

*The following is a six page excerpt from **Transformers: Lord of Velocitron**, A fan novel written by Chance Clarke. This is one of the opening scenes of the story. Combatron Veteran **Scourge** joins a battle against the Combatron Corps' age old foe: 'The Indifference.' This excerpt is meant to show an example of the kind of action the rest of the story has on display. Here I am looking for feedback where readability is concerned, but I am more than willing to hear any notes, questions or concerns regarding the work at large.*

*- Chance "Gearshifter09" Clarke.*

## Prologue - Wheel and Road

***Not all roads ride the same.***

*Sector 9, Theater of War, Velocitron, Bahneon 23rd, 6535, 0932  
Nanocycles*

Out there on the other side of Velocitron, in the harsh heat and untenable desert; far removed from Delta where disputes were settled on the track, battles were settled in a far more traditional manner for Cybertronians.

"Push!" A metal voice orders through the chaos of battle. "For Velocitron!"

On the true face of Velocitron, the Combatron Corps pressed across the desert flats against a hail of ballistic fire cascading down upon them from a raised position atop a mountain several miles away. Their enemy? The unknowable, incomprehensible faction known only as *The Indifference*.

Named by the Velocitronian Council, The Indifference were a group of indigenous armored insurgents said to be looking to topple Delta and uproot Velocitronian society. Every cycle they would set themselves up to ambush the moving City and every cycle the Combatron Corps were force deployed to stop them. This had been the case for the last *Four Thousand Stellar Cycles*, and there was no end to the conflict in sight.

The whistle of artillery precedes an eruption of smoke and sand and ash. Heavy metal bodies cascade into the air; their chassis are crushed by the force of impact. Their splintered, broken forms go scattering across the desert sands; those who would survive this onslaught have the unfortunate luck of watching their own limbs flop down in the sand separate their bodies; the flecked shrapnel of their 'once-chassis' rain down on their comrades with a sickening 'pitter patter'. The sight is anguish-filling, but it is typical. For the Combatrons, this is reality.

Before the current Cycle, much of the Combatron's ranks had never held a blaster, much less rushed an armed position. Such was a byproduct of their conflict with the Indifference. The conflict was so relentless, and the demand for warriors so unwavering, that the Slow were selected en-masse and rarely - if ever - trained properly. To join the corps all one needed to be was young, impressionable, and shunned for the alternate mode they were born with.

Composed entirely of the Slow, Combatrons were of a heavier build. They turned into vans, trucks, tanks, jets, helicopters, Gyrodynes, buggies; anything that could not race to the impossibly unrealistic standards of the Velocitron Racing League. They'd all joined seeking the respect and adoration of their contemporaries; few however would survive long enough to experience the fruits of their sacrifices. Despite the hopelessness of their situation, some amongst the Corps would not waver in the face of stacked odds. Some fight against those odds; they would fight *harder*. Their heroic courage would serve as inspiration to their kin.

Over the incoming shred of gunfire, a heavy V10 Engine Roars. A Black, armored Truck barrels onto the battlefield. Its metal shifts and splits as it launches up into the air, changing forms overhead the other Combatrons. The recruits looked skyward, away from fear and adversity for but a moment, to witness a Black Velocitronian with great shoulder pylons come leaping in the air over them, a crude double barreled blaster pointed forth in one hand, spitting flak out at the gun positions at the base of the mountain they were rushing.

The Black Velocitronian lands with a tuck and roll. He raises back up on one knee and repositions his blaster now at the raised positions further up the mountain before loosing another burst of blaster fire, followed by a volley of rockets from his shoulder pylons. The Combatron's assault completely obliterates the mounted gun positions within nanokliks of his arrival. Unlike the recruits, this Black Combatron was a step up. The newbies who were fresh out of the recruitment center could tell just from the way he carried himself that he'd been doing this a while.

The Black Velocitronian turned around, revealing his full form to his fellow Brothers and Sisters-in-arms. He was tall and his armor was black with piercing Cyan highlights. He had Magenta chest windows arranged in a pair above a silver grill on his abdomen. His head was framed by an armored helmet beneath a forehead crest and an antenna on either side. His face was obscured by a silvered faceplate, leaving only two piercing red eyes exposed. This all gave him a fearsome, intimidating appearance. His name matched the role he played on the battlefield for the enemies of Velocitron, he was their *Scourge*.

"We're getting up this hill!" Scourge declared, twin barreled blaster in hand. "Come with me!"

Emboldened and inspired by the presence of the veteran Combatron, the rest of the Corps pressed their advance. With blasters raised and a fire in their sparks, they charged ahead. "For Velocitron!" They cried as they ran and drove and flew forth against the Indifference position.

Against a hail of gunfire the Combatrons charged. Having been all but rushed out of Delta to wage war, the Combatron Corps pressed on to their deaths with fear in their Sparks and a smile on their faces. All for the *hope* that they might be worthy of sharing the same side of the planet as their quicker contemporaries. That was all the motivation they needed to lay down their lives.

Both sides trade fire. Both sides lose numbers. The Combatrons advance and the Indifference? They remain at their posts atop the mountain. They have the high ground, they have the advantage and that advantage makes it hard for the Combatrons to get close, let alone close enough to make out the faces of the foes they fought on the otherside. Such had been the case for the entirety of Scourge's career. The Corps had never gotten a good look at their enemies, they never even got close. But this Cycle would be different.

Scourge fought like mad. He rushed the Indifference and made sure those around him got there too. He fought so hard and was so determined that, for once, it actually looked like they might actually reach their age-old enemy... but then reality sets in and the Corps is harshly reminded that this is Velocitron and Velocitron is about *speed* and nothing more. And, in a world of Speed, one rarely stops to ask where that leaves the *Slow*.

Underneath a hail of traded gunfire and without warning, the ground began to tremble so hard that the Combatron advance fell apart and the Indifference position halted. Both sides stopped firing entirely and all were thrown to the floor. The dirt beneath their feet shook violently; great cracks quickly grew from hairline to chasm sized, swallowing trillions of pounds of sand as the Mountain before the Corps - the same on the Indifference were posted on - began to segment and split apart. And thus, the truth of Velocitron began to reveal itself.

Velocitron was a desert. Far removed from the tall, sprawling, roadway filled metropolis on wheels that was Delta, the planet was a ruinous wasteland filled with wide open surfaces and occasionally ridged in mountains. The thing was, those mountains that did not always stay in the same place. In an unholy matrimony of natural formation and wildlife, some of the mountains atop Velocitron's soil weren't mountains at all.

As the ground came apart, the 'mountain' began to *rise*. Its jagged peaks and sharp slopes shift and turn; clouds of dust rising as dirt and settled rock are broken apart. The Indifference positions? Those were totally lost in the shuffle of what were quickly revealed to be some gigantic creature's vertebrae and shoulder blades.

From the ground, Scourge watched the enemy abandon their posts. The Flyers, the ones quick on the uptake at least, got airborne and escaped the chaos. The ones who couldn't fly tried - and failed - to flee the awakening mountain and were crushed in the shuffle. Their bodies cracked and popped like the foil. They screamed, but their screams were drowned out by what could only be described as the voice of Velocitron itself.

A low, chassis piercing groan ripples up from the dirt and dust, immobilizing anyone not already frozen with fear. And then, with the shifting of Velocitronian soil, Scourge is forced to watch rough, coarse folds peel apart, giving way to a set of gigantic opaque spheres with deep, black voids at the center. The veteran Combatron was now beholden to a pair of massive, organic eyes staring back at him. Only now, as Scourge and the recruits around him gazed into the eyes of a literal force of Nature, did they understand the truth of their situation. The Indifference and the Combatrons? They hadn't been fighting over a mountain *at all*. It was a *Planesbeast* and the Planesbeast had decided that this battle was over.

Scourge stowed his Twin barreled Assault blaster on his back and grabbed the soul nearest him, shoving them away from the living mountain as boulders, cast off in the creature's movement, came raining down all around them. "RETREAT!!!!" The Black Combatron screamed as loud as his vocal processor would allow. Most of the Combatrons onsite didn't have a comms channel to communicate with, so he had to hope that his voice was loud enough. Then again, the mere sight of a Planesbeast was sure to send even the most experienced of their ranks running to get out of its way.

Planesbeast were as the name entailed: great, hulking behemoths the size of entire planes of land, a byproduct of the brutal climate on Velocitron. The Combatron Corps of old had once called these beasts *prey*. They couldn't kill them, of course. Instead they'd herd them out of Delta's path. When facing a Planesbeast, it was imperative to bring Armor piercing artillery of the highest caliber and Energon weapons rated at over Six Thousand Degrees Kelvin, anything less and one could not penetrate their rocky hides. Unfortunately for the Corps of today, they were only armed with 'less'.

"Go! Run!" Scourge shouted before transforming into his armored truck form and rolling away. He was not equipped with sensor panels

in the back of his alt-mode, so he couldn't see the true breadth of the devastation behind him. But, as he dodged falling boulders, the screams of those who did not, followed by great tremors did not fill the Veteran Combatron with confidence. The Planesbeast was agitated. It'd been disturbed by the constant artillery fire from both sides and was more than likely just getting up to move. But to ants, the movement of giants was akin to the end of the world. The Combatron Corps had to roll for their lives. But again, this was Velocitron: a world of speed. And, in a world of speed, the Slow do not make it.

Scourge felt his tires lose traction. The ground beneath him, displaced by the creature's rise, gave out and he fell through a cloud of sand. The Black Combatron transformed and reached out, instinctively flailing for something, *anything* to grab onto. His first attempts to grab hold do not grant his grasp purchase. So, he deploys his Energon Short sword and plunges it deep into the nearby rock; that does the trick. The Velocitronian slows to a stop, anchoring himself. The others aren't so lucky.

From the corner of his eye, Scourge catches glimpse of another of the Corps unlucky enough to be swallowed by Velocitron. The Black Combatron watches his falling brother-in-arms change form, hand reached out to him. With his free hand he reaches out to grab them, but he's nowhere near close enough to make contact. The two Combatrons miss. Scourge watches the bot plummet into the dark below, but he can't hear them; not over the Planesbeast's wails. He doesn't hear their body smash against the bottom either.

With the Planesbeast rising over him now, Scourge takes his sword's handle in both hands and holds on for dear life. In what he assumes to be his last moments, Scourge feels no regret. For if history remembers one in a thousand of them, then it will be filled with stories of who they were and what they did for their people. The Slow will have a legacy, if only through their demise. That is as close to recognition as any of them could ever hope to achieve. So, he shuts his eyes and waits to join the rest of the Corps in the Well of All Sparks. But it was not his time yet.

Some time passed. Eventually, the ground stopped shaking. Scourge didn't know how long it'd taken but, when he opened his eyes and engaged his optics again, he found himself still clinging to his Sword - his lifeline - an eerie silence in the air. The bot's hands, illuminated by the Magenta-bright, burning Energon sword, were caked in soil. The Sword they were clenched around was superheating the rock it'd been embedded in, causing it to drip molten magma down along the rockface which helped to illuminate Scouge's view.

Before he can be unseated by the melting rock, Scourge removes his non-dominant hand and reaches up. He plunged his fingers into the streams of falling sand and found purchase on solid rock. Scourge

removes his anchor from the rock and recalls the Energon into its hilt. Then, with effort, the Black Combatron starts to climb.

Hand over hand, Scourge rises. Despite fate's best efforts to the contrary, the Commando's inner strength surges and he defies his premature burial. Some cycle, he would have to pay the ferryman's toll, but that would not be this cycle.

It took Scourge fifteen kliks to pull himself out of the ground and another few nanokliks to rise to his feet. When he finally stood again at his full height and cast his gaze amidst the catastrophe he'd survived, he soon wish that he hadn't.

Where, only kliks ago there was an insurgent position atop a mountain and a Platoon of brave soldiers rushing desperately to stop them, now there was a gigantic gorge. The site of their grand battle was just the resting site of a Planesbeast. Scourge turned the opposite way and actually saw the beast in question several miles away, lumbering on all 4s in the distance, swinging it's great, rocky tail as it covered great distances on limbs too massive in scale to comprehend. The creature had left nothing but a pit of devastation and death in its wake.

The Black Combatron turned back to the gorge and spent a few Kliks waiting in silence. Scourge looked to his left. He looked to his right. He cried out, but there was no one left to hear him. Scourge was alone - again. He had again been the sole survivor of yet another massacre. Only this time, *both sides* had incurred incalculable losses. One would think that, after 9 tours of duty - that was Nine-Hundred Stellar Cycles at war, he'd have grown numb to the feeling of being the last, but he didn't. This time, like his first and all the others in between, he wanted so badly to stop. To give up and allow death to take him... but he couldn't.

The last Combatron took a breath, then he checked his gear. Twin-barreled Assault blaster, Energon Short Sword, Energon double-sided hand-axe, the Spark in his chest - all accounted for. Scourge took in the devastation one last time. The freshly planted Gorge and limbs poking out of the Desert sands were the only indication that two opposing sides had once battled here for the 'glory of Velocitron'. Once it had been a battlefield, now it was a mass grave.

Having been made the sole survivor yet again, Scourge began to wonder if fate had something else in store for him or if his survival was just some sort of sick cosmic curse. Ultimately, however, it didn't matter. Regardless of why it was him that'd survived, Scourge *had* survived, so he had to keep going. Because this was Velocitron; and no one was going to wait for him.

Scourge turned from the mass grave and started on his way back to base. He'd carry on from these dust and echoes, as he had plenty

of times before. Those swallowed by Velocitron? Their race had ended,  
but his was just getting started.

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