH OUR WORK.

NOTHING AT ALL.
ARE YOU SURE THIS WILL WORK, POHATU?

IT HAS TO... WE CAN'T OUTFIGHT THE BOHROK--

--NOT WITHOUT RISKING HARM TO THE ISLAND. SO WE HAVE TO OUTSMART THEM.

THIS CANYON IS OUR TRAP, GALI.

“ONUA DUG A TUNNEL FROM THE CANYON WALL TO THE SEA...”

“THEN KOPAKA FROZE THE TUNNEL ENTRANCE SOLID—LIKE PLUGGING A HOLE IN A DAM.”

“WHEN THE BOHROK COME, I’LL...”

I HOPE YOU PLANNED WELL, THEN.
THE TAHNOK ARE HERE!

THEN LET'S MAKE THEM FEEL WELCOME!

WHUNNNNTT

ROCK SHATTERS ICE...

BRAKASSSH
...AND
FIRE MEETS
WATER!
I will have to be swift to gather their Krana!

The Tahnok will not be stunned for long.

When the waters have already begun to boil?

Splash

I can only hope I have the strength to survive this.

I can survive in the icy cold of the sea bottom.

But will even Galis's speed be enough...?
THE GATES OF TA-KORO:

MATA NUI FACES PERHAPS ITS GREATEST CHALLENGE...

-- ONE THAT WILL TEST OUR COURAGE, OUR STRENGTH, AND OUR BELIEF IN EACH OTHER.

THOUGH MY POWERS ARE GREAT, THIS IS NOT A STRUGGLE FOR TOA ALONE.

EVERY ELDER, EVERY VILLAGER, IS LIKE A SINGLE STONE...

AND TOGETHER, YOU CAN BUILD A WALL SO MIGHTY THAT NO BOHROK COULD EVER HOPE TO BRING IT DOWN!

WITH VAKAMA, JALA AND THE REST OF YOU GUARDING TA-KORO, OUR VILLAGE WILL STAND.

AND I PLEDGE TO YOU THAT AS TOA OF FIRE I WILL DO ALL I CAN TO KEEP YOU AND OUR HOME SAFE FROM HARM.

REMEMBER--YOUR BRAVERY, YOUR WISDOM, YOUR SPIRIT, MAKE YOU AS MIGHTY AS ANY TOA! TOGETHER, WE WILL PREVAIL!

WE ARE WITH YOU, TOA OF FIRE!

THEM WILL NEED THEIR STRENGTH... WE ALL WILL.

THESE KRANA ARE NOT OBJECTS OF POWER, LIKE OUR KANOKI--THEY ARE ALIVE!

ALIVE, AND WORSE. PREPARE YOURSELF, MY FRIEND, TO LEARN THE DARKEST SECRET OF ALL!

BUT KOPAKA'S SECRET WILL HAVE TO WAIT FOR THE NEXT CHAPTER...
...for the Toa of Water has almost completed her dangerous task.

I have been fortunate. The shock of the flood slowed the Tahnok enough for me to claim some Krana...

...but these boiling waters sap my strength... I must reach the surface...!

Those Tahnok up ahead... what are they doing? Melting the rock wall...?!?

Wham!

They have sheared through it! It’s falling toward me...!
NO, POHATU! STAY THERE!

ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?

BARELY. IF I HAD BEEN EVEN A LITTLE TOO SLOW....

SHE'S BEEN DOWN THERE TOO LONG!

GALI! I'M COMING IN AFTER YOU!

WHAT MATTERS IS I HAVE FOUR KRANA....

AND WE MUST GO-- NOW!

I AM NOT CERTAIN ANYTHING CAN, LOOK!

WHY? DIDN'T THE WATER STOP THE TAHNOK?

THEY'RE MELTING HANDHOLDS IN THE ROCK!

SSSSSSSSSSSS
WON'T THEY FOLLOW US?

IT DEPENDS ON HOW BADLY THEY WANT THE KRANA BACK.

NO SIGN OF THEM. LET'S GO... YOU NEVER KNOW, KRANA MIGHT BE ABLE TO CALL FOR HELP SOMEHOW.

THERE IS NO TELLING WHAT THEY CAN DO. DRIVE THE BOHROK ON THEIR INSANE MISSION... CONTROL OTHERS...

THEN YOU BELIEVE WHAT VAKAMA SAID?

THAT KRANA CAN CONTROL THE MIND OF ANYONE WHO WEARS ONE?

YES... AND THAT JUST MAKES ME MORE CONCERNED FOR THE OTHERS -- ESPECIALLY LEWA.

DAYS HAVE PASSED SINCE HE LEFT FOR LE-KORO.

IF HE ENCOUNTERED A BOHROK SWARM, WHO KNOWS WHAT MIGHT HAVE HAPPENED?

I CANNOT REST UNTIL I KNOW THE ANSWER--
“...WHERE CAN LEWA BE?”

Gali’s question goes unheard deep in the jungles of Mata Nui, which is perhaps just as well...

...for she might not like the answer. She might not like it at all.
From the Wall of History…

**Hafu Saved in Daring Rescue**

*Pohatu returns hero to safety*

*By Takua*

Pohatu returned to his village just in time to save the Matoran, Hafu, from certain doom at the hands of a swarm of Tahnok. The fire Bohrok had surrounded the helpless Matoran just outside of Po-Koro, but using the powers of his Kanohi, Pohatu snatched Hafu out of danger and returned him to the village unharmed.

Hafu was in a precarious situation after attempting to block the Tahnok from entering Po-Koro using his own Path of Prophesies carvings. Sacrificing not only his art, but potentially his life, Hafu ventured from the safety of the village to dismantle the famed statues. The statues blocked the entrance from the Bohrok, protecting many Matoran from a potential disaster. The villagers of Po-Koro watched in horror from the gates as Hafu disappeared from sight.

“I knew the Toa were close by, and chances were good that Pohatu would be returning soon,” explained Turaga Onewa, “and like a Toa, he was here to help us in our darkest hour!”

The grateful Po-Koro Matoran were overjoyed to have Hafu back in the village.

“The Tahnok are still out there,” says Huki, “but we're just glad to have Hafu back safe and sound with us!”
Onua walked steadily through the rocky wastes near the southern border of Po-Wahi, wondering how the battle was going back in Po-Koro. After meeting up with Pohatu and Gali and helping them set a trap for a swarm of marauding Tahnok, he had left them to spring the trap themselves. Kopaka had already departed to check on Tahu, which left Lewa the only Toa unaccounted for. Onua had set out to find him.

I hope Lewa is okay, Onua thought with a flash of worry. He can be so impulsive – acting without thinking, putting courage before caution. And these Bohrok swarms are really nothing for one Toa to tackle alone, no matter how bold and strong.

That fact had become clearer with every passing hour. Everywhere he turned, Onua saw more of the Bohrok swarms – or the destruction they’d left behind. The creatures seemed willing to leave nothing untouched, from the trees to the rivers to the very land itself.

He hadn’t admitted it to the others, but Onua was truly worried about the Air Toa. Lewa had been gone a long time – Onua was starting to wonder if it hadn’t been foolish to separate in the first place.

Calling upon the power of his Kanohi mask for greater speed, he soon reached the region near Le-Koro. He slowed and looked around, noting the charred foliage and uprooted trees on all sides. He also noticed several steaming greenish puddles on the ground.

“Acid,” he muttered, not liking what this might mean.

He stepped forward carefully, his senses on the alert. The last thing he wanted was to let the Bohrok take him by surprise.

Suddenly Onua stopped, seeing something glinting golden in the sunlight.

* * *
MATA NUI.

SUNRISE...ON PERHAPS THE LAST DAY THE TOA WILL EVER SEE.

LOOK, TAHU! THERE IS THE PROOF YOU DEMANDED!

NO WONDER VAKAMA KNEW SO MUCH ABOUT THE BOHROK. THEY ARE NOT CREATURES FROM SOME OTHER LAND...

--THEY COME FROM WITHIN MATA NUI ITSELF!

INTO THE NEST
The time has come to end this, Kopaka! With our combined powers, we can --

Have you learned nothing?

Charging in there now will not save this island. The krana are the key!

Still you are right.

As long as our people are threatened, we don't have the luxury of being merely warriors.

So I will heed your advice... this time.

Gali is with Pohatu, so both should be safe.

But Onua left to search for the missing Lewa and has not been heard from.

I would not worry about Onua --

-- The toa of Earth can take care of himself.
Onua walked on toward the outskirts of the treetop town. As he drew closer, he became aware of a sound somewhere ahead.

Onua took a cautious step forward, then another. *This jungle makes me nervous*, he thought. *All I have to do is find Lewa, and then I can get out of here.*

“I don’t think it’s going to be that easy,” a cold, metallic voice spoke from directly behind him.

“Lewa!” Onua gasped – just as a mighty gust of wind sent him spinning backward onto the ground. “Surprise,” Lewa sneered through the pulsing krana mask. “I heard you were looking for me. So here I am!”

Onua was speechless – it was Lewa, but this was not the Lewa he knew. The Air Toa wore a new mask now – a Bohrok’s krana – and behind it, his eyes burned with anger.

“Don’t try to fight me, Onua. You can’t win. We’re too strong.”

*Perhaps I should tunnel beneath him, Onua thought uncertainly. If I can knock him off balance long enough to get my hands on that krana…*

“Just go ahead and try it, earthworm,” Lewa said with a laugh. There was no hint of the real Lewa in the voice. “You’ll find the ground here a bit marshier than in your wormholes down in Onu-Wahi. You’ll find me a bit quicker than a worm, too.”


Krana Lewa chuckled. “I am a Bohrok Za, a squad leader,” he said. “My telepathic powers are meant to communicate with my swarm. But your thoughts are so slow and transparent that I can read them with no effort at all.”

Onua frowned. His chances were not looking good at the moment. The creature before him had not only the ruthlessness of the Bohrok, but also the strength and knowledge of Toa Lewa. It seemed an invincible combination.

*But I have faced many invincible challenges before and prevailed*, he reminded himself. *Perhaps if I approach things another way…*

“There is no other way,” Lewa hissed, leaping forward.

There was no way Onua could dodge in time. He was flung backward and landed against a tree trunk with a thud. *When I went looking for Lewa, I didn’t think success would be quite so painful*, he thought, shaking his head to clear it.

When he stood, he saw Lewa watching him. Lewa’s body twisted suddenly, as if fighting against itself. “Onua, get away from here – please!” Lewa blurted, the real Lewa. “Flee before I am forced to harm you.”

“I think I have a better idea,” Onua muttered.

He leaped forward, smashing the ground with his fists. A great wave of earth rose up like a tidal wave, sweeping toward Krana Lewa.
But the infected Toa somersaulted easily over the passing quake. “Leave while there’s still time,” Lewa cried, his voice filled with pain. “I can feel the power building! Even your strength won’t be able to defeat me soon.”

Onua wasn’t sure what to try next. Lewa was strong in battle – too strong. He wasn’t sure he could defeat him. But he certainly wasn’t going to allow this – this krana thing to see that.

Or was he right in thinking of Lewa that way? No matter what he might wear on his face, beneath the mask he was still Lewa – Toa friend, hero.
I know the Kranak controls your body, Lewa, but not your will.

If it is so strong that it can make you harm a friend...

Then go ahead... I will not defend myself. But I know you, Lewa. I have fought beside you...

...and I know you are stronger than this parasite.

My energies are yours, Toa of Air! Be free!

Yes...

You are a Toa... prove yourself worthy of the name!

Toa... my people... my friends... I will not harm Onua, creature...
I WILL NOT!

EASY. HERE -- YOU WILL NEED THIS.

I TOOK IT AWAY FROM A PARTY OF LEHVAK VA. THAT IS HOW I KNEW YOU WERE IN DANGER.

MORE THAN DANGER... I KNOW NOW. ONUA, I KNOW WHY THE BOHROK ARE HERE!

--THE LEHVAK ARE CHARGING US. ONUA SAYS "BUT NOT TO WORRY...."

"...I BROUGHT FRIENDS."

"WHAT ARE THOSE THINGS??"
"The Matoran have learned that the Bohrok do not truly live."

"They are artificial life... biomechanical creations," Onua explains.

"The villagers salvaged parts from fallen Bohrok to build the Boxor vehicles."

"They will need them. When I wore the Krana, I could hear the voices of the swarm."

"We must act now, Onua, or..."

"Nothing will be left of Mata Nui!"

Later...

"Hurry, Pohatu! This is no time to admire the scenery."

"I was just remembering when these canyons were full of life. The Matoran used to live in the caves above—before the Bohrok drove them away."

"It looks as if they mean to do the same to us!"

"Think maybe they want all these Krana back?"
Well that's just too bad --

CRRUNNNCH!

...because my people want their homes back!

There is moisture in the air, even in this arid place...

...and where there is moisture...

But there will be more Bohrok waiting along our path.

I can make a flood!

The Krana want to be free. We won't stop. Let's go find the others!

It's time to end this threat, once and for all!
From the Wall of History…

**Island Wildlife on the Move**

*Local naturalists concerned*

*By Takua*

The arrival of the Bohrok swarms has taken a serious toll on island creatures. Gahlok activity off the coast has driven a number of Takea closer to the shore, where they menace diving Taku and disrupt the migration of the Ruki schools.

One Ga-Koro fisherman responded, “In addition to threatening our homes, the Bohrok are also threatening our livelihood!”

The deforestation of the Le-Wahi jungle has sent herds of Vako and Fusa wandering deep into the desert to compete for food with the native Husi flocks. The Hoi and Kuna have lost the shelter of the trees, making them easy prey for Rahi. Destruction of Fikou webs has caused the tree spiders to flee to the high jungle canopy, territory of the swift-flying Goko-Kahu.

The Ussal-riding defense force of Onu-Koro has had its hands full with a surge in Kofo-Jaga, chased from their hidden lairs, while scouts warn that the mountain-shaking of the Nuhvok and Pahrak has brought a few dangerous Makika Toads out of their caves. In fiery Ta-Wahi, besieged by the frozen Kohrak, the tunnels of displaced Hoto firebugs have been creating sinkholes and causing hut collapses. Even the fierce Hikaki have been forced to abandon their ancient nesting grounds.

The Bohrok swarms are a threat to every creature of Mata Nui, from Matoran to Rahi. Hopefully, the swarms will be contained soon before irreparable damage is done to the island.
Tahu was uncharacteristically silent as he and Kopaka climbed the foothills at the base of the volcano. Though he didn’t like to admit it, the Fire Toa was a bit awed by what the Ice Toa had just showed him – a nest of Bohrok. Tahu had been ready to charge down into the tunnel immediately, but Kopaka had convinced him to wait. It was time to join forces with the other Toa.

_I suppose he was right about that, _Tahu thought with a grimace. _I hate it when he’s right._

How much time had passed since the Bohrok had first appeared? Tahu wasn’t sure; he’d been too busy fighting them to keep track. All he knew was that there seemed to be endless numbers of swarms and that their attacks were taking a toll on Mata Nui.

They passed a jagged patch of ice jutting out of the rocks just ahead. Clearly, the Kohrak had been this way. Tahu waited until they had come even with the icy patch, then pointed his sword, blasting the ice into lava.

Kopaka shot him an unreadable glance. "We will be needing all of our power soon," he commented. "Waste it not."

Tahu scowled. "Waste?" he said. "The only thing wasted is your breath when you tell me what to do."

"Yes, it seems so," Kopaka replied icily. "The Toa of Fire listens to none but himself."

Tahu’s scowl deepened. "Is that supposed to be an insult?" he said. "Because I –"

Before he could finish his retort, a shout came from just down the slope.

"Brother Tahu! Brother Kopaka! There you are!"

Tahu had never been so glad to hear Gali’s voice. He spun around and peered down the slope.

"Greetings, brothers!" Pohatu cried. "You’ll be happy to hear that at least one Tahnok swarm is no more. What news do you have on your end?"

Tahu clanked his fist against Pohatu’s, then Gali’s. "Serious news," he said. "Kopaka tracked one of the Bohrok Va back to its nest."

"Nest?" Gali repeated curiously. "But how can that be? Nests are for birds and reptiles and other living things, while the Bohrok don’t really live. They’re just –"

"– vehicles for the krana they carry within," Tahu finished for her with a nod. "Yes, we realize that now, too. But don’t you see? The Bohrok and the krana emerged from this nest. That means –"

"– that they spring from Mata Nui itself." This time it was Pohatu who finished the sentence. "They are not invaders from elsewhere, but creatures of the island just as all the others are."

"Right," Gali looked at each of the other Toa in turn. "So why are they trying to destroy their own land?"

Nobody had an answer for that. Finally Tahu shrugged. "We don’t need to understand them," he pointed out, impatience welling up in him like lava. "We just need to stop them. So what are we waiting for?"
“Onua and Lewa,” Kopaka answered. “Where are they?”
“No one has seen Lewa since we parted in Ta-Koro,” Pohatu said. “Onua went to look for him, but we haven’t seen him since then.”
Tahu was ready for action. “So let’s send a search party, or—”
“No need for that, brother Tahu,” a voice sang out from behind a large stone outcropping. A moment later Lewa sprang into sight. He hurried toward the others.
“Lewa!” Gali cried with relief. “Are you all right? You look a bit—er, strange.”
“And no wonder,” Onua’s familiar voice rang out from just behind Lewa. “Wait until you hear about the trouble our high-flying brother here got himself into.”
Tahu glanced at Lewa, expecting a quip or other playful comment, but the Toa of Air seemed uncharacteristically somber.
“Yes, I suppose you should all know,” Lewa said. “In case—well, just in case anything should—should happen.”
“What are you talking about, Lewa?” Gali asked with concern. “Did you have trouble with the Bohrok in Le-Wahi?”
“You could say that,” Lewa said quietly. “Not only me, either. Le-Koro—Le-Koro is no more.”
He bowed his head.
Tahu wasn’t sure what to say. He was used to Lewa being the flighty one among them, the lighthearted one who never took anything seriously. Seeing him like this was unsettling, to say the least.
“What happened?” he asked gruffly as the silence stretched uncomfortably.
“It was the Lehvak,” Onua answered. “They captured the Le-Matoran and infected them by replacing their own masks with krana. And when Lewa found them like that… Well, perhaps you’d better tell the rest, brother Lewa.”
Lewa looked uncomfortable. “I—they told me it was a physical entrapment only, that they needed the strength of a Toa to offmask the krana from their faces. I believed them. Why should I not? It is not in the nature of a Le-Matoran to falsespeak.”
“Unless in the interest of a practical joke,” Tahu murmured under his breath. When Lewa looked over at him, he cleared his throat. “Er, I mean, didn’t you remember what the Turaga said? That the krana, when worn, could steal the mind—even the mind of a Toa?”
“I remember that now,” Lewa admitted. “I didn’t then. I was too quickminded to help. And so I leaped right into the helptask, and before I knew it, my Kanohi mask was quicksnatched from one side while from the other, someone slipped the krana over my face. By the time I caught on, it was too late. I was…one of them.”
Tahu wasn’t sure what to think. How could that have happened? he wondered uneasily. How could ordinary Matoran—even a group of them, even with the cunning of a Bohrok guiding them—overpower a Toa? He shook his head. It would not have happened had it been me.
He glanced around at the others. Gali and Pohatu were exchanging a worried glance. Kopaka was staring at Lewa intently, as if trying to dissect him with his gaze.
Onua was the only one who seemed relaxed. “Don’t look so fretful, my brothers and sister,” he said. “In the end, brother Lewa overcame the power on his own. I stood before him, allowing him to choose his own fate—and mine. And I was right. His will was strong enough to overcome the poison of the krana.”
“Only because you offered your own mindstrength to go with my own,” Lewa said quietly. “Without that, I might never have found a way to self-free.”
“That’s the way it usually happens, isn’t it?” Gali pointed out. “Even when an enemy is too strong for one to face alone, together we can find a way to prevail.”
“Yes,” Kopaka said. “And our greatest test of this unity comes now—as we go down into the nest.”
“Nest?” Onua repeated. “What nest? What are you talking about?”
The others quickly filled him in on what Kopaka had discovered. Onua nodded as he listened to Kopaka and Tahu’s description.

“What about the krana?” he asked when they had finished. “Do we have all we need?”

The six Toa quickly produced the krana they all still carried. It didn’t take long to determine that they’d collected more than enough.

“That one is the Krana Za,” Lewa said, staring fixedly at one of the krana. “That’s what I was — what was infecting me, I mean.”

Gali glanced at him with concern. “Yes, it’s what infected you,” she said. “But never think that it is what you were. Never think that you became the Bohrok, because you didn’t.”

“Gali is right,” Pohatu put in. “Lewa, whatever you’ve been through, it’s time to forget about that and focus on what’s ahead. We’ll need all our wits about us — no distractions.”

“Yes, all right,” Tahu said impatiently, not liking to think too much about Lewa’s “infection.” It made him uneasy — as if something alien had suddenly come into their midst. “Now come on. Let’s go down to that nest and see if we can figure out what we’re supposed to do with these krana.”

“How do we know we’re supposed to take them underground, into the nest?” Gali wondered.

Tahu shrugged. “How do we know we’re not?”

“But we still don’t know anything about them,” Onua added worriedly. “We don’t even know why they want to destroy things, or why they chose this moment to emerge, or —”

“Makuta,” Lewa interjected suddenly. “It was Makuta. He released the manyswarms when we tried to awaken Mata Nui. It was not yet the right time, the time he had planned — but he outsent them early, hoping to stop us.”

“What?” Pohatu stared at him. “How do you know that?”

Lewa shrugged. “I don’t know how,” he said simply. “I just know.”

Tahu nodded, understanding suddenly. The infected mask — the krana — must have transferred some of the Bohrok’s knowledge into Lewa’s brain. But if such knowledge remained, what else might linger?

The others continued to discuss possible courses of action. Kopaka and Lewa kept mostly silent, but the other three traded possibility after possibility.

As he listened, Tahu could feel impatience bubbling up within him. “Come on!” he cried, interrupting Pohatu’s suggestion to gather the Turaga together for a council to seek any further knowledge that might exist in the ancient legends. “We can stand around here all day while the Bohrok continue to destroy our island and endanger our people. Or we can take action!”

“Tahu is right,” Lewa spoke up at last. “We should hurry-go to the swarmnest. It’s the only way.”

Though he was glad for the support, Tahu once again had to fight back a shudder of unease. Was this agreement really coming from Lewa, the impulsive one? Or was it coming from the mind of the swarm, luring them into a trap?

Onua glanced around the group. “Does anyone have any objection to Tahu’s plan?”

There was a moment of silence. Gali and Kopaka traded a look, but both kept quiet.

“Then it’s decided,” Onua said. “We will challenge the Bohrok in their nest.”

Tahu nodded. “The Bohrok cannot be allowed to endanger our people any longer.”

“No,” Lewa reminded them. “The Bohrok are not the true enemy. It is the krana we must defeat. They have a purpose, a mission — it’s why they exist.”

Pohatu shrugged. “Then they can tell us all about it — on their way off the island.”
From the Wall of History…

**Le-Koro Liberated!**

*Boxors instrumental in Nuhvok defeat*

*By Takua*

The Bohrok invasion of the Le-Wahi jungle and Le-Koro resulted in the loss of many hightree villagers. Even Toa Lewa was overcome by the evil krana! But thanks to the courage of Onua, Toa of Earth, Lewa has been freed, and now the mighty Toa search together beneath the surface of the island for the Bohrok nest.

Not forgetting the lost Matoran of Le-Koro, the Toa sent Nuparu, the Onu-Koro engineer, to meet under the cover of darkness with the last free villagers of Le-Koro. Together with the high-flying Kongu and Tamaru the bird-tamer, Le-Koro’s liberation was planned and a cunning trap prepared for the Bohrok.

The brave Kongu and Tamaru led a force of Nuhvok and krana-controlled villagers to the forest edge. Believing them trapped, the Bohrok prepared to capture the last of Le-Koro – only to face a force of Boxors as they rose from hiding! Thanks to Nuparu’s Boxor squad and the element of surprise, the krana that controlled the Bohrok and Matoran were successfully removed.

The Turaga have called for a great feast and festival to celebrate this day’s victory. A shaken but grateful Matau said, “At long last, the darkdream is over. Sunbright Le-Koro and her people are free! As we rebuild, our thoughts must turn to the Toa and the great challenge that they face beneath Mata Nui. May they succeed in their quest!”
The six Toa wasted no time in traveling to the mouth of the nest. They climbed down its steep, rocky walls, avoiding the emerging Bohrok whenever possible and fighting them when not. Their progress was agonizingly slow, but eventually they left the glow of daylight behind and found themselves in a large, smooth tunnel leading deep into the earth.

The darkness swallowed them up. Occasionally a group of Bohrok hurried past. By pressing against the walls, the Toa managed to avoid attracting their attention. Though they hated the thought of more swarms emerging into Mata Nui, they knew their energy might be needed for whatever they found at the end of the tunnel.

Tahu found himself walking beside Onua. Lewa and Kopaka were walking close together at the front of the group, with Pohatu and Gali trailing just behind them.

“Keep an eye on Lewa,” Tahu murmured to his companion.

“Do you think he is still influenced by the swarm?” Onua asked, glancing forward.

“I don’t know what to think. But nothing can be allowed to interfere with our mission.”

Onua chuckled. “Lewa would say you sound like a Bohrok, my friend.”

Tahu didn’t bother to respond. Instead, he hurried forward to warn Pohatu not to let his guard down around Lewa.

A few minutes later, there was a scraping sound as Pohatu ran his hand along the tunnel wall.

“Have you noticed?” he commented, loudly enough for all to hear. “This tunnel wall – it’s smooth. No Matoran dug this. Or any Bohrok, for that matter.”

“Are you sure?” Gali asked.

“Gali, if there’s one thing I know about, it’s stone,” Pohatu reminded her. His voice held its usual light tone, but there was an undercurrent of worry. “I think something is very wrong here.”

Gali didn’t respond. But whatever it is, we can handle it, she thought. At least, I hope we can.

Just then Tahu shouted something from the front of the group. “What was that?” Gali asked Pohatu.

“An opening,” the Toa of Stone replied. “Tahu is going down to investigate.”

Gali nodded, watching as the Toa of Fire leaped off the edge of an opening in the floor. Moving forward with the others, she peered over the edge of the tunnel.

KA-BLAMMMMM!

Suddenly a stone door slid over the opening and slammed shut, blocking Tahu from view.

“Tahu!” Onua cried. “He’s trapped down there!”

Pohatu’s expression was grim. “And we may be trapped up here.”

The Toa spent the next moment or two trying to smash their way through the wall. But it refused to give, even after Onua’s pounding and Pohatu’s most devastating kicks.

Left behind without Tahu’s sword, the rest of them should have been standing in darkness. Kopaka was the first to notice that there was a reddish glow still lighting the tunnel. He pointed.
“Molten lava!” he shouted.  

Spinning around, Gali saw that the Ice Toa was right. An enormous fireball was bearing down on them, filling the tunnel with its roaring, deadly energy. She desperately began pulling in water from the air around her, knowing that it was probably already too late. The only one who might be able to stop the lava now was—

“Stay back!” Kopaka yelled. “My ice can hold the lava at bay for a few moments.”

He aimed his sword of ice, freezing the lava solid. Gali breathed out a sigh of relief, though she knew Kopaka was right—his defense would hold only a few minutes.

Pohatu and Onua were still trying to break through the wall separating them from the next chamber. They pounded against the wall with power that could level a mountain. Still the wall stood, not even a scratch marring its smooth surface.

“It doesn’t shatter,” Lewa shouted suddenly. “Doesn’t shatter because it isn’t there!”

“What?” Pohatu gasped breathlessly.

Lewa waved his arms, a hint of his old exuberance breaking through. “There’s nothing you and Onua can’t bring down,” he exclaimed. “So if this wall is still standing, it can’t be real! Stop believing in it—and it disappears!”

With that, he stuck one arm straight through the solid wall. Pohatu blinked, hardly believing his eyes. How could this be? He struck at the wall, feeling the impact shake his whole body as his fist bounced off the impenetrable surface. Then he looked again at Lewa, who had disappeared halfway through the “wall” by this time.

It couldn’t be—and yet it was. The wall was nothing but an illusion! What kind of creatures are we dealing with here, anyway? Pohatu wondered, a shiver of dread coursing through him.

Noticing that the other four Toa had disappeared through the wall, Pohatu took a deep breath. If they could do it, he could do it, too.

_Stand aside, wall_, he thought with a rueful smile. _If I can’t get through you with my fists and feet, I suppose this way will do._

Trusting his comrades’ wisdom, he flung himself at the wall. This time, instead of bouncing off, he stumbled right through.

He found himself standing with the others in a small chamber lit by a strange greenish glow.

“What about Tahu?” Onua said. “We can’t leave him back there.”

The others agreed. But before they could figure out what to do, Lewa pointed out that the ground was getting hot. Was it more lava? Or—

“Everyone down,” Kopaka barked. “NOW!”

Kopaka rarely gave an order, but there was no disregarding the urgent tone this time. They all flung themselves to the floor—just as the cavern exploded around them.

Dirt, stone, and lava flew in every direction. In the midst of it was a tall red figure.

“Tahu!” Lewa cried. “Are you all right?”

Tahu nodded. Then, a little breathless, he explained that he’d used his sword to heat the air in the cavern where he’d been trapped—the heart of the Bohrok nest itself. The air pressure had finally blown apart the nest, scattering the remaining Bohrok to the far corners of the tunnels.

Before the others could figure out what that might mean, they felt the ground giving way beneath them. The cavern floor groaned and split.

“Uh-oh,” Pohatu cried. “Looks like things are going downhill again.”

He tried to hold on to the walls, but the entire floor was falling away beneath his feet. He skidded through the yawning opening. All around him, he could see the other Toa falling as well.

“Use your levitation powers!” Gali shouted.

“And be ready for anything when we hit the bottom,” Tahu added grimly.

Each Toa called upon the levitation powers of his or her Kanohi mask, and they floated downward among the hail of falling stones and earth. The six of them finally landed in a massive, dimly lit, round chamber.
Kopaka found some deep niches carved in the otherwise smooth floor. Their shapes matched the krana they carried.

“I think this is where the krana are meant to go,” he said, placing one of the krana he carried into the proper slot.

The others followed suit. As Gali fitted the last of the krana into place, there was a sudden jerk in the floor below her.

“Whoa!” she cried, grabbing onto Kopaka’s arm to keep from being thrown to the ground. “What was that?”

More violent tremors followed. The floor, walls, and ceiling of the cavern shuddered.

“It’s begun!” Lewa cried, barely keeping his feet as the earth shook and shuddered beneath him.

“The end of the Bohrok!”

“What do you mean, brother?” Gali shouted.

“What do you know?” Tahu cried at the same time.

Before they could get any answers, the cavern walls groaned and fell away, revealing six enormous metal doors in the new wall. The doors slid back with a clang. Behind them were six identical tunnels shrouded in smoke and darkness.

Onua stared into the nearest doorway. “It seems,” he said slowly, “we’ve been invited in.”
From the Wall of History…

**Last-Moment Save!**
*Ga-Koro Matoran rescued by Koli champion*

By Takua

With a swarm of Pahrak battering at the gates, the Matoran of Ga-Koro today attempted to dismantle the floating path that connects their village to the shore of Lake Naho. But before they could finish, the gate was shattered by the might of the Bohrok, sending stone fragments everywhere. One nearly struck Maku, but was deflected just in time by the last Matoran one would expect to see in watery Ga-Koro: Huki, Koli champion of the village of Stone.

“Maku is a good friend,” said Huki after the exciting rescue, “and I…enjoy her company greatly. When I saw that boulder come flying at her, I didn’t have time to think. I just swung!”

And a lucky swing it was, too, for the stone not only missed Maku but also destroyed the path, preventing the Pahrak from reaching the village. But why were the Matoran of Po-Wahi there?

“Our village was badly damaged in the Bohrok’s last assault,” explained Turaga Onewa sadly. “We came to Ga-Koro in search of sanctuary until the threat of the swarms is past – but we did not expect to arrive in the middle of a Pahrak siege!”

With the Bohrok in retreat, the Matoran of Ga-Koro have begun to relax. But how long will this safety last? Jala, Captain of the Ta-Koro Guard, urges caution. “The Pahrak are stubborn,” he warned. “They do not give up easily. I fear that the danger is still very much present.”
Each of the Toa stepped into the closest tunnel. Ahead, Lewa saw a dark glow. It held a strange shape – some kind of armor. Could it be?

He hurried forward and saw that he’d been right – it was a suit of armor! Exo-Toa armor. He didn’t know how he knew it was called that, he just knew. More knowledge left over from the krana that had infected him? Shrugging off the disturbing thought, he took a step closer to the armor.

I suppose I’d better put it on, he thought, touching the smooth surface of the armor. I may need it. Soon he was outfitted in the armor. He felt new power seeping into his limbs and smiled. Then his smile faded as he felt a tug on the edges of his mind.

Clean it all. It must be cleaned.

“No!” he muttered aloud, shaking off the shadowy thoughts.

Hurrying forward, his new armor clanking softly as he moved, Lewa wondered what he would find at the end of the tunnel.

All obstacles must be removed.

Lewa hesitated. Had that thought come from his mind? Was it the remains of the Bohrok’s infection?

“No,” he muttered uncertainly. “It wasn’t – I didn’t…”

You are an obstacle, the mind-voice came again. You must be removed.

Lewa gasped as an enormous creature burst into view, the massive bulk of its gleaming red limbs and pearly fangs filling the tunnel. “What – what are you?” the Toa cried in surprise.

This time knowing laughter filled his mind. You know who I am, Toa of the Bohrok, the voice taunted. You know me – I am your queen. My sister, Cahdok, and I rule your thoughts, your actions.

“No!” Lewa shouted furiously. “I do know who you are, Gahdok.” The name had popped into his mind as if planted there. “But you are wrong about me. You don’t rule me, and you never will!”

With that, he lashed out furiously. But the creature before him knocked him aside easily, sending him spinning into the hard tunnel wall.

You are wrong about that, Toa of Nothing, the mind-voice hissed. Dead wrong.

More voices started to whisper within Lewa’s head – the voices of the swarm, calling him to fulfill their destiny. Gritting his teeth, Lewa did his best to ignore them.

I have to fight back, he told himself. I am a Toa.

He raised his arms, focusing his powers on the air around him. But all that came to him was a whisper of a breeze.

What’s happening? Lewa wondered desperately as the voices gained in volume. What’s bad-wrong with me?

He fell to his knees, pressing his hands against his ears. Still the voices filled his mind.

Clean it all. It must be cleaned. All obstacles will be removed. You are an obstacle. You must be removed. You are wrong about that, Toa of Nothing. Dead wrong. You know me – I am your queen. My sister, Cahdok, and I rule your thoughts, your actions. You are wrong about me. You don’t rule me, and you never will!”
“Help!” Lewa cried. “Someone, over here! Quickly – please!”

Lewa breathed out in relief. Miraculously, Kopaka’s cool, no-nonsense voice had sent the voices away. Nearby, Gahdok roared in fury.

“Use the armor,” Kopaka told Lewa. “Let its power work for you.”

Lewa glanced down at himself, realizing he hadn’t even bothered to examine his new powers. But he would make up for that now.

Noting the electro-rocket on one arm, he raised it and pointed it toward Gahdok. Beside him, Kopaka did the same. The creature gnashed her teeth and roared again, but she backed off a few steps, moving down the corridor in the direction of the cavern.

“Drive it back to the cavern,” Kopaka said tersely. “We can’t fight it here.”

Lewa noted the Exo-Toa armor of his own.

“Kopaka is driving the creature-queen this way,” Gali, Pohatu, and Onua were in the cavern. All of them wore Exo-Toa armor.

Pohatu glanced at Lewa. “Tahu has the other creature on the move, too,” he reported. “When they’re both in here, we can surround them and take them down.”

“Good,” Lewa murmured. “That will be the end of the Bohrok threat.”

He wasn’t sure how he knew that, but he knew it for sure. If they could only defeat Cahdok and Gahdok, the Bohrok would be finished.

Before he could tell the others, there was a shout. Tahu had just driven a large, silvery-blue version of Gahdok into the chamber – her sister, Cahdok. A second later, Gahdok herself backed in from the tunnel, goaded by Kopaka.

“Drive them to the center of the chamber!” Onua called. “Surround them!”

But the two queens were already backing toward each other. Soon they were side by side in the center of the cavern.

“Strike now, Toa,” Tahu roared. “For your villages and your people!”

Lewa leaped forward with the others, raising his rocket arm. He aimed and let it blast right at Cahdok and Gahdok. The other Toa did the same.

But the rocket blasts exploded helplessly several yards in front of the sisters. Cahdok and Gahdok screeched with triumph.

“What’s wrong?” Onua asked, his voice filled with awe. “It’s as if they’re surrounded by some kind of force field!”

Suddenly Lewa knew the answer. It filled his mind, even as the queens of the swarm taunted the other Toa in their thought-speak.

Fools! Gahdok hissed in the Toa’s minds. By bringing us together, you increase our power! Now Mata Nui will be as it was in the Before-Time. All that does not belong will be removed – beginning with you!

Lewa gasped in horror. Now that the sisters were together, their powers knew few limits.

Why didn’t I know this would happen? Lewa thought in frustration. I should have remembered – from before. I should have been able to warn the others.

But it was too late for that now. The queens had suddenly gone on the offensive – Cahdok showered Kopaka with a hailstorm of stones, while Gahdok blasted Gali with smothering heat.

Did I betray the other Toa? Lewa wondered uneasily. Did I lead them into this trap – could the Bohrok still be controlling me, even if I don’t realize it?

No. It hadn’t been his idea to bring Gahdok to the cavern – Kopaka had been the one to suggest that. The thought filled Lewa with relief.
Don’t feel too glad, Toa of Weakness, the sisters taunted Lewa in his mind. For we have powers that will make your blood run cold…

“Nooo!” Lewa cried, but the words froze in his throat as Gahdok turned her icy gaze on him, freezing him in place.

Meanwhile, the others were calling upon all of their powers to battle the sisters. Tahu blasted Gahdok with fire, but she retaliated with a barrage of hurtling stones.

“Tahu!” Lewa cried in horror, his half-frozen mouth barely forming the name. With an effort, Lewa turned his ice-encrusted eyes toward Onua and Pohatu, hoping they would come to Tahu’s rescue. To his surprise, he saw that both were busy fighting – but neither appeared to have an opponent!

More of the sisters’ illusions, Lewa thought desperately.

Just in time, the Toa of Fire used the power of the Mask of Shielding to block the stones. But Lewa could see that he was struggling to maintain the protective shield.

Nearby, Gali was fighting to stay upright as wave after wave of nauseating heat rolled over her. She didn’t understand what was happening. Somehow, her elemental power had deserted her – she couldn’t even manage to call forth a trickle, let alone a flood, to fight the two queens. She could see that Tahu was having similar troubles – and the sisters were closing in on him.

“Onua! Pohatu!” Gali shouted. “You are fighting shadows! Tahu needs you!”

Luckily her words got through to Pohatu. Shadows? He stared at the hulking metallic monster before him. It reared up, preparing a devastating strike with its hooked claw.

“ Forget it, brother shadow,” Pohatu spat out, disgusted with himself for falling for the sisters’ tricks.

He stood firm as the shadow creature struck. The claw passed right through him and disappeared in a whiff of smoke.

Pohatu whirled around, knocking Onua on the shoulder. “Brother!” he cried. “Leave that shadow alone – we have to help Tahu!”

Without waiting for an answer, he rushed and flung the largest rock he could find toward the queens. But they deflected it easily, tossing it aside. Pohatu growled in frustration, looking around for another boulder.

“All of you!” Tahu shouted suddenly. “Shed your armor! It hinders our elemental powers – and they are our only hope!”

Of course! Pohatu ripped off the Exo-Toa armor. Though he immediately felt power seeping away, he also felt his own natural strength swell to replace it.

Tahu was still struggling against the queens, their voices hissing angrily in his mind.

You dared challenge the Bohrok swarms? You have no hope! – The mission will proceed!

You dared oppose your brothers! Therefore you must fall! Mata Nui will be cleansed!

It’s no use, the Fire Toa thought desperately. They’re too strong! How can we hope to fight them?

The knowing will come.

The words filled his mind. Suddenly he knew what to do.

“Toa!” Tahu shouted. “Surround them! We must combine our powers.”

Lewa leaped forward with the others. But he couldn’t help worrying – what if this was another trap? What if the queens had tricked them into attacking without the protection of their powerful armor? If the Toa perished, who would be left to protect their people?

“But – the danger,” he cried as the others moved toward the hissing, screeching queens. Gali glanced at him in surprise. “The safety of our people is worth any risk,” she said. “If power is all these creatures understand, then we will show them power.”

Tahu nodded tersely. “Let’s go,” he said. “Lewa, either join us or get out of the way.”

Lewa stared at the Fire Toa, seeing a question in his eyes. Could Lewa give the right answer to that question? Did he know the right answer? Suddenly he was certain that he did.

“Yes,” Lewa said at last. “You are true-right. It’s worth the risk.”
Tahu smiled at him for a second, looking relieved. For the first time since Lewa had been overtaken by the krana, there was no suspicion or doubt in the Fire Toa’s eyes.

Then Lewa joined the others in forming a ring around Cahdok and Gahdok. He closed his eyes, summoning all the power he could find within himself. Just when he’d reached the bottom, he felt Gali’s hand grasp his shoulder. A new wave of power swept through him.

A howling gale swept through the cavern, sweeping the sisters into a maelstrom.
Soon a driving rain hammered down on the queens.
Seconds later the rain froze to deadly hail.
A shower of stones pounded the enemy from every direction.
Waves of earth rose up around them.
Blasts of fire heated the stone and earth into steaming lava.
“Keep it up, brothers!” Gali shouted. “We’re winning!”

Fools! Gahdok’s words seared through the Toa’s minds like poison. The queens were writhing in agony as the Toa’s attack continued. You think you have won – but you cannot imagine what you have unleashed!

Then suddenly, the energy sizzling around the queens condensed into a gel-like substance. Protodermis, thought Gali in confusion. The mysterious substance had been mined on Mata Nui for years, its origins unknown. And now it had formed a barrier around the queens, imprisoning them within!

Before she could understand the significance of this protodermis cage, Gali heard a deafening rumble of earth and stone. The cavern shuddered as stones rained down from above and the earth erupted below.
Disaster struck late last night as a force of Pahrak destroyed Ga-Wahi’s great monument to the Toa Gali, smashing the famous cliffside Kanohi to create a bridge of rubble from the beach to the floating village of Ga-Koro.

“It was terrible,” Turaga Nokama said. “Our most skilled artisans labored to create that carving, and it was gone in an instant. All of that beauty and craftsmanship was just another obstacle for the Bohrok to destroy.”

But Ga-Koro’s troubles were about to become much worse. As dawn broke, the Pahrak swept across the bridge, shattering everything in their path. Nuparu’s Boxors rose to challenge them, but found themselves plunged into the waters of Lake Naho.

“My poor Boxors are designed for land, not lily pads,” mourned Nuparu. “They did their best, but they just don’t float. We’re lucky that Maku and Kotu were there to pull us out in time.” The engineer paused for a moment. “You know, perhaps if we were to attach hollow shell-seeds to the sides, and maybe add a gear-driven propeller system…”

With the Pahrak stranded on another pad, the villagers of Ga-Koro thought that they were safe…until a Pahrak Va suddenly appeared on the scene.

Turaga Onewa explains: “Those Pahrak Va – goatdogs, we call them in Po-Wahi – they carry extra krana for the swarm. This one replaced the Bohrok’s krana with Krana Vu, letting them take to the air.”

As the Pahrak hurtled toward the huddled villagers and refugees of Ga-Koro, one question was on every Matoran’s mind.

Who could possibly stand up to the Bohrok?
“Looks like Cahdok and Gahdok had one more surprise for us!” Onua shouted as he tried to stay upright.

Lewa shook his head. “This is not their doing,” he called back, the knowledge strong in his mind. “This comes from the heart of Mata Nui.”

“The floor!” Gali cried. “We’re sinking!”

Before anyone could respond, the ground fell away beneath them. Tahu found himself sliding down a long, narrow tube. Its walls were clear, allowing him to see the other Toa trapped within similar tubes. What now? the Fire Toa thought rather desperately. Just when we think we’ve finally won – just then the tube ended abruptly. Tahu found himself flying through the air for a split second, and then –

SPLASSSSSH – ZZZZZZT!

He was enveloped in a gel-like substance halfway between liquid and solid. The gel cushioned him, seeping into every joint, making him feel warm and cold by turns.

_Protodermis_, Tahu thought fuzzily. The substance seemed to be seeping into his mind as well as his body, making it difficult to think or move. _We’re swimming in protodermis._

The mysterious substance had been mined on Mata Nui for years, used as a source of power. What effect would it have on the Toa?

The Toa of Fire closed his eyes, feeling the protodermis surround him. He wanted to struggle, to fight his way to the surface. But he couldn’t move.

An immense heat swept through his body, his blood boiling and white-hot flames flickering behind his eyelids. As soon as the heat had come it disappeared, replaced by an icy cold so deep that Tahu couldn’t even shiver. Within a fraction of a second, he felt himself sinking into warm, welcoming water, deep and pure. Then the water evaporated away into a howling wind that swept him around around – until he landed on the hard earth and felt himself sinking down, down, down into the stifling depths. Finally he hit the hard surface of a stone cliff and behind his still-closed eyes it was as if he could see right through it until it held no mysteries.

Then the stone, too, fell away. For a long moment there was nothingness.

With a gasp, Tahu broke through the surface of the protodermis. Coughing and choking for breath, he looked around and saw the other Toa surfacing nearby.

They levitated up in a group, landing on a rocky ledge above the bubbling pit of protodermis. The cavern was empty. Cahdok and Gahdok had disappeared. But the Toa were even more shocked by the changes they saw in one another.

Each of them was still recognizable – but they had all changed. Instead of his golden Kanohi mask, Tahu’s face was now covered in a larger mask of gleaming red, while his body shimmered in metallic tones of silver and bronze. The others had undergone similar transformations.

“What has happened?” Gali voiced the question at last. “What have we become?”
“More than we were,” Kopaka answered, his cool voice tinged with the warmth of amazement. “More than anyone has ever been.”

Sure enough, Tahu could feel power surging through him. But he glanced upward with concern. “Let us worry about why it happened later,” he said. “There are more important questions to answer now.”
KAAAUNNNNCCCH!

The mask of shielding protected us all! It could never do that before...!

And it never will again, if we do not escape! Lewa, Pohatu - combine the powers of your masks!
SURE, I SEE!
THE MASK OF SPEED GETS US OFF THE GROUND...

AND THE MASK OF LEVITATION KEEPS US IN THE AIR!

WHY DIDN'T I THINK OF THAT?

YOU WOULD HAVE, LEVA... EVENTUALLY, IF WE HAD HAD THE TIME TO WAIT.

BUT PATIENCE IS NO VIRTUE WHEN THE GROUND BEGINS TO SHAKE.

RUMBLE LEE
KRA-KAM
KRACKKK

IT FEELS LIKE THE ISLAND IS COLLAPSING INTO THE SEA!

THROUGH THE TUNNELS, EVERYONE--GO!

THIS WAY. I SEE LIGHT AHEAD!
WATCH OUT! THERE ARE BOHROK HEADED STRAIGHT FOR US!

CHKT-CHKT-CHKT-CHKT!

WITHOUT CAHOCK AND GAHDOCK TO DIRECT THEM, THEY ARE CONFUSED... OUT OF CONTROL...!

I SHARE THE POWER OF THE MASK OF STRENGTH WITH YOU!
WE MUST USE IT... NOW!

SLAMMMMM!

HERE THEY COME!--
—And there they go!

This will keep them from returning for a while.

As the ice melts, they will be forced further below!

Admire your work later! Our blow has weakened this tunnel even more!

The Bohrok's domain is collapsing! Go! Go!
Soon they were bursting out of the darkness of the tunnels onto the surface. They flew high up into the air until they could see the island from end to end. While there were enormous areas of bare earth, charred rock, and other damage, the Bohrok swarms were nowhere to be seen.

“We did it!” Gali cried as the Toa settled back toward the ground. “The threat of the swarms is ended! But at what price?”

Tahu couldn’t help wondering the same thing as he glanced at Lewa. But he shook off the nagging distrust of the Air Toa’s mind.

“Nothing has been lost,” the Fire Toa said firmly. “The protodermis has given us the power to protect our people from any danger and to heal the land. Once we were Toa – but now we are far, far more.” He raised his magma sword, reveling in the power surging through him. “Now and forevermore, we are – the Toa Nuva!”

The cheers of the other Toa Nuva rose into the air. Mata Nui had been injured – but soon it would heal. The Toa Nuva would see to that.

And they would see to it that Makuta never again troubled this beautiful island – if he even bothered to try. Was this the end of their battles against the darkness? Tahu wondered.

_Not the end, Toa._ The words hung in the air – not as if they’d been spoken, but as if they’d always existed, independent and alone. _This is only the beginning._
From the Wall of History…

After the Storm

Peace returns to Mata Nui

By Takua

As the defenders of Ga-Koro faced the Pahrak swarm, it seemed that all would be lost. The village’s great monument lay smashed, its buildings torn and tattered, and the Boxors sent to protect it had sunk to the bottom of Lake Naho.

But suddenly something amazing happened. A blinding light burst from the shrine of the Toa Gali, shining upwards like the very beacon that first summoned the Toa to the shores of Mata Nui. Five others rose to join it, and as they lit up the morning sky, the Pahrak… stopped.

All across the island, the destructive rampage of the Bohrok came to a halt. Far below, the Toa had triumphed over the Bahrag, twin rulers of the Bohrok nest, and had been transformed by the mysterious power of protodermis.

“With their link to the Bahrag gone,” Turaga Vakama explained, “the krana that the Bohrok carry no longer control them. On their own, the creatures are harmless.”

Turaga Whenua agreed. “Without the will of the queens, the Bohrok are like machines, lacking direction of their own. Set them to a task, though, and they will eagerly carry it out.”

So now the swarm aids in repairing the very damage that it caused! As the Matoran mend their villages and homes with the help of these unlikely new allies, volunteers are collecting the remaining krana, hiding them away where they can do no more harm. The Toa have returned as the Toa Nuva, their powers greater than ever before. It seems that the threat of Makuta and the Bohrok swarms is finally at an end. Peace has come at last to the island of Mata Nui.

Or so we hope…

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Deep beneath the island of Mata Nui, in a cavern so far below the surface that no ray of light had ever pierced its darkness, a pair of glowing red eyes stared out of a huge, shadowy face. Unblinking, the eyes turned upward, seeing far beyond what lay before them, through rock and earth and sand, all the way to the distant sunlit surface.

“Soooooo…” a deep, ominous voice breathed into the empty cave. “Toa. You have defeated the Bohrok swarms… as it was foreseen. And in doing so, you have called forth the instrument of your own doom.”

The red eyes blinked and narrowed.

“And though the prophecies of the Matoran may sing of the Toa’s might, we shall soon see that even the spirit of a hero can be broken.” The dark voice sounded pleased. “The time has come – time to awaken the next protectors of Mata Nui’s slumber. It is left to them to avenge the defeat of their Bohrok brothers. And to preserve things as they should be… as they must be… forever.”
“Look out below!”
Pohatu Nuva glanced up as he stepped out into the sandy main street of the desert village of Po-Koro. A hail of stone rained down from the wall that surrounded the village.
“Good job,” he called to the workers atop the wall. “At this rate, you’ll have this section of the wall repaired before sunset.”
“Thank you for the kind words, Toa!” one of the workers called back.
Pohatu glanced at Turaga Onewa, the leader of the village, who had followed him outside. “They’d better be careful about calling me ‘Toa’ like that,” he joked. “Especially when Toa Tahu is listening. It’s supposed to be ‘Toa Nuva’ now.”
Onewa chuckled. “Indeed,” he agreed. “There have been a lot of changes on Mata Nui since you and the other Toa arrived.”
“Yes.” Pohatu looked down at himself, still a little amazed at the changes in his own body. It was stronger and sleeker than ever, with gleaming silver armor highlighting his bronze-and-gold limbs and torso. His mask had changed, too — instead of its old, smooth bulletlike shape, it was ridged and spiky and provided him with even stronger powers of speed.
There was another shout from the direction of the village wall. Pohatu and Onewa watched as several large, beetlelike creatures hauled a large chunk of stone toward the broken section. A villager pointed and called out, and the creatures obediently turned slightly to the left.
“Who would have thought it?” Pohatu said. “Not long ago we were fighting the Bohrok swarms. Now they’re helping us repair the damage they caused.”
“It is amazing indeed, Toa of Stone,” Onewa agreed. “I must admit, I was not certain it was the right decision, letting the Bohrok swarms into the villages so soon after you and the other Toa defeated their queens.”
“How could it be the wrong decision?” Pohatu said. “After all, it’s one of the few things we six Toa have agreed upon since we arrived here.”
It hadn’t been long ago that he and the other Toa had first awakened on this island of Mata Nui. Even though the Toa were six heroes with one destiny, they didn’t always find it easy to work together. But they had come together when it counted, most recently to defeat the Bohrok swarms sent by Makuta. In the end, the Toa had trapped the twin queens of the swarm, Cahdok and Gahdok — first with the help of the powerful Exo-Toa armor they had discovered in the queens’ underground lair and then by releasing the mysterious substance known as protodermis. At the same time, the Toa were exposed to the protodermis themselves and emerged from it changed — into the Toa Nuva.
“Besides,” Pohatu went on as he watched the Bohrok maneuver a square chunk of rock toward the wall, “we know now that it was the krana — the mysterious beings they carried within them — that controlled them. Now that the krana have been removed, there is no reason to fear the swarms anymore.”
“Turaga! Turaga!” a shout interrupted their conversation. They turned to see a villager racing toward them.

“What is it, Huki?” Onewa asked as the Matoran skidded to a stop before them.

Huki gave a slight bow. “Forgive the interruption, Pohatu Nuva,” he said. “But something extraordinary has just happened.”

Pohatu and Onewa followed as Huki hurried back toward the center of the village. He led them to the village shrine known as the Po-Suva. A crowd of Po-Matoran had gathered there, clustered near the suva’s entrance.

“Move aside!” Huki shouted. “Let the Toa Nuva and the Turaga see.”

The villagers moved aside, murmuring with wonder. Pohatu saw a bronze-colored object hovering just above the ground.

“What is it?” he wondered aloud, taking a step forward. It was about the size of his mask, with carved lines forming an angular pattern in its smooth surface.

Turaga Onewa took in a sharp breath.

“What?” Pohatu glanced at him. “Do you know what that thing is?”

The Turaga frowned and began to tremble. “It is as it was foreseen…”

Tahu Nuva, the Toa of Fire, watched as Turaga Vakama set the strange object into a niche in the wall of the Ta-Suva, the village’s sacred shrine.

“I still don’t understand what it is,” he said. “You say it’s an icon – a symbol of my power. But what is its purpose? Where did it come from?”

“That cannot be said, Tahu Nuva,” Vakama replied, bowing before the icon. “It is a mystery shrouded in the mists of the past.”

“Yes,” Tahu murmured with a twinge of annoyance. “There seems to be a lot of those.”

Tahu stepped outside the suva, but Vakama followed. “Tahu Nuva,” he said. “Please come back inside for a moment. I have something of importance to discuss with you.”

Vakama drew the Toa back into the dark quiet of the suva. “I have been consulting with the Turaga of the other villages. We wanted to make sure you and the other Toa Nuva know that there is still work to be done – that becoming Toa Nuva does not end with your new looks and strength. There is a new set of Kanohi masks you must find to truly make use of all your new powers.”

“New masks?” Tahu grimaced slightly. Soon after the Toa’s arrival on Mata Nui, they had set out to find the sets of Kanohi masks that would give them great powers. They had been hidden all over the island, and Makuta had set his vicious minions, the Rahi, to guard them.

“It should not be such a difficult task this time,” the Turaga said. “As you know, the Rahi no longer answer to Makuta. And with the Bohrok no longer a threat…”

“…finding the masks should be as easy as a nice game of Koli,” Tahu finished. “All right. I suppose it’s better to get this out of the way. Can you manage here without me for a while?”


“Yes! What is it?” Tahu did his best to keep impatience out of his voice. “Is there something else?”

“There is.” Vakama shifted his firestaff to the opposite hand. “I – I don’t know if the time is right. I don’t know if any time would be right for this. And the wrong decision…”

“Yes, what are you saying?” Tahu demanded. It wasn’t like Vakama to sound so hesitant. The Turaga was usually much more like Tahu himself – quick-thinking and decisive. “What’s the big secret?”

Taking a deep breath, Vakama reached into an opening in the wall and pulled something out. Tahu stared at the item curiously. “What is that?” he asked, reaching toward it. “It looks sort of like a mask – but not any mask I’ve ever seen.”

Vakama held up the object. Its surface gleamed a deep flame orange.

“It is a mask,” Vakama said, his voice low and reverent. “The Kanohi Vahi – the Great Mask of Time. It is the most powerful mask of them all.”

“Really?” Tahu reached out eagerly.
But Vakama pulled it out of reach. “Wait,” he said, his voice so serious and commanding that Tahu lowered his hand in surprise. “You must understand what this power means.”

Tahu frowned, irritated. “I am a Toa Nuva,” he reminded Vakama haughtily. “I know all about the use of power.”

Still, Vakama held the Vahi mask away. He shook his head. “This is not the kind of power you have known,” he said. “Your other powers are great indeed. But the power of the Vahi exists on a higher level. Do you understand what it would mean to control time itself?”

Tahu paused, turning over the question in his head. “I – I suppose it would be useful in battle,” he said. “I could slow down time for my opponent, giving me the chance to defeat him before he could even complete a strike. Or I could use it instead of the mask of speed, quickening time to get me somewhere faster. Or…”

“No!” Vakama sighed. “This is what I feared. You must think of the greater reality, Toa Tahu. For he who controls time controls reality – controls everything. Do you see?”

“I see that time connects all other powers,” Tahu said slowly. “Nothing else can exist without it.”

“Yes!” Vakama sounded pleased and relieved, though his voice still held an undercurrent of worry. “Now you begin to understand. It’s one thing to control time and with it all of reality – and another to lose control of it all. The Kanohi Vahi can only be used in the direst emergency – when there is nothing to lose.”

Tahu paused. “But, I might never reach such a state of desperation at all,” he said. “I might never find a chance to call upon the Vahi.”

“That is my hope,” Vakama said. “In fact, I think it would be better if the other Toa never know you hold it unless you need to use it. Can you accept that, Tahu Nuva?”

Tahu thought for a moment, struggling with the idea. To have the most powerful mask of all and never to use it… never to let on that it existed… Could he really maintain such a secret?

“Why me?” he blurted. “Why should I be the one to be given this responsibility?”

“Why does anything on Mata Nui happen as it does?” Vakama responded. “We cannot know. We can only accept our destiny.”

Tahu sighed. Unity, duty, destiny – such were the ideas the Matoran lived by. He glanced at Vakama, who was watching him carefully. How much did Vakama and the other Turaga really know about the Toa’s destiny? He wondered. Did they see more of the future and the past than they told?

“All right,” he said at last. “I will do my best to protect this mask – and its secrets.”

He reached again for the Kanohi Vahi. And this time Vakama allowed him to take it.
“Don’t be late, don’t be late,” Lewa Nuva, Toa of Air, sang to himself as he launched himself off of a cliff near the edge of Le-Wahi.

Don’t be late. It was the last thing Toa Onua had said to him when the six Toa Nuva had parted ways.

The other five Toa Nuva were waiting when Lewa finally reached the meeting spot. Gali smiled at him, and Pohatu gave a friendly wave.

“Greetings, brothers,” Lewa called. “And sister,” he added with a wink at Gali, the Toa of Water. “Did I late miss anything important?”

Onua, the Toa of Earth, greeted him with a nod. “We have just recently arrived ourselves. But how are things in Le-Koro, brother?” he asked in his deep, rumbling voice. “We have all wondered.”

Lewa’s smile faded as he thought of the rubble that was all that had remained of his treebright village after the Bohrok got through with it. If only he had fought harder to resist the power of that krana… He shuddered as he remembered the horrible feeling that had come over him when one of the krana had taken over his mind.

He shook his head, refusing to dwell any longer on such things. The past was past, and even a Toa could not change time.

“We are hardworking,” he said. “There is much to do, but we are making progress.”

“That is good to hear, Lewa,” Gali said. “Let us know if you are in need of our help.”

Lewa shrugged. “Many thanks, Gali,” he replied. “But with my new powers, I truly doubt I will need much help with anything.”

“Indeed.” It was always a surprise when Kopaka Nuva, the Toa of Ice, had anything to say. But now his cool voice cut into the conversation. “I fail to see why any of us need to bother with these meetings any longer. Not until we discover how to awaken Mata Nui.” It was the Toa’s ultimate goal to reawaken the Great Spirit for whom the island had been named.

“Let’s not be hasty, brother Kopaka,” Gali said. “Even our new power doesn’t mean we can go it alone from here on in.”

“Oh, really? Watch this.” Lewa flung his katana blade upward, calling upon the power of the wind. It swept down with a roar, lifting the other Toa Nuva off their feet.

“Take care where you point that power of yours, brother Lewa,” Tahu Nuva growled as he leaped to his feet. “You might just find yourself in hot water…” He sent a blast of flame out of his magma sword. Lewa somersaulted out of the way just in time. “Is that the best you can do, Tahu Nuva?”

Before long all of the Toa Nuva had joined in, each trying to overwhelm the others with a show of his or her new powers.
DIVIDED WE FALL

PREPARE YOURSELVES! THE ULTIMATE CHALLENGE IS ABOUT TO BEGIN!
HA! AFTER OUR STRUGGLES WITH THE BOHRK...

DEFEATING THESE THREE WILL BE NO PROBLEM AT ALL!

THINK WHAT YOU LIKE, GALI...

...BUT YOU'LL HAVE TO BE FASTER THAN THAT TO STOP ME!

HOW ABOUT THIS?

LET'S SEE YOU GLIDE OUT OF A TORNADO...

ON THOSE AIR KATANA "WINGS," LEWA!

DID YOU SAY FASTER?!
NOW, Pohatu. My brother... didn't Turaga Onewa ever tell you?

---

...you always have to watch where you're running—especially when Onua Nuva is near!

UH-oh.

WHOA! WHOA! WHOA!
KRRAASHH!

That leaves you and I, Tahu Nuva.

No. That only leaves me.

A fire caged. How amusing.

That's enough to imprison a mindless Rahi. Perhaps...
...but not Kopaka Nuva!

You always were a little too confident, Tahu.

Beware, brother... when I turn up the heat, even the Toa of Ice will melt!

Enough! We've learned what we set out to learn.

As Toa Nuva, we have greater power and greater control over that power—than ever before!

It is a shame we cannot control our tempers as well.
We are all on edge, Gali," Pohatu said soothingly. "The struggle with Cahnok and Gahnok – our transformation into the Toa Nuva…"

"Not to mention rebuilding our villages," Lewa added, his mind wandering back to Le-Koro. His hands quivered slightly, impatient to get back to work helping with the repairs.

"Maybe it would be best for us to go our separate ways for now," Tahu put in. "Our villages need us more than we need one another."

"I agree," Kopaka said. "This alliance is no longer necessary."

Lewa shrugged. He liked Gali, but in his opinion she had always put a little too much emphasis on the unity part of the Matoran’s favorite saying, even when it didn’t seem necessary.

"This is a mistake," Gali pleaded. "I can feel it. Please – what if we are needed once more? What if some new danger threatens Mata Nui?"

"We will tug that vine when we come to it, watersister," Lewa called over his shoulder. "Quickspeed to you – I am out of here."

Soon Lewa was sailing in for a landing on the outskirts of the village. He could see that the Matoran had made progress even in the short time he’d been away.

There was a crashing sound in the brush nearby. Lewa glanced toward it expecting to see an animal. Instead, a Tahnok Va – a scout of the fiery Tahnok breed of Bohrok – emerged.

"News… news ahead."

The thought slipped easily into Lewa’s mind. He shuddered slightly. Because of his experience with the krana, Lewa was the only Toa who could hear and understand the Bohrok’s communication. He still couldn’t quite get used to the fact that the swarms still had access to his mind, though it had certainly come in handy.

"What news?" he asked the Tahnok Va, ignoring his own uneasy feelings. "What’s happening? Is something bad wrong at the village?"

"No… no… nothing wrong…"

With that, the Tahnok Va turned and scurried away into the jungle. Lewa frowned after it for a moment. Nothing wrong – he hoped that was true. It was still hard to trust the Bohrok sometimes after all that had happened.

Whatever the news, Lewa figured he would know soon enough. He grabbed the closest vine and swung upward. "I’m back, little ones," he called as he landed.

He need not have bothered. The entire population of the village was already gathered nearby. The Le-Matoran let out a cheer.

"Welcome back, Toa," Turaga Matau called. "We’ve been waiting for you. We just finished repairing your suva and we can finally put your power icon in its proper place in the heart of the village."

Lewa nodded. He had nearly forgotten about the strange floating symbol that had appeared out of nowhere earlier that day.

"And don’t forget the celebration!" a voice shouted from the crowd.

"A celebration?" Lewa said. "What are we waiting for? Let’s get started!"

A cheer rang out from the gathered villagers. Soon someone was playing a lively tune on a Madu-shell xylophone, and Matoran were dancing, leaping, and swinging playfully on nearby vines.

Turaga Matau put a hand on Lewa’s arm. "Before you join the party, would you like to see the suva?"

"Sure," Lewa replied. He followed the Turaga toward a mound-shaped structure at the center of the village.

Inside, the woven walls allowed only a dim glow of soothing green light to seep in from outside. At the center of the small, round room was a solid stone shelf.

A niche had been cut into the stone. Resting in it was the symbol.

Lewa gazed at it curiously. It was square and intricately carved out of a greenish stonelike substance. Where had it come from? What did it mean?
He didn’t wonder about it for long. “Very nice,” he told the Turaga. “But enough symbolgazing. Let’s get out there and have some partyfun!”

Soon he and Matau had rejoined the gleeful crowd on the platform. As he danced and laughed along with his villagers, Lewa could feel some of the tension of the recent battles draining away.

_If only stuffy old Kopaka could see us now!_ Lewa thought with a grin. _Or any of the others, for that factmatter. Nobody knows how to have restfun like a Le-Matoran!_

Overwhelmed by joy, Lewa shouted for attention. “Watch this, leafbrothers,” he cried, balancing on the edge of the platform. “I’ll show you the kind of sunsoaring I can do with my new powers!”

He crouched briefly, then sprang up, putting all of his energy into the leap. Up, up, up… he soared straight into the sky above the treetops, higher and higher until he was almost blinded by the bright light of the sun.

“Yeee-haaa!” he cried as he reached the top of the arc.

He waved his hand, calling upon the air currents to carry him down. As he did, he glanced down. He was a bit startled by how high he was.

“Good thing my friend the wind is always ready to do my bidding,” Lewa murmured. Realizing the breeze he’d summoned hadn’t yet materialized, he swirled his hand in the air again.

Still the wind didn’t respond.

“What?” Lewa cried, his heart clenching with fear as he tried again – and again. He felt himself plummeting downward as he realized the truth – his elemental powers had deserted him.

He tumbled helplessly down toward the village far – too far – below.
Vakama, why are the guards protecting the village from me? I am the Toa Nuva of Ta-Koro!

Gali is wrong. A Toa Nuva can meet any challenge alone and unaided.

Forgive them, Tahu.

They are not yet used to your new appearance...

...or your new power.

We have our Kanohi and our elemental powers. They are our strength.

Only the enemies of Mata Nuva have anything to fear from me.

I may have changed, but my love for my people has not.

In their hearts, all Matoran know this.

Even now, in every village, they gather to celebrate the symbols of the Toa Nuva’s might.

Each village will honor and protect the symbol of its Toa Nuva for all time.
The icy village of Ko-Koro:

Turaga Nuju asks if you are pleased with this tribute to your might.

I am pleased that my people are safe.

As for this...it is only a symbol. It has no power. Matoro.

I will guard it just the same. And it will be here when you return.

Later, on the slopes of Mount Ihu...

I am troubled.

Is Mata Nui in peril once more?

Our new powers are great, but they have driven the Toa Nuva apart. Perhaps that is best. But...

Did someone, or something, know this would happen? Plan for us to split apart?
BACK IN KO-KORO:

"ONLY A SYMBOL," HE SAYS, BUT TO WE MATORAN, IT IS MUCH MORE.

IT IS A REMINDER THAT THE TOA NUVA WILL ALWAYS BE THERE TO PROTECT US.

NO, THEY WILL NOT.

WHO-- OH NO! NO!

I WILL STOP YOU! ILL...

CAN'T STAND...

I-- I'M SO HEAVY... CAN'T STAND...

CAN'T GET UP... TOO HEAVY...

BUT YOU CAN'T--

I CAN. MY BROTHERS AND I WILL FIND THE PRIZE WE SEEK...

...AND NEITHER KOPAKA NUVA NOR ANY OTHER WILL STOP US!
All seems peaceful... but is it the peace that comes before the avalanche?

The bridge!

An ice slide will get me safely to the ground, and then--

?! What's this? My ice powers--

KRRAAKKKK

They're gone!
AND WITHOUT THEM--THERE IS NO ESCAPE!
Gali Nuva stood on a rock, looking out over Lake Naho. Her mind was troubled. It had been only a few days since the other Toa Nuva had decided to break up the team. She had pleaded with them to change their minds, reminding them that their destiny was to fight side by side. What would happen to Mata Nui if some new danger arose, and the Toa Nuva were not united against it?

No one had listened. Tahu Nuva and Kopaka Nuva were both proud and stubborn and the tension between them had reached a breaking point. As for the others… with the Bohrok defeated, and Makuta seemingly gone for good, they saw no reason to suffer each others’ company any longer.

The sound of waves crashing against the coastline pulled her abruptly from her reverie. The waters of the lake had grown angry, more so than she had ever seen before. Each successive wave was higher and more powerful than the last. The Toa of water knew that at this rate the tide would soon threaten Ga-Koro itself.

She mustered her concentration and reached out with her mind to calm the waves. She had done this dozens of times before. It required a relatively small fraction of her power, but perfect calm on her part – so closely was she tied to the waters of Mata Nui that her anger or grief could affect them without her even being aware.

Her mind touched the waters – and nothing happened. It was not that the waves resisted her, as they had when Makuta was asserting his dominance over nature. It seemed as if they simply did not hear her call.

With a knot of fear growing in her breast, she reached out to the ponds and streams of the island, even to the moisture in the air. There was no response. The waters had grown deaf...

“KRAAA!”

Lewa’s eyes flew open. He realized he had closed them to shut out the view of the hard ground rushing toward him. “Oof!” he cried as his descent was suddenly stopped just above the ground. For a second all he could see was a feathery neck. He clung to it, realizing he was still moving downward – but at a much safer speed.

“Are you okay, Toa?” a breathless voice asked.

“Kongu?” Lewa said. “Is that you?”

“It’s me and Ka,” the Matoran responded. “It looked like you were in troublebad, so we upflew to check.”

“Thank you, bravebrother,” Lewa said as he finally realized it was the beating wings and strong body of Ka the Gukko that had stopped his free fall. He glanced at Kongu, who was perched on the large bird’s back. “I – I know not what wronghappened, but the wind didn’t answer my hererecall.”

With a squawk, Ka glided in for a landing, depositing Lewa on the swampy ground.

“What do you mean, Toa?” Kongu asked. “How could the airwind not respond to you?”
Lewa shook his head. “I don’t know, little brother,” he said. “It has not happened before.”
Not wanting to think about it anymore just then, he grabbed a vine and swung up into the village. Kongu followed aboard Ka.
As he landed on the main platform, Lewa saw that the villagers were clustered together, their eyes and voices full of fear.
“Don’t worry fret, little ones,” he called, assuming that they were concerned for his safety. “I’m all right.”
Matau rushed up to him, his eyes wild and frightened. “I’m gladhearted to hear that, Toa,” he said. “But I’m afraid there is other wrongnews. Your power icon has been stolen!”

“This creature,” Onua Nuva said patiently, “what did it look like?”
The Onu-Matoran standing before him, a sturdy villager named Onepu, bowed his head. “It was large,” he reported. “But I prepared to fight it.”
Onua nodded. “Go on.”
“I – I know not how else to describe it,” Onepu said, his voice shaking slightly. “It was hideous – terrifying. Its body had a metallic sheen, and its claws were huge. I shouted for help, knowing I could not hold it off for long on my own. Then it – it spoke to me.”
He was silent for a long moment. Onua waited, gathering his patience.
Finally Onepu continued. “Its words were as metallic and cold as its body,” he said, his voice twisted with horror. “It told me to step aside so that it might claim its prize. When I would not, it – it began to breathe in. Within seconds, it had sucked away all of the air within the suva. I tried to hold my post, but with no air I found myself helpless. It pushed past me and grabbed the icon – and then it was gone.”

Onua turned the story over and over in his mind. Who was this new, mysterious enemy with such strange and disturbing powers? What did it want with Onua’s power symbol?
“What does it mean, Toa?” Onepu asked meekly. “Why did it happen?”
“I thought these icons were merely that – symbols of we Toa’s elemental powers, artistic tributes to our destiny,” Onua said slowly, allowing the careful logic of his thoughts to unfold aloud. “But now I see that the icons actually held these powers within them. As long as my icon remained in the village, my power remained strong. Now that the symbol is gone, so are my powers.”
It was an uncomfortable feeling. Onua was accustomed to being the strongest of the strong. Now he was left helpless – and it seemed that a powerful new enemy had appeared on Mata Nui.
Just when we thought Makuta’s forces were stamped out for good… Onua thought. He recalled Gali’s words earlier that day. As usual, she had been right – she had been the only one with the wisdom to realize that Makuta would not be finished with them yet.
“What should we do now?” Onepu asked. “Should I call out the Ussal forces and go after the thief?”
“Not just yet,” Onua said. “Go tell the Turaga what has happened. I’d better check in with the other Toa Nuva. Together we will decide what to do.”
He is Kopaka Nuva, Toa of Ice—bringer of winter, and a hero of Mata Nui...

His elemental energies and Kanohi Nuva mask give him great powers.

Unfortunately, flying is not one of them.

Chapter 22

Powerless!
NOT CERTAIN WHY MY ICE POWERS HAVE DESERTED ME, BUT IF THIS DOES NOT WORK...

I WILL NOT HAVE TIME TO WORRY ABOUT IT.

COME ON! COME ON!

TOO CLOSE... MUCH TOO CLOSE...
HOW DID KOPAKA NUA LOSE HIS ICE POWERS?

IT ALL BEGAN WHEN STRANGE BEINGS STOLE THE SYMBOLS OF THE TOA NUA FROM THE SIX MATORAN VILLAGES...

THE EFFECTS WERE FELT RIGHT AWAY, ALL OVER THE ISLAND...

...AS THE TOA NUA LOST THEIR ELEMENTAL POWERS, AND NOTHING COULD BRING THEM BACK.

SUDDENLY PROBLEMS THEY COULD HAVE SOLVED EASILY THE DAY BEFORE THREATENED TO BECOME DISASTERS!
From the Wall of History…

**Theft of Fire**

Toa Nuva’s symbol stolen!

*By Takua*

Just as we thought the threat of the swarms was finally over, a new danger has emerged from the darkness. In a daring raid on Ta-Koro, Tahu Nuva’s symbol of power has been stolen, and with it the Toa’s control over the element of fire.

The thief approached the Ta-Suva by stealth, incapacitating the Matoran on watch with some sort of sonic field. As the Ta-Koro Guard looked on helplessly, the creature – like a Bohrok in appearance, but far more powerful than any that we have encountered before – took Tahu’s symbol from the shrine and leapt away.

“I have rarely felt so powerless,” said Guard Captain Jala, “as when that…thing stood gloating before me with Tahu’s symbol in its grasp, and I could do nothing to stop it.”

Tahu Nuva appeared to block the beast’s path, but it brought down a shower of stones upon him. The onlookers’ relief at the Toa’s arrival turned to dismay as mighty Tahu summoned his blazing elemental energies – and was buried beneath the rubble as his flame failed to appear.

What does the appearance of this terrible new creature bode for Mata Nui, and what has become of the Toa Nuva of Fire?
Kopaka Nuva glided slowly down the snowy slope, reminding himself to be careful. While he could still ski, he no longer had the ability to control the ice beneath his feet. That skill had deserted him along with all the rest of them.

It's beginning to seem that Gali's earlier worries were well-founded, he thought bleakly. Our split seemed almost too easy this time. As if it were destined to happen – or as if someone or something wanted it to happen.

He still couldn’t believe that his elemental powers had suddenly deserted him. It was only thanks to his determination – and the help of Turaga Nuju – that he had survived his sudden tumble off of a crumbling ice bridge.

As soon as he heard that the Ice Toa’s powers were gone, the Turaga had suggested that Kopaka seek out the others. If it had happened to all of them… Well, there was no telling what might become of Mata Nui in that case.

Before long Kopaka left the snow behind and climbed down to the Toa’s usual meeting place. To his relief, both Pohatu Nuva and Tahu Nuva were waiting for him in the clearing.

“I guess this means the icon thief has struck in Ko-Koro, too, ice brother,” Pohatu said by way of greeting.

Kopaka nodded.

“Whoever or whatever this foe may be, it will regret stealing our powers!” Tahu raged. “I will make sure of that!” He raised his magma sword for emphasis. Instead of its usual flickering flame, the sword merely smoked weakly.

“Anger will not help us,” Kopaka pointed out. “We need to unite, to form a plan.”

Tahu let out a short, disbelieving laugh. “Has the thief stolen my hearing as well?” he exclaimed. “I would swear I just heard Kopaka, the Toa of Doing His Own Thing, suggest that we unite!”

“Brothers, brothers,” Pohatu pleaded. “Enough with the petty disagreements. We have enough problems without that. Let’s try to work together here, okay?”

“Good advice at any time.” Onua Nuva’s voice interrupted the tense moment. He strode into the clearing and glanced around. “But especially important now, I think. All of you – you’ve lost your elemental powers, too?”

Each Toa nodded. “I think it’s safe to assume that Gali and Lewa will have been struck as well,” Pohatu added.

“You’re right about that,” Lewa said, hurrying into the clearing just in time to respond. “Found that out in a wrongmoment back in Le-Koro.”

Onua nodded. “Then we need to decide what to do.”

“I know what to do,” Tahu spoke up at once. “Find the thief and take the symbols back. End of plan.”

Kopaka sighed. Typical Tahu – all bluster with no thought. “That’s no plan,” he said icily. “That’s suicide.”
“Kopaka is right,” Pohatu agreed. “Without our powers, and knowing not what we might be facing, it would be foolish to rush into action.”

“Who are you calling foolish?” Tahu snapped, glaring from Pohatu to Kopaka and back again. Onua raised his hand. “Easy, brother Tahu,” he said. “Let’s just think on this for a moment.”

Lewa rolled his eyes behind his mask. “Yes, a moment,” he quipped. “Or a day, or a month. With all due respect, brother Onua, if we spent as much time wait-thinking as you would like, we’d never get anything done at all.”

Kopaka winced as Onua frowned. Lewa often spoke without thinking, but rarely did he purposely insult anyone. It was clear that the loss of powers was setting all of them on edge. Where is sister Gali? he wondered. She’s usually the only one who can make peace at such a moment.

As if responding to his thought, Gali raced into the clearing at that very moment. “Brothers!” she cried breathlessly. “Good, you’re all here. I have news!”

“We know,” Pohatu said. “Symbol stolen, powers gone, blah blah blah. Old news.”

Gali shook her head. “Not that,” she said. “I already heard from a messenger that the thief struck all of us. Or, rather, the thieves.”

“There is more than one creature stealing our powers?” Onua asked.

“Yes,” Gali replied, leaning on her aqua ax for support as she caught her breath. “My village guards were as helpless as yours before the intruder – it disabled them by filling the suva with electricity that pinned them to the walls. But others saw what happened and followed – and tracked it to the edge of Po-Wahi, where they saw it join with two others like it.”

“What are we waiting for?” Tahu hoisted his sword. “Let’s get to Po-Wahi!”

“Wait!” Onua cried. But Tahu had already charged off, with Lewa right behind him. Even Pohatu trotted after them eagerly.

“Reckless fools,” Kopaka muttered.

Gali glanced at him. “I agree, some of our brothers could stand to do a little more thinking before they act,” she said. “But this time, their course might be the best one. The longer we are without our powers, the greater the danger to Mata Nui. We have to confront these creatures and take back our icons.”

“I suppose you are right, sister,” Onua said, his voice deep with worry. “But how easy will it be to do so without our powers?”

Kopaka was wondering the same thing. But he followed without another word as Gali and Onua hurried after the others.

Soon the six Toa Nuva were moving as a group through the open, rocky pass between the northern section of Le-Wahi and the eastern slopes of Mount Ihu.

“We should at least try to be prepared for what we will face when we find the thieves,” Onua pointed out as he hurried along near the back of the group. “The least we can do is share what information we have. What did your Matoran see? What tools did the creatures use against them?”

Each Toa Nuva described everything he or she knew in turn. Tahu reported that the creature in his village had disabled the guards with a wall of intense sound so loud that it had cracked the walls of the suva. The creature that had stolen Lewa’s icon had used a strong magnetic force to push away the Le-Matoran. In Onua’s village, the weapon of choice had been a vacuum power that had sucked all of the air out of the suva. Pohatu had lost his symbol to a creature that had thrown off such intense heat that everything around it turned instantly to plasma. And Gali had already mentioned the electricity used against her villagers.

When his turn came, Kopaka briefly described the way one of the creatures had affected gravity, making the Ko-Matoran guard’s limbs and body too heavy to move. “It sounds like there may be six separate attackers, not three,” he finished. “Six enemies, and six of us.”

“Three or six, three dozen or six hundred, it matters not,” Tahu said with a shrug. “We must face them down no matter what.”
With that, he hurried forward to the end of the pass. Beyond lay the open, sweeping vista of the great northern desert.

"Now which waypath do we take?" Lewa wondered.

Onua pointed. "I would say we go that way."

Kopaka followed the Earth Toa's glance and saw broad prints leading northward in the bare soil. The marks were large and deep.

"Come on!" Tahu said. "Are we going to stand around looking at these tracks, or are we going to follow them and take back what is ours?"

Without waiting for an answer, he strode off in the direction the tracks led.

"Our enemies seem to be making no attempt to remain stealthy," Pohatu commented. "I wonder if we should be worried by that."

"They should be worried about us!" Tahu said boldly. He led the way over a rise. Beyond lay a large, rocky plain scattered with stones of all shapes and sizes.

"Does anyone see prints?" Gali asked.

Pohatu shook his head. "It will be pointless trying to find them here," he said. "This sort of ground is not friendly to ordinary tracking."

"Maybe we should go back," Onua said. "We could seek out the rest of the Kanohi Nuva – with those additional powers, it may be easier to find the thieves."

"We've got to continue on," Tahu seemed unwilling to accept reality. "If we search Po-Wahi, we have to catch up to them."

"Or maybe not, if they've pathchanged to the tunnels of Onu-Wahi or anywhere else." Lewa shrugged. "Besides, what do we do if we find them?"

Kopaka grimaced. Where had that question been when they were all back at the meeting place? "It's not 'if'," Tahu said, breaking into Kopaka's thoughts. "We will find them, and we will get our powers back."

Pohatu was still staring across the rocky plain. Now he raised his hand and pointed. "Uh, Tahu?" he said. "I think those things up ahead might have something to say about it."
From the Wall of History…

**Out of Their Elements**

Toa Nuva search for symbol thieves

*By Takua*

The theft of Tahu Nuva’s symbol was just the start. Each village of Mata Nui has been the victim of a similar raid, with each Toa left diminished in its wake. Kopaka Nuva was nearly lost down a chasm, Tahu Nuva found himself buried beneath a hail of stones, and Gali Nuva was swept away by a giant wave that she could have stopped only a moment before. Lewa, Onua and Pohatu too have suffered indignities thanks to the work of the mysterious thieves.

“I fell out of a tree!” said an embittered Lewa Nuva. “Me, of all beings! I nearly ended up neck-deep in that reeking swamp on the ground below. Stupid bugs.”

“It wasn’t fun,” was Pohatu Nuva’s only comment. “Frankly, I’d rather not talk about it any more.”

As they set out in pursuit of the thieves, some of the Toa were more introspective. “Our powers were increased greatly in the nest of the Bahrag,” Onua Nuva mused, “but they were also shackled to these symbols by some means. Now with the theft of the one, we have lost the other. It is a discomforting thing to ponder.”

“Thankfully, although they have lost some of their vibrancy, our masks still serve us,” Gali Nuva reported. “The Turaga believe that the event that transformed us and created our symbols may also have brought forth new Kanohi from Mata Nui. As we follow the creatures that have stolen our powers, we will seek these Kanohi Nuva and hope that they grant us the strength to protect our villages once more.”
Pohatu stared as the six creatures he had spotted came closer. Their bodies were sinewy and powerful-looking, covered in gleaming metallic armor of various shades – red, blue, silver, bronze, green, and black.

“What are those things?” Onua murmured.


Gali grimaced. “Let’s just hope there aren’t swarms of them somewhere,” she commented. “These six look to be enough to deal with.”

“And deal with them we will,” Tahu said grimly, tightening his grip on his magma sword.

By then the creatures had nearly reached the Toa Nuva. One of them, the one with the reddish-colored armor, stepped forward.

“We are the Bohrok-Kal,” it announced in a hard, smooth voice. “We search for Cahdok and Gahdok, queens of the swarms.”

Pohatu’s eyes widened in surprise. The queens? So he had been right – these must be a strange sort of Bohrok. The original swarms had been controlled by the queens. But these creatures seemed to function all on their own.

“Tell us where you have hidden the Bahrag, and then stand aside. We have no wish to harm helpless foes.”

“Helpless?” Lewa exclaimed, charging forward. “Toa Nuva are never helpless!”

The Bohrok-Kal raised its bluish metal shield. “No amount of speed can save you from my magnetic force,” it said coldly as a wave of power rippled out from the shield’s surface.

Lewa was stopped in place so quickly that he nearly toppled over. “My feet!” Lewa cried. “Magnetized to the ground! I can’t move!”

Onua grabbed an enormous boulder and lifted it above his head. Even without his elemental powers, his strength remained awesome.

Before he could throw the boulder, another Bohrok-Kal lifted its shield and sent a wave of concentrated power toward it. “Your rock is no threat, Toa Nuva,” the creature said as the boulder dissolved into magma. “And neither are you. Give us Cahdok and Gahdok – now!”

Tahu leaped toward Gali, Pohatu, and Kopaka. His mask was glowing brightly.

“The Mask of Shielding will protect us for now,” Tahu said as his mask’s force field surrounded himself and the other three Toa. “Bohrok-Kal, your quest must fail – the creatures you seek have vanished from Mata Nui.”

“You lie!” the black Bohrok-Kal hissed. “They are here and we will find them. Your shield cannot stand before the crushing power of gravity, Tahu Nuva.”

A second later Tahu hit the ground hard. Gali gasped as she saw him struggling to lift his sword. His weight, multiplied a hundredfold by the Bohrok-Kal’s gravity power, crushed the stones beneath it as he sank into the ground.
“Tahu!” Gali cried, horrified to see the bold and powerful Fire Toa made so helpless.
“The shield is down,” Kopaka said grimly. “Defend yourselves, Toa Nuva!”
“There can be no defense against Tahnok-Kal’s electricity,” the reddish Bohrok-Kal said.
“Or Kohrak-Kal’s sonic power,” the silvery one hissed.
“And Lehvak-Kal’s vacuum blast,” the greenish creature added.
Gali gulped. A second later, she felt herself flung backward by a blast of combined energy so strong that she could hardly tell where one force ended and the next began. Air, electricity, sound – all surrounded and overwhelmed her, filling her mind and body so that, for a long moment, they seemed to cease to exist.
Tahu opened his eyes and sat up, unsure how much time had passed. There was no sign of the Bohrok-Kal anywhere.


“I believe we have just been given a warning by the Bohrok-Kal,” Onua said heavily, pushing himself upright. “They obviously do not want us interfering with their search.”

Tahu scowled. “No?” he cried, jumping to his feet. “Well, the Bohrok-Kal will pay for daring to challenge the Toa Nuva. We shall –”

“Tahu!” Gali cut him off. By this time all six Toa were awake, sitting up and testing their limbs for injury. “This is no time to worry about our pride. If they find Cahdok and Gahdok and free them, the Bohrok swarms will strike again!”

“But how do we stop them?” Pohatu sounded worried. “Our powers are gone.”

Tahu noticed that Lewa’s eyes were clouded and his expression slightly pained. “What is it, brother?” he asked with concern. “Are you hurt?”

Lewa shook his head. “No, it’s not that,” he said. “It’s just…” His voice trailed off hesitantly.

“What?” Tahu asked sharply, not liking the look in Lewa’s eyes. It reminded him of the way the Air Toa had looked after being taken over by the Bohrok swarms. “Tell us what’s wrong.” It was an order, not a suggestion.


“ Heard something?” Gali repeated with interest. “What do you mean?”

Lewa shrugged. “Communication. Thought-talk,” he said. “Like that of the krana.”

Pohatu blinked in surprise. “Are you saying there are krana inside these Bohrok-Kal, controlling them, just as there were in the Bohrok?”

“That would make sense,” Kopaka pointed out. “These Bohrok-Kal seem to be related to the Bohrok somehow. They share the same goal.”

“No exactly,” Gali said. “After all, Bohrok-Kal don’t seem interested in damaging anything. They left the villages untouched.”

“They’re trying to frighten us,” Lewa said. “To make us run so we won’t try to stop them.”

Kopaka scowled. “No one makes me run,” he said coldly. “No one.”

For once, Tahu agreed with the Ice Toa. “Enough talk,” he said. “Gali, you, Pohatu, and Onua go back to the Bohrok nest – see if you can discover what happened to Cahdok and Gahdok. Kopaka, Lewa, and I will keep after the Bohrok-Kal – see if we can slow them down.”

“I suggest we all keep our eyes out for Kanohi Nuva masks,” Onua said as he joined Gali and Pohatu. “With our elemental energies gone, we need all the help we can get.”
Onua was troubled as he followed Gali and Pohatu, heading for the entrance to the Bahrag’s nest. How are we supposed to do it? he thought uneasily. How are we supposed to fulfill our destiny to protect Mata Nui when our greatest powers have been taken from us?

Gali glanced over her shoulder at him. “This is a momentous challenge that we face, brother,” she commented. “Perhaps the greatest test yet of our resolve.”

Shading his eyes against the glare of the sun, Onua smiled at her. He had often noticed that the Toa of Water could all but read others’ thoughts at times.

“Yes,” he agreed. “It will not be easy. But we cannot falter. All of Mata Nui depends on us.”

“The weakness this time may lie in the krana-kal,” Gali pointed out. “They could be controlling the Bohrok-Kal just as the krana controlled the regular swarms.”

Onua nodded. “I was thinking about that, too,” he said. “I hope brother Lewa is right about hearing krana voices. It could be our only hope.”

“I suppose so,” Pohatu said. “If we can figure out a way to separate the krana-kal from the Bohrok-Kal, we just might—”

“Hush,” Onua broke in, picking up a sound from somewhere up ahead.

A second later, something large and fast-moving crashed into sight from around a bend in the riverbed. It was the reddish-colored Bohrok-Kal, the one known as the Tahnok-Kal.

“Stand aside, Toa Nuva,” it hissed loudly as it came. “You are in my way.”

“We will not,” Pohatu said boldly. “If you want to go this way, you’ll have to go through us.”

Onua stepped up beside him, as did Gali. The Tahnok-Kal didn’t slow its pace. It merely raised its shield, sending several lightning bolts shooting out of it.

“Look out!” Gali shouted, but it was too late. The bolts hit the ground beneath Onua, flinging him into the air, where he tumbled over and over before landing with a heavy thud on the bank of the dry river.

“Oof!” Pohatu grunted as he landed beside him a second later. Nearby, Gali dropped heavily onto the hard-packed ground as well.

Onua blinked, trying to clear his mind. Pushing himself upright, he looked down into the riverbed just in time to see the Tahnok-Kal hurrying on without a backward glance.

The Toa of Earth squinted, willing his sun-weakened eyes to focus. “Look,” he croaked, pointing. “Is that…?”

The other two followed his gaze. Gali gasped. “A krana-kal!” she said. “The creature carries it beneath its face shield. So Lewa was right!”

Pohatu stared after the Tahnok-Kal as it disappeared around a bend. “That thing,” he said, sounding shaken. “It didn’t even slow down! It just knocked us aside and kept going.”

Gali climbed to her feet. “Come on, brothers,” she said wearily. “The only good news is that the Tahnok-Kal was heading away from the tunnel entrance. We’d better take advantage and get there before it does.”

Soon the three of them were hurrying up a rocky slope. At the top, Onua knew they would find the entrance, buried under a giant pile of rocks. After their battle with the Bohrok queens, an avalanche had completely covered the opening.

Pohatu was already moving forward toward the pile of rocks. He drew back one foot and kicked at a large boulder.

“Ow!” he shouted as his foot connected with the solid stone. The boulder didn’t budge.

“Pohatu, don’t,” Gali said gently. “Without your powers, you’ll only wear yourself out.”

Onua sighed. “We’re going to have to find a different way,” he said.

Gali stared at the covered cave entrance. “I’m starting to think that seeking out the Bahrag ourselves is a waste of time,” she said. “It’s unlikely we would be able to stop the Bohrok-Kal from getting to them anyway. I think we should focus instead on finding a way to get those krana-kal. Without them, the Bohrok-Kal will most likely be left directionless—and harmless.”

“I agree,” Onua said. “We need to get those krana-kal—any way we can.”
From the Wall of History…

**Desert Showdown**
Disaster in the sands for the Toa Nuva
By Takua

The Toa had tracked the thieves of their symbols all across Mata Nui, returning at last to the sandy expanse of Po-Wahi. Deep in the desert, they finally caught up with the mysterious Bohrok-Kal.

The creatures’ eyes glowed with a cunning intelligence. Their gleaming shells bore reptilian patterns surrounding strange symbols. They raised their shields and, incredibly, they spoke!

“We are the Bohrok-Kal,” said one in a voice like metal scraping stone. “We search for Cahdok and Gahdok, queens of the swarms.”

“Tell us where you have hidden the Bahrag and then stand aside,” said another, “We have no wish to harm helpless foes.”

Angered by their tone, Lewa Nuva leaped into action, but the impulsive Toa of Air found himself pinned in place by the magnetic force of Gahlok-Kal. Onua Nuva tried to end the battle with a single blow, but Pahrak-Kal’s plasma held him at bay. As Tahu Nuva attempted to protect his fellow Toa with the Mask of Shielding, Nuhvok-Kal’s mastery of gravity sent him crashing to the ground. Then the Bohrok-Kal turned the full force of their powers on the heroes of Mata Nui.

When the Toa Nuva awakened, the creatures were gone.

“This was one of those look-before-you-leap things, wasn’t it?” said Lewa Nuva. “I guess I’m still mad about the tree. Stupid bugs.”

Kopaka Nuva’s mood was predictably cold. “If they free the Bahrag, the swarms will return to their mission. We cannot allow this to happen.”

“The Bohrok-Kal faced us together, while we stood apart,” said Gali Nuva sadly. “This is what I feared when we went our separate ways. As powerful as we became, it is in our unity that our true strength lies.”

Now the quest of the Toa Nuva has become even more desperate. They must find the Bahrag, defeat the Bohrok-Kal and end the threat of the swarms for good – all without the aid of their elemental powers!
NO... YOUR EYES ARE NOT DECEIVING YOU. THAT IS TAHU NUA TOA OF FIRE, LEADING A SWARM OF BOHROK.

NO. THIS IS NOT AN ALTERNATE TIMELINE, A VISION, A DREAM, OR AN IMAGINARY TALE TOLD AROUND MATORAN FIRES.

YES... SOMETHING IS VERY, VERY WRONG ON THE ISLAND OF MATA NUI.

FORWARD, TAHNOX, AND THE DAY WILL BE OURS!

A MATTER OF TIME...
What could possibly force a Toa Nuva into an alliance with a Bohrok Swarm? Here is one of the six answers: Num'ok-Kal.

You lead the TahnoK against me, Tahu! You are bits of Straw challenging a Whirlwind...

A little less gravity and the Swarm "flies" away. They will be safe in orbit—until I need them.

A little more gravity, and you will be too heavy to interfere. We will find the Bahrak Queens you imprisoned, Tahu. Defy us at your peril.

Umngghh!
“Easy, easy,” Lewa Nuva murmured under his breath. “Don’t look uptree, my metallic friend. Nothing to see up here…”

He carefully swung across a clearing on a vine, his gaze trained on the Kohrak-Kal, which was marching along the ground below. The creature seemed unaware of the Toa Nuva’s presence.

He hadn’t kept track of how much time had passed since that first meeting with the Bohrok-Kal, but it seemed like forever. The Toa had split up, trying to get the krana-kal. But every encounter had ended the same way – with the Toa Nuva groaning on the ground while the Bohrok-Kal continued their quest without so much as a pause.

At least we found a few number of Kanohi masks along the way, Lewa thought, trying to look on the bright side. So we each have some of our maskpowers back now.

Below, the Kohrak-Kal moved on. Just a few farthersteps, Lewa thought, willing himself to be patient. It’s almost time.

He grasped a strong vine hanging nearby, glancing up to make sure that it was firmly entwined around a higher branch.

When the creature was near the middle of the clearing, Lewa nodded. It was time.

He bent his knees and pushed off, springing gracefully off the tree branch. Holding the vine tightly with one hand, he held the other outstretched at the ready. The vine swung him down, down, down – as the vine’s arc reached the clearing, he was skimming just above the swampy ground.

Perfect! he thought eagerly, aiming straight toward the Kohrak-Kal. The creature’s broad back was to him, and Lewa could clearly see the softly glowing white krana-kal set into the center of it. He was almost close enough to grab it…

WHANNNNNNNG!

A burst of noise exploded out of the Kohrak-Kal just as Lewa reached it, knocking him to the ground as solidly as any physical strike might do. Lewa was momentarily stunned by the blow, but quickly leaped to his feet. The Kohrak-Kal hardly spared him a glance as it continued easily on its way, but it did gesture briefly in his direction with its shield. A split second later, a high wall of solid sound sprang up between it and the Toa Nuva – vibrating and whining, sending leaves scattering away and causing tree trunks at the edge of the clearing to bend and crack.

“You won’t awayblock the Toa of Air so easily,” Lewa muttered, though his words were lost in the cacophony. Taking a deep breath, he called upon the power of the Mask of Levitation. He floated upward, easily reaching the top of the wall.

As soon as he did, the sonic waves shifted slightly, moving out and around him and blocking his rise. The wall of sound surrounded him, pummelling him with its intensity, so loud that it seemed it would crack the earth and sky themselves.

Lewa dropped back to the ground, hardly noticing the force of the fall. Much worse was the force of the sound assaulting his ears – staggering, inconceivable sound. How could any creature hold such terrible power?

Lewa couldn’t think, couldn’t move – could do nothing but try to survive the assault.

It was unbearable – like nothing he had ever experienced, like nothing he could ever have imagined. It bent his mind until it could think no more, his body until it could stand against it no more.

“Kopaka!” Gali’s voice was urgent. “Come here – quick!”

Kopaka abandoned the Bohrok-Kal footprint he was examining and hurried forward to join Gali, who had moved several lengths ahead through the jungle.

“The soundshape… the soundshape…” Lewa was muttering, his gaze blank and his limbs curled into a fetal position.

“Lewa!” Kopaka said sharply. “Brother Lewa, do you hear me?”

“He’s in shock,” Gali said, kneeling beside the Toa of Air. “Give him a moment.”
Kopaka nodded, watching as Lewa writhed on the ground. Mud and swampy water covered him, making it clear that he’d been there quite a while. What could have happened to him?

The Bohrok-Kal, of course, Kopaka told himself grimly. Our foolish airheaded brother must have decided to try to take one on by himself. Hasn’t he learned his lesson by now?

Kopaka noticed that the Toa of Air was pressing his hands to his ears. “Look at that,” he told Gali. “He must have tangled with the sonic shield of the Kohrak-Kal.”

“Yes,” Gali agreed with a shudder. “That one is worse than all the others combined, if you ask me.”

She reached down and gently tried to pry one of Lewa’s hands loose. He struggled briefly against her, then finally relaxed. Slowly, his sightless eyes began to focus.

Finally he groaned and sat up. “Ice brother, water sister,” he croaked weakly. “The sound—it’s really gone?”

“Whatever happened, it’s over,” Gali assured him. “You’re safe now.”

Kopaka stretched out a hand to help Lewa to his feet. “What happened, brother?” he asked.

Lewa winced. “Please, Kopaka,” he said. “Keep your voice quiet—low. My ears are still ringing from the boxing the Kohrak-Kal gave them.”

“So it was the Kohrak-Kal,” Kopaka said, carefully keeping his voice to little more than a whisper. “Why did it come after you?”

“It didn’t, exactly,” Lewa admitted, his own voice gaining strength with each passing moment. “It was defending its krana-kal—I had hoped to vineswing down and grab it from above. I thought I was trackfollowing undetected, but I guess it knew I was there after all.”

“That was a risky plan, brother;” Gali chided him gently.

Kopaka grimaced, his own opinion of Lewa’s plan formed of harsher words. But he shrugged them off. Lewa had learned his lesson the hard way.

“What do we do now?” he asked instead. “The more we see of this enemy, the stronger it seems.”

“Evertrue, brother,” Lewa agreed. “If those swarmqueens are still down there in the dark-tunnels somewhere, it’s only a matter of time until the Bohrok-Kal trackfind them.”

Kopaka glanced at him, surprised at the normally cheerful Toa Nuva’s pessimistic words. “We can’t give up,” he reminded him. “No matter what, we have to do all we can to protect Mata Nui. It is our destiny.”

“I know that everwell, coldbrother;” Lewa retorted. “But how does it help save Mata Nui to let ourselves be crushed by the Bohrok-Kal? We have tried many plans, yet nothing can stop them.”

Gali cleared her throat. “Wait, brothers,” she said quietly. “There is one thing we haven’t tried yet…”
“This time I won’t stop until I have your krana-kal, monster!” Tahu shouted as he landed atop a ridge just three lengths from the Pahrak-Kal.

The creature paused and glanced back toward him. Then it turned away, its bronze-shaded krana-kal seeming to mock him.

“Don’t turn your back on me, Pahrak-Kal!” Tahu howled, raising his magma sword and charging after the creature. “I’ve come for a fight, and a fight I will have!”

The creature merely raised its shield, deflecting Tahu’s blows easily. Then it pointed the shield toward the ground. Seconds later, the hardened and cooled magma had melted into a boiling puddle of fresh lava.

Tahu felt himself sinking into the newly created puddle. To his surprise, he could feel the burning sensation of the boiling lava on his feet and legs. He leaped backward, landing on the solid ground behind him. Steam rose from his feet.

Uh-oh, he thought in horror. I didn’t realize that my ability to withstand intense heat had deserted me along with my other elemental powers.

“Are you through with me yet, oh, great Toa?” the Pahrak-Kal taunted.

This time the Pahrak-Kal took a step toward him as it raised its shield. The wave of heat that rippled out from the shield surrounded Tahu, filling his body with searing fire.

Tahu realized all he had to do was fall back again and the heat would stop. All he had to do was retreat. But he couldn’t – that would mean letting the Pahrak-Kal win. Giving up.

So this monster wants to fight me with my own element? he thought as the fire filled his body, seeming to burn him up from the inside out. Fine, then let it do its worst. Better to burn out than to give up…

“Tao Tahu!” a voice shouted from somewhere nearby. Distracted, the Pahrak-Kal turned, at the same time shifting the aim of its shield. Tahu slumped to the ground, gasping at the sudden disappearance of the pain.

As he collapsed, he glanced up and saw Jala, the head of the Ta-Koro guard. Several other Ta-Matoran stood behind him. The Pahrak-Kal watched the newcomers approach.

“Is this your rescue party, Toa?” it hissed with amusement. “They’re a little on the puny side.”

“Leave us alone, creature!” Jala shouted boldly.

The Pahrak-Kal gazed at the Matoran. “I have no quarrel with any of you, weak ones,” it said. “Your hotheaded Toa is the one who wished to test my powers.”

With that it turned and moved on along the ridge. Tahu pushed himself to a sitting position as Jala kneeled beside him.

“Are you all right, Toa Tahu?” the Matoran asked with concern.
Tahu pushed aside his helping hand. “I’m fine,” he said brusquely, climbing to his feet. “And I’ll be even better once I take care of that thing.”

“Too!” Jala cried, grabbing his arm. “Please, stop! You’ll get yourself hurt!”

“Better than living as a coward,” Tahu snapped, shaking off the Matoran’s grip.

“You have no right!” Jala shouted, anger in his voice.

Tahu stopped short, blinking in surprise. Slowly, he turned to face the Matoran. Jala’s eyes behind their mask were defiant.

“What did you say to me?” Tahu asked, holding down his rage with difficulty.

Jala took a deep breath. “I said, you have no right,” he said. “You have no right to sacrifice yourself. You have a duty to us – to Mata Nui. Your destiny doesn’t allow room for personal pride.”

Tahu couldn’t help being impressed by the Matoran’s courage in speaking out so boldly. Of course, it seems like just about everyone is taking things into their own hands lately, he thought with a flash of annoyance. He had been unpleasantly surprised when he’d first heard that Onua had decided to change plans without consulting him. For a moment he had started to insist on doing things his way – just to make sure that everyone knew who was in charge. But Gali and Pohatu had convinced him that the Earth Toa’s decision was right. Was Jala right in his defiance, too?

Out of the corner of his eye, he noticed that the Pahrak-Kal had paused again and seemed to be listening. It took a step back toward them.

“Listen to your little friend, Toa,” it hissed with a chuckle. “He’s only trying to save you from being humbled by the strength of the Bohrok-Kal. Again.”

Tahu gritted his teeth. “Mark my words, Pahrak-Kal,” he said slowly, calling upon every ounce of strength he had to control the flames of his temper. “You will not succeed in your mission. For it is the sworn duty of the Toa Nuva to stop you. And stop you we will.”

The Pahrak-Kal laughed, the sound tinny and scornful. “Is that so, feeble hero?” it said. “Once we find and release the queens, you will – aaaagh!”

Its words broke off in a strangled cry. To his surprise, Tahu saw that Jala had just leaped forward and wrenched the krana-kal free!

The Pahrak-Kal’s limbs twitched, it let out several moans, and then fell still.

“Good job, brave Jala!” Tahu cried with delight. “Now that we’ve conquered one of them, the others will —”

“Toa Tahu – look!” Another Matoran broke in, pointing to the far end of the ridge.

A Gahlok Va was scuttling toward them. “What’s it doing?” Tahu wondered aloud.

He didn’t have to wait long for the answer. As the small scout creature came closer, he saw that it was clutching something in its clawed hand.

“Is it – is it bringing the creature another krana-kal?” Jala asked in surprised dismay.

Tahu nodded grimly. “Looks that way.”

“Everybody run!” one of the Matoran cried out.

So much for our alliance with the Bohrok and Bohrok Va, Tahu thought hopelessly as he and the Matoran scattered at top speed. It seems the Bohrok-Kal are exerting some kind of influence over them. It seems we may have made a serious mistake in trusting the swarms inside our villages…

For a moment, he thought of the Kanohi Vahi. Was this the desperate emergency Vakama had spoken of? Was it time to call upon the dreadful powers of the Great Mask of Time?

He shook his head, feeling helpless and angry as he ran. He could barely control his own temper. Why had Vakama asked him to control such an awesome power?

In the jungle near Le-Koro, Gali was primed for battle. “Ready?” she asked.

Kopaka nodded. “Ready.”

“Me, too,” Lewa added. “Let’s do this.”

Gali closed her eyes, gathering and focusing her energy. She concentrated on the other two Toa Nuva, allowing her own mind to flow and merge with theirs…
A moment later, the Toa Nuva Kaita known as Wairuha opened his eyes. Created from the mental and physical uniting of the three Toa, he combined their powers into one form.

“It is time to put an end to this threat,” he rumbled, moving toward the Lehvak-Kal that was searching a boggy area nearby.

The Lehvak-Kal stopped what it was doing. “So this is how it will be, Kaita? Then so be it.”

As Wairuha moved toward it, the creature let out a series of shrill calls. Seconds later, two more Bohrok-Kal appeared – the Kohrak-Kal and the Gahlok-Kal.

Wairuha gathered his powers. To his surprise, the creatures ignored him and turned instead toward one another. There was a blast of energy – and all of a sudden a single, larger creature stood where three had been a second before!

Wairuha gasped. The Bohrok-Kal had merged into their own Kaita being!

The creature attacked, flinging a solid mass of flickering sound toward him. Wairuha ducked, but it was too late.

The orb caught him and trapped him within an airless, magnetized vortex of sound. Every part of his body was pulled toward every other part by the intense magnetic field, while his mouth gasped for air and his mind shrieked against the pummeling scream of sound.

“No, Wairuha thought, struggling to retain consciousness. Must – fight – against –

“Oof!” Kopaka grunted as he hit the ground a second later, flung out of the unity by the force of the attack.

Nearby, the Bohrok-Kal Kaita dissolved its own merging, returning to three separate forms. “That was almost – fun,” the Lehvak-Kal said with a metallic laugh.

“Yes,” the Kohrak-Kal responded. “But we must not think of that. We have to find the queens.”

The three creatures turned away from one another and, without further discussion, scuttled off in different directions.

Kopaka watched them go as the strength seeped back into his body. Finally he was able to lift his arms, testing them for injury. “That was not fun,” he said succinctly.

“Not even a little,” Lewa agreed, his voice heavy. “If even the Toa Nuva Kaita can’t stand against these creatures, what hope is there?”

Kopaka had to agree with him. No matter how he looked at it, there seemed to be no solution. The Toa Nuva could not stop the Bohrok-Kal – they couldn’t even slow them down.

Is this the end? he wondered hopelessly. Is it our destiny to fall before this unstoppable enemy – to fail in our duty to protect Mata Nui?

He glanced over at Gali, expecting her to protest against the Air Toa’s pessimistic words.

But Gali merely shook her head, her expression downcast. “I fear that at this point, all we can hope is that the creatures’ search will turn out to be fruitless,” she commented wearily. “That Cahdok and Gahdok really are gone for good as we had hoped.”

Kopaka nodded along with Lewa. But he had his doubts.

In the depths of the earth far below, the waiting dark figure laughed, for he had sensed the Toa’s words.

“Giving up so soon, mighty heroes?” he cried with delight, though he knew the Toa could not hear him. “The endless tales and legends of the Turaga surely did not foresee this, did they? But I am not surprised. The Toa may be hailed as heroes, but they are as flawed as any Matoran. Flawed and weak and frightened before this more powerful enemy. And so their story seems to be reaching its end – at last.”

The figure glanced over at an enormous mask that stared sightlessly from the cavern wall nearby. He nodded thoughtfully as he gazed at it, his red eyes glowing more brightly than ever.

“Fear not, brother,” he said. “As long as I am here, nothing will ever disturb you…”
Chapter 26

Tahnok-Kali! Do you remember the plan? I made up the plan.

Do you have the stone?

Polished so bright you could see your face in it... if that were worth seeing.

Then I am going.

Hey, Onua—be careful, all right?

Of course I will. You just kick one straight for a change, my friend.

Tahnok-Kali! You of the lightning bolts... I have seen little moto bugs more frightening than you!

Tahnok-Kali! I have no wish to defeat you... again.

Go away, Toa of Earth. We simply found your company so boring, we chose to take a nap.
THEN PERHAPS I SHOULD RETURN YOU TO YOUR SLUMBER TOA!

KYZZZAAATTA!

NOW!

WHIIINT!

KRAAAAK-KAAAAMM!

WHAT..?
Removing the Krana-Kal from the fallen Bohrok-Kal is easy. But its words send a chill through the Toa Nuva.

Well done, my brother.

That will not hold him for long. Let's retrieve his Krana-Kal.

CAHDOCK AND GAHDOCK disappeared... and then an earthquake brought the nest down. They are gone for good, creature!

You are too late! Already, the Bohrok-Kal have learned where the Bahrag are hidden. They will free Cahdock and Gahdock—and the swarms will live again!

No, Toa. They are waiting beneath the ground, waiting to be freed... and you are powerless to stop us.

Onua, Pohatu... I fear that... thing... may be right.
Turaga Nokama, what have you discovered?

Our boxors surprised a Bohrok-Kal long enough to steal his Krana-Kal... and we learned much. These are an elite squad of Bohrok, with only one mission: freeing the Bahrag.

If Cahok and Gahdok are freed, then the swarms are sure to return in force... and without our powers...

Onua, look! The Tahnok-Kal is gone! How?

The Bohrok va, they are serving the Kal. It's the only answer.

Nokama, warn the Koro, Pohatu, and I must find the others before it's...

--Too late.

The Bahrag are waiting beyond this barrier.

Hsssstttttt
“Are you two going to tell me what this is about?” Tahu Nuva asked.

Pohatu Nuva could tell that the Fire Toa was reaching the end of his meager store of patience.

“Soon, brother,” he said soothingly. “It will be easier to discuss it when we’re all together.”

Onua, who was in the lead, glanced over his shoulder and nodded. “A Matoran told us he saw Gali, Lewa, and Kopaka here in the jungle. We should be with them shortly.”

Tahu sighed loudly, but didn’t protest further. Pohatu was relieved. If what he and Onua had just learned was true, the Toa Nuva had much more important things to do than bicker among themselves.

Soon they heard voices through the trees, and a moment later the other three Toa Nuva emerged in a clearing. Gali spotted them first.

“Brothers!” she called, hurrying toward them. “We were just talking about coming to find you. We’ve had a rather disturbing experience that we thought you should hear about.”

“You’re not the only ones,” Pohatu replied. “Wait until you hear what Onua and I found out.”

“Yes,” Tahu said irritably. “I have been waiting for that. Too long.”

Onua nodded at Gali and the other two Toa Nuva who had just hurried up behind her. “Why don’t you three go first?” he suggested.

“Brothers!” she called, hurrying toward them. “We were just talking about coming to find you. We’ve had a rather disturbing experience that we thought you should hear about.”

“You’re not the only ones,” Pohatu replied. “Wait until you hear what Onua and I found out.”

“Why don’t we try the short version of the story?” Kopaka interrupted. “We merged into Wairuha. Three Bohrok-Kal formed their own Kaita. They beat us.”

Lewa rolled his eyes. “Some storyteller you are,” he muttered.

Pohatu hardly heard him. He was too shocked by what Kopaka had just said. “The Toa Nuva Kaita,” he exclaimed. “And it was no match for the Bohrok-Kal?”

“No, even close,” Gali admitted. “Its power – it was astonishing. It disunited us, leaving us helpless. Fortunately it seemed to have no interest in fighting us further and left – heading toward the north.”

“We might know why it went that way,” Onua said heavily. “Come, let’s walk that direction ourselves as we talk – you’ll understand why in a moment. Pohatu, why don’t you tell them what we learned?”

Pohatu nodded. “With all due respect to brother Kopaka, I think I’ll tell the medium-length version of the story,” he said.

He went on to describe how he and Onua had tracked the Tahnok-Kal to the beach on the eastern shore of the island. They had hidden in the woods nearby and concocted a plan to disable it by reflecting its lightning bolts back over its head toward a tall tree behind the creature. For once, the plan had worked perfectly, and the tree had cracked and fallen right on the Tahnok-Kal, trapping it. The two Toa Nuva had been able to remove the krana-kal from the creature with little trouble.

“Then the krana-kal spoke to us,” Pohatu continued. “It told us we were already too late – that the Bohrok-Kal had learned where Cahdok and Gahdok were trapped.”
Lewa gasped. "But we were so sure that the swarmqueens were no more," he exclaimed. "We mentioned that to the krana-kal," Onua said wryly. "It seemed quite convinced that we were wrong."

Pohatu nodded. "The Bohrok swarms have left the villages where they were working. All of them seem to be heading back to their nest – as if obeying a command."

Onua nodded. "If we’re to have any hope of protecting Mata Nui, we’ve got to get there before them," he said. "That’s why we’re heading north – to Po-Wahi."

By this time the group had reached the edge of the jungle. "So we’re going back to the tunnel entrance?" Gali asked. "But we’ve already been there. The tunnel was filled in with rocks."

"Yes, we know," Pohatu said. "But we have most of our Kanohi Nuva now. We might be able to push through somehow, or dig a shortcut into the lair. Just so long as we get down there before the Bohrok-Kal find their way underground."

"What good will that do?" Lewa asked, vaulting over a low wall of tumbled stones. "Don’t you think they can easily win belowground as well as above it?"

Kopaka was looking thoughtful. "I know," he spoke up. "The Exo-Toa."

"That’s right," Pohatu said. "We don’t have our powers, but the Exo-Toa armor will give us strength if we can reach them in time."

The others nodded. They all remembered the giant suits of armor that they had encountered underground. The Exo-Toa armor had helped them trap Cahdok and Gahdok. The last they had seen it, it was still there near the Bahrag’s lair.

There was little conversation as the group continued across the plains and deserts of Po-Wahi, each deep in his or her own thoughts.

Finally they reached the base of the hill leading to the cave entrance. "Almost there," Tahu commented. He led the way up the slope.

A moment later all six Toa Nuva stopped short, staring in surprise at the sight before them. The huge pile of rocks that had covered the entrance the last time they’d seen it was gone – completely melted. The entrance yawned open, leading down into the darkness.
They have already been here. We will have to follow, and hope we are in time.

Has anyone else noticed that every time we go underground something really bad happens?

Be wary. Remember, we do not have our elemental powers to rely on.

And, by the way, Lewa... yes, we have all noticed.

Silently, the Toa Njwa descend into the chamber where they last saw Candok and Gandok. The Queens of the Bohrok swarms...

This hole is new... the edges are still hot. Lewa, you are the best of us at moving silently...

I understand. I'll scout ahead.

Take care, Lewa... there could be anything down there.
OH, MY...

I DON'T BELIEVE IT. IT'S THE EXO-TOA!!

BUT THERE'S NO ONE INSIDE THEM!

KZILLAHHHHH!
Although empty, these suits of armor still oppose us... but they will fall before the force of sound!

Nor can they hope to fight the force of gravity.

And the magnetic power of Gahlok-Kal...

...means the end of the exo-toa!

Kra-ka-kanng!
Now we will fit the symbols of Nlva power on to the cube... and Gahdok and Gahdok will be free once more!

The swarms wait in their nests for the call to rise again.

The time has come! Free the Bahrag!
Kopaka glanced toward the hole in the floor of the underground chamber. How long had it been since Lewa had levitated down through it?

To distract himself, he looked around the underground chamber. It hadn’t changed much since the last time he had seen it, just after the defeat of the Bahrag. The only real difference was the jagged hole burned into the floor.

Onua was standing near the hole, his head tipped to one side. “Do you hear something?”

Gali smiled. “None of us have the sensitive hearing you do, brother,” she reminded him. “What do you hear?”

“I’m not sure.” Onua frowned, leaning closer to the hole. “Strange, faraway sounds – like shattering glass or stone. I hope Lewa is okay. Maybe we shouldn’t have let him go down alone.”

“He is the best of all of us at moving quickly and silently,” Pohatu reminded him. “Anyway, if he doesn’t return soon, we can –”

“Everbad sightnews!” Lewa said, popping up out of the hole so suddenly that the waiting Toa Nuva all jumped in surprise. He sounded breathless, and his eyes were wide and worried. “The Bohrok-Kal are downcave, all right. They’re groupstanding cubefront with their iconloot, and the hardluck Exo-Toa is downfalling everquick, and –”

“Wait!” Onua cut him off. “Brother, slow down. What are you telling us?”

Lewa took a deep breath. “Truesorry,” he said. “It’s just that what I saw was so scarybad. The Exo-Toa – they were watchguarding the Bahrag’s prison. By themselves.”

Kopaka blinked in surprise. The suits of armor – they could act on their own?

“Are you sure?” he asked Lewa.

“Truesure,” Lewa replied. “They were fighting against the Bohrok-Kal – but having sorrybad luck at it. I saw the creatures destroy most of the Exo-Toa before I hurryleft to come back.”

Gali’s eyes were somber. “I see,” she said. “What was that you said about a cube?”

“Oh!” Lewa said quickly. “There was a cube – a lightglowing, airhovering thing. It was in front of the darkcavern. I couldn’t see what was inside the cavern. But I can dreadguess.”

“Cahdok and Gahdok,” Pohatu said solemnly, voicing what all were thinking.

Lewa nodded. “The cube had shapecarved spaces on each side,” he said. “A perfect fit for the power symbols that were stolen from us.”

“That must be why the Bohrok-Kal wanted the icons,” Onua said, his eyes lighting up with realization. “They must need to fit them into that cube in order to release the Bahrag – it’s like a lock of some kind.”

“This is bad,” Kopaka said. “We’d better get down there and do whatever we can to stop them.”

“How?” Pohatu wondered. “We still don’t have our powers. It sounds like we don’t even have the Exo-Toa option anymore. All we have is a few paltry mask powers.”

“Yes, a few mask powers,” Gali said. “And our wits. And our duty.”
Tahu strode toward the hole. “And that will have to be enough.”

A few paltry mask powers, Tahu thought as he levitated down the long, dark tunnel. *If the others only knew about the not-so-paltry mask power I hold – but is now finally the time to reveal it?*

He thought back to that moment in the suva in Ta-Koro. He could almost hear Vakama’s solemn words echoing in his head. *He who controls time controls reality – controls everything.*

Tahu grimaced. Was he ready to control everything? Could anyone ever be truly ready for that – even a powerful Toa Nuva?

Tahu slowed his descent as the lower cavern came into view. All six of the Bohrok-Kal were there, gathered around the floating cube. What was left of the Exo-Toa lay scattered on the stone floor nearby – most of the suits had been pulled to pieces.

“There must be something we can do,” Gali said.

Tahu took a deep breath, suddenly feeling in his heart that the decision was already made. It had been destined – all he had to do was accept it.

“There is,” he said.
Gali glanced at Tahu, wondering what the Fire Toa had in mind. She gasped as she saw his mask begin to glow a fiery orange and morph into an odd, primitive shape.

"Tahu!" she exclaimed. "What are you doing?"

"Something I hoped I would never have to do," Tahu replied hollowly. "Something that could mean the end of everything. I call upon – the Great Mask of Time!"

Gali felt her heart constrict with terror. "Then you may have doomed us all," she whispered bleakly.

She was distracted by an echoing voice drifting up from the cavern below. "Free us, my children!" it wailed joyfully.

"Yes!" a second voice joined the first. "Unlock this prison, my children, and set us free!"

"The Bohrok queens," Tahu said. "I'm going in."

Without waiting for agreement, he levitated downward. Gali followed along with the other Toa. Soon she was low enough to see into the cavern beyond the cube, where the enormous, monstrous forms of Cahdok and Gahdok were barely visible beyond a hazy wall.

The Bahrag soon spotted the Toa Nuva as well. "You are too late!" Cahdok howled, her words slightly garbled by the mass of protodermis that was holding her hostage.

As her feet touched the stone floor, Gali glanced worriedly at Tahu. He was standing beside her, his head bowed in concentration.

"Gali, I must use this power," he said. "I must master it – or all is lost."

"But if you fail," she said urgently. "Mata Nui will fall. All of reality may be undone!"

The Vahi glowed brightly. "Then I will not fail," Tahu said grimly.

Gali held her breath as a ripple of energy radiated out from Tahu's mask. The air seemed to quiver as the time energy moved through it.

The Vahi's energy struck the Bohrok-Kal just as they raised their clawed arms to move the icons into place. Their movements slowed more and more, until the motion was barely perceptible.

"It's working!" Onua cried in relief.

For a moment, Gali shared his joy. Then she glanced at Tahu. His hands were clenched into fists, and every muscle of his body quivered uncontrollably.

"I can't… hold back time… much longer!" Tahu gasped, his voice twisted with exertion. "Go! Get our symbols back!"

The other five Toa Nuva leaped forward as one. As Gali headed toward the Nuhvok-Kal, she could see its krana-kal. Despite the time slowdown, it still appeared to be pulsing evenly.

Gali paused, staring at it as it shimmered and glowed. Was the time mutation playing tricks with her eyes, or was it – changing?

"Hold on," she said to the others. "Something's happening. Their krana-kal are changing – turning silver."
Kopaka moved forward for a better look. He was stopped a short distance away, as if he’d just run into a wall. “A field of energy surrounds them,” he said grimly. “In the final moments before they complete their task, they must be protected from all harm. Even the slowing of time could not stop it.”

“Forgive me if I test your theory,” Onua said, hurling a chunk of stone at the Bohrok-Kal with all his might.

ZZZZZZZZK!

The stone struck the force field and disintegrated. Gali shook her head worriedly as she glanced at Tahu, who was still shaking with the effort to control the Great Mask of Time.

Lewa shuddered. “It’s over,” he said. “Even when we still had our powers, we were barely able to fightsnare the Bahrag at their ordinary strength. We’ve failed. Failed our villages, our people…"

For once, words seemed to desert the Air Toa, and he merely shook his head to complete his point. Gali glanced around the group. The other Toa Nuva looked just as dejected as Lewa. Onua was staring in disbelief at the spot where the stone had disintegrated. Nearby, Pohatu was shifting his weight nervously from one foot to the other. Kopaka said nothing as usual, staring fixedly at the Bahrag in their glutinous cage. And for the first time since she’d known him, Gali saw defeat lurking in Tahu’s eyes.

But Gali herself was not yet ready to give up. Unity – duty – destiny – so far, the Matoran creed had never failed them.

“Remember,” she said thoughtfully, “we have always had the most success when we have been willing to dig deep inside our hearts and risk everything – even our very selves…”
The other Toa stared at Gali, confused. “What do you mean?” Pohatu asked her.

“Our powers!” Gali explained, her eyes lighting with hope. “If the essence of our powers is housed in those symbols, maybe we can use that against the Bohrok-Kal!”

Tahu stared at her as the power of the Vahi began to waver and weaken. Tahu himself was weakening, also. “How?” he asked, pushing out the single word with effort.

“We need to pool our willpower,” Gali said. “Reach out to our symbols. Even if it means freeing the Bohrok-Kal from the Vahi.”

Tahu shook his head, not understanding. He was tired – so tired. Perhaps it was time to give up, to allow the Vahi to overwhelm him...

“Tahu!” Kopaka said sharply. “The mask. You have to send it away – now.”

The Ice Toa’s voice was always enough to set Tahu on edge. Now it broke through the haze in his mind. Who is he to tell me what to do?

But Kopaka was right. The Vahi had served its purpose. “Vahi,” he croaked. “Be gone!”

He nearly collapsed as the intense time power released him and the Vahi faded. Pohatu reached forward to catch him. “Easy, brother,” the Stone Toa said. “There you go. Now come on, pull yourself together – we have work to do.”

Tahu nodded, pulling in a deep breath. “I am ready,” he said.

The Bohrok-Kal, released from the power of the Vahi, were beginning to stir. “Hurry,” Onua said urgently. “We don’t have much time.”

The Toa Nuva turned to face the cube. Tahu could already feel his strength flowing back into him. He gathered that energy, pushing it outward toward the power symbols. Around him, he could feel the other Toa Nuva doing the same.

Tahu had never felt such an intense wave of energy. But would it work? Would their combined power stop the Bohrok-Kal? A glow surrounded the Toa, growing brighter with every passing second. Slowly, the glow took separate form, moving forward toward the Bohrok-Kal.

It neared the force field surrounding the Bohrok-Kal, which their krana-kal were still holding steady. “Concentrate!” Tahu urged the others. “We must break through!”

He could see that the power symbols were beginning to glow in response to the Toa Nuva’s energy. The glow pulsed outward, surrounding the Bohrok-Kal.

“What is happening?” the Nuhvok-Kal said in its metallic voice. “I feel stronger! The Toa Nuva symbols are feeding us energy!”

I hope this works, Tahu thought, as the Bohrok-Kal all pulled the icons back from the cube, gazing at them in wonder. If not, we might have given the enemy even more power than it already had...

The Lehvak-Kal held up its icon. “Yes!” it said. “Cahdok and Gahdok do not need the swarms – with this power, we can return Mata Nui to the Before-Time.”
“No!” Gahdok howled. “My children, do not be distracted from your task!”
But the Bohrok-Kal seemed not to hear her. “We will rule beside the Bahrag!” the Gahlok-Kal cried, its body pulsing. “We will –” It shuddered, the energy turning darker.
“What is happening?” the Tahnok-Kal wailed as its body quivered uncontrollably, waves of energy rippling and sparking over it.
“Good question,” Pohatu whispered.
The Bohrok-Kal were all convulsing by now. “No!” the Gahlok-Kal shrieked as its body lurched.
“Too much power – can’t control!”
“You fools!” Cahdok roared from within her prison. “You have been tricked!”
“Yes,” Gali said calmly from the head of the group. “You wanted our power, monsters. Now let us see if you can handle it!”
The Nuhvok-Kal dropped the symbol it was holding.
“So much power,” the Nuhvok-Kal moaned. “Can’t control my energies… Gravity crushing me…”
Tahu gasped as the Nuhvok-Kal’s powerful body began to crumple and fold in upon itself. “He’s throwing out an uncontrolled gravity field – it’s going to crush him!”
“Bahrag, aid us!” the Nuhvok-Kal pleaded, its voice distorted by the weight crushing down on it.
“Before it is too laaaaaaaate…”
The last word trailed off into nothingness. The gravitational force had finally overwhelmed it, compressing the creature into a miniature black hole in the middle of the chamber.
Lewa gasped. “It’s awaygone!” he murmured in amazement.
Tahu didn’t respond. He was watching the Pahrak-Kal, which was struggling against its own power overload. It had hurled its Toa Nuva icon away, but it was too late. The Pahrak-Kal’s armored body was glowing with a plasma-fueled heat so intense that the stone floor started to melt beneath its feet.
“I will contain this power!” The Pahrak-Kal sounded drippy and slow, as if it, too, were melting.
“I am Pahrak-Kal! I cannot be defeated!”
But a moment later, the floor beneath the Pahrak-Kal gave way entirely, and the creature dropped away through it out of sight.
Tahu glanced toward the cube just in time to see the Gahlok-Kal stepping toward it, one of the power icons still clutching in its hand. “Uh-oh,” Tahu said, pointing.
“The Bahrag will be free!” the Gahlok-Kal cried. “You cannot defeat me with my own power!”
“Should we do something?” Lewa wondered aloud.
Tahu shook his head. “One symbol will not free the Bahrag,” he said. “It would need to collect all six of them. And I suspect that’s going to be harder than it realizes…”
At that moment they all became aware that the pieces of shattered Exo-Toa armor were moving.
“Look!” Gali said. “It’s the Gahlok-Kal’s magnetic energy. It’s going to –”
Before she could finish the sentence, the Exo-Toa pieces suddenly shot toward the Gahlok-Kal, pulled there by the creature’s pulsing magnetic force.
“Oh no!” the Gahlok-Kal cried, a split second before the pieces struck.
Tahu had turned to watch the Lehvak-Kal. The incredible vacuum forces it was emitting finally overwhelmed it, sending it shooting upward like a rocket. It smashed through the cavern ceiling and disappeared.
The Tahnok-Kal had teetered over to a corner of the cave. There, it stood locked into place, a prisoner of its own electrical forces, which swirled in the air around it and formed a constant shimmer of concentrated lightning.
Onua nodded toward the helpless creature. “I expect that one will stay there until it finally runs out of energy entirely.”
That meant the only Bohrok-Kal left was the Kohrak-Kal. It was standing near the cube, buffeted by waves of undiluted sound. The sonic forces were so focused around their core that Tahu could hear
nothing but faint zips and kreeees. But he shuddered to imagine what it must sound like to the creature trapped within its own sonic vortex.

As he watched, the Kohrak-Kal’s body shuddered and gave way to the pressure, crumbling into dust before the pummeling sound waves. Only its silvery krana-kal escaped, scuttling away into the shadows.

The six power symbols lay on the floor. Slowly, the glow that had surrounded them faded away, and the cavern was still.


“They did not live as we understand life, so they cannot die,” Kopaka answered. “But they have been defeated.”

Tahu nodded. “Did you see that krana-kal escaping?” he asked.

“I did,” Gali said. “I expect the others managed to get away, too. But I don’t think we need to worry. Without the Bohrok-Kal to house them, the krana-kal will remain powerless.”

“Then we have won!” Tahu said, hardly daring to believe it.

Kopaka nodded. “It seems so,” he said, his cool voice tinged with admiration. “Thanks to our wise sister. How did you know, Gali?”

Gali shrugged. “I didn’t,” she admitted. “I gambled that tapping the power of the symbols would feed the Bohrok-Kal more energy than they could control. In the end, the only power that could defeat them was their own.” She turned toward Tahu. “There’s one thing I don’t understand,” she said. “The Vahi – where did you get it?”

“Vakama gave it to me,” Tahu said. “Along with a warning – that its power might be too great for even a Toa to wield. He was nearly right.”

As he remembered the surge of power that the Vahi had sent through him, a surge of energy welled up. He held up his sword, seeing flames dancing along its length. Hardly daring to believe what he saw, he pointed the sword at a nearby rock, blasting it with searing flames.

Kopaka was watching him. “Our powers have returned,” he said. Glancing toward the cavern ceiling, he pointed his own ice blade. A moment later an icy staircase had formed.

Tahu led the other Toa Nuva toward the icy staircase. The Bahrag were once again safely contained in their underground prison. It was time for the Toa Nuva to return to the surface.

None of the Toa Nuva could relax before the first rays of sun penetrated the dark tunnel – a sign they were at last reaching the surface.

Once safely above, the six Toa sank to the ground in relief. Gali glanced at Tahu with unease, still trying to process what he had just revealed – still trying to understand how he had kept the Great Mask of Time a secret for so long. What other secrets might he be hiding?

But she suppressed her unease – now was not the time. Instead, forcing a smile, she turned to her fellow Toa Nuva and said, “Well, brothers, what do you think? Will we be able to put Mata Nui right again?”

“Of course,” Tahu said. “I think we’ve finally learned our lesson.”

“What lesson?” Lewa asked. “You mean the lesson that a Toa’s work is never done?”

Pohatu chuckled. “No, he’s probably talking about the lesson that we should always pay attention to Gali’s hunches.”

“Or that only bad-yuck things happen underground,” Lewa added, grinning.

“Yes, all of those lessons, brothers,” Tahu said with a smile. “But also the most important one of all. Don’t you get it?”

“I know what you’re thinking, brother,” Gali said, hoping she was right. “Three little words, right?”

Kopaka nodded, speaking up for the first time since Tahu’s speech had ended. “Unity, duty, destiny,” he said.

“Right,” Tahu said. “When we keep those three words in mind, the Toa Nuva can do anything!”
From the Wall of History…

Defeat of the Bohrok-Kal
The Toa Nuva triumph again!
By Takua

By the time the Toa reached the lair of the Bahrag, the Bohrok-Kal had already arrived – and departed. They had melted through the floor to the cave below, where the Queens had been trapped since their defeat. Strangely, the Bahrag were being guarded by the Exo-Toa. How and why the Exo-Toa came to be there would remain a mystery, for the powerful devices were swiftly defeated by the might of the Bohrok-Kal.

To free the Queens, the Bohrok-Kal needed to touch Cahdok and Gahdok with their krana Xa-Kal and place the stolen Nuva symbols upon the cube in the cavern’s center. When the Toa Nuva arrived, the Kal had already completed the first part of their task!

The Toa Nuva quickly used their secret weapon: the Vahi, the Great Mask of Time. Using the Vahi is very dangerous, and Tahu knew that if he lost control, it could mean the unbinding of all reality. Time slowed, but the Bohrok-Kal were protected by a powerful energy field and could not be harmed. Acting fast, the Toa Nuva took one last gamble and channeled their energy through their symbols, straight into the Kal.

Energized by the elemental strength of the Toa, the Bohrok-Kal’s powers raged out of control, incapacitating or destroying their unliving shells. The krana-kal yet lived, but without their Bohrok hosts, they were no longer a threat. The Bahrag remained imprisoned, and the Swarms would not be unleashed this day.

As the Toa Nuva reclaimed their symbols, they felt their powers surge through them once more. They made their way to the surface and prepared to return to their villages. Another threat to Mata Nui had been defeated!
From the Wall of History…

**Naming Day**  
**Honoring the heroes of Ga-Koro**  
*By Takua*

Mata Nui has bestowed a great gift upon his people. Through the teachings of the Turaga, the Matoran have been transformed, becoming stronger and more agile, better able to defend their villages from danger. As all the villagers of Mata Nui gathered around the Kini-Nui, the Turaga made a momentous announcement.

“Brave Matoran,” began Nokama. “You have weathered a time of challenges with courage, spirit and unity. We wish especially to recognize those who stood against the Bohrok in the final battle against the swarms. In the face of darkness, you were a beacon of light for us all.”

Vakama raised his staff. “The defenders of Ga-Koro shall receive a special honor. Even as the Toa became the Toa Nuva, so too will these heroes have new names when their tale is carved in the chronicles.”

Jala was the first to be called. “Captain of the Ta-Koro Guard,” Vakama declared with pride. “Your valor and dedication to duty are an example to all. When your name is inscribed upon the Wall of History, you shall be known as Jaller.”

As the crowd cheered, Huki of Po-Koro and Maku of Ga-Koro too were granted new names. For their deeds at Ga-Koro, they will be known henceforth as Hewkii and Macku.

At last, Vakama called one final name. “Chronicler Takua…”

“Inscribe these names upon the Wall of History, as is your duty,” said Vakama sternly. “And try to spell them correctly.”

Now it is a time of great festivity and celebration. Matoran from all across Mata Nui gather in Po-Koro to exchange gifts and goods and to play in the village tournaments. After much consultation with Pohatu Nuva, Turaga Onewa has announced that the new form of Koli, played with Ga-Koro net-staffs, is to become the official Po-Koro sport of Kolhii.

As for Takua the Chronicler, who it seems shall forever remain only Takua the Chronicler, he too has held a small ceremony of naming. From this day forward, whenever her deeds are written on the great Wall of History, the faithful Ussal crab Puku shall be known by the name of Pewku.