
Episode 436 – Still ignoring that premise

It was a nice apartment, well-lit, spacious and well furnished. A pair of nice, plush leather couches set the scene, arranged in a neat L-shape, with a small coffee table between them. What dominated the room, however, was the massive flat-screen against one wall, so big as to loom over all else around it. By comparison, the broad windows with views out over a strangely futuristic metropolis and the other doorways leading away to gods alone knew where seemed like afterthoughts.

“So to quickly summarise,” Tsuneo considered as he and Rick entered, “the human supremacist villain voiced by Clancy Brown made an evil clone of the super-strong, altruistic alien who has a distinct red and blue colour scheme.”

“Exactly,” Rick nodded.

“Well when you put it like that…”

“What are you two going on about?” Rebecca asked as she and Dan entered the apartment.

“We were considering the potentially interesting ‘humans in giant robot suits’ plot in part one of the fic,” Tsuneo explained.

“Was that a thing?” Dan tilted his head in thought. “I really can’t remember.”

“It does seem like a short epoch ago,” Rebecca admitted.

“So anyway, based on that, I was filling in Tsuneo on the history of related things in Transformers media,” Rick continued.

“It does seem that humans trying to stop Transformers, duplicate their tech or both happens a lot,” Tsuneo agreed. “A precedent that the fic seems to be utterly disinterested in following through with.”

“There’s a lot of that,” Dan nodded.

“So Rick,” Tsuneo continued, “with that out of the way, there’s something in this fic that I feel that I’d like to get some more context for.”

“Fire away,” Rick nodded.

“Now it’s fair to say that Crosshairs is being an utter jerk towards Rangeblade because she’s a Decepticon,” Tsuneo explained.

“Entirely reasonable.”

“Now what I’m trying to figure out is the sort of mindset involved,” Tsuneo continued. “You know, why he’s assuming that she’s going to betray them or kill them all or the like. I mean, yes, I know they’ve been involved in a genocidal civil war for countless millennia, but he seems to take it all rather personally”

“I get what you’re saying,” he nodded. “See, this is one of those cases where we really need to go beyond ‘they are the enemy’ and look at the personalities of those involved.”

“Which I’d imagine is difficult, given that deep characterisation and the Transformers movies were not exactly friends,” Rebecca smirked.

“No arguments there, and it’s fair to say that the Decepticons get the worst of that deal,” Rick agreed. “Putting aside the bulk use of generics, most of the ‘named’ Decepticons rarely get more than a namedrop and then shouting something before exploding.”

“Not exactly compelling storytelling,” Tsuneo noted.

“It is not, but even then we can take a few things from there,” Rick noted. “Barricade is deceptive, Starcream is egotistical and arrogant, or that Bonecrusher was willing to smash through a packed bus to get to Prime, for example. There’s a few others that get a bit better developed through direct statements though. Dreadbolt engaged in a spree of ‘bank robberies’ that were just excuses for him to kill people and destroy property. And yet the TRF were willing to let him out over Berserker.”

Tsuneo nodded. “Thus why I was looking for a slightly deeper examination of the subject, as I figured you could tell me more.”

“Fortunately there is a wealth of material on the subject,” Rick nodded. “Techspecs, website bios, expanded universe comics and novels and so on.”

“So does that tell us anything about the Decepticons that could give us a context for Crosshairs’ actions?”

“Quite a bit,” Rick nodded. “So let’s start with Barricade. Not only is he deceptive, but he’s actively malicious about it. He enjoys messing with people’s heads and betraying them. That’s why he chose a cop car as his vehicle mode; it’s an authority symbol that he can abuse.”

“Charming,” Rebecca noted.

“Bonecrusher is a hate-filled murder machine who loathes basically everyone and everything in existence,” Rick continued. “So he violently lashes out at anyone who even looks at him funny. The guy is basically a massively pent-up ball of psychotic fury waiting for a chance to explode.”

“Not the nicest of people,” Dan added.

“Not at all,” Rick nodded. “Which is a contrast to Brawl, who just likes to destroy things full stop, and doesn’t care for anything else. Brawl will blow you up simply because he enjoys it. Being ordered to do it is just the icing on the cake.”

“So how about Demolishor?” Tsuneo asked. “On the surface it looks like he’s just chilling outside Shanghai before the Autobots come in to shoot him.”

“Actually, that’s a part of his modus operandi,” Rick explained. “He’ll sneak into a civilian settlement and hide there until the time is right. Then he transforms and goes on indiscriminate cross-country rampages in the middle of densely populated areas. When the Autobots caught him in Shanghai he’d already torn through several other cities on Earth.”

“Lovely,” Rebecca sighed.

“The other Constructicons are similarly charming people,” Rick continued. “Mixmaster likes to concoct deadly chemicals and test them on unwitting subjects, feeling that simply shooting an enemy is boring. Rampage likes wading into the middle of a battle with no concern for his own health as long as he gets to destroy stuff. And let’s not forget that these guys didn’t hesitate to kill one of their own to provide parts to revive Megatron.”

“Well they are a wonderful bunch of people,” Tsuneo noted.

“Oh and Berserker, the guy who the TRF refused to release?” Rick spoke up. “He eats people. Not because he gets anything out of it or the like because he’s a robot and all. No, he does it because he can.”

“I see.” Tsuneo finished. “So what you’re saying is that Movie Decepticons are thoroughly awful people as a whole.”

“It does seem to be the case,” Rick nodded.

“So based on that, it does seem that there’s a case for Crosshairs being a bit of a jerk towards Rangeblade,” Tsuneo admitted. “Given that everyone around her seems to be an insane axe murderer and the like.”

“That does seem to be the case.”

“And then further from that, what about Drift being an ex-Decepticon?” Tsuneo asked. “Everybody seems to be okay with that.”

“Yeah well that’s the thing,” Rick scratched his chin. “There’s really two issues with that. The first is that Drift’s allegiance as an ex-Decepticon is never addressed on-screen. It’s more of an inherited trait from his G1 counterpart than anything else.”

“I can see how that would be a problem,” Tsuneo nodded. “The former Decepticon thing is more of an assumed trait than an actual one.”

“And while Crosshairs doesn’t get along with him in the movie, that’s simply because Crosshairs is a jerk to everyone,” Rick added. “Nothing to do with Drift himself.”

“Of course. So what’s the other thing?”

“Based on bits in the background from Last Knight, we can say that Drift was an Autobot in the 1860s,” Rick noted. “And that’s simply at the latest point that he could have been a Decepticon. For all we know he could have been an Autobot for millennia before that”

“Also fair,” Tsuneo nodded. “So in short, their trusting Drift is not a meaningful comparison at all; both because he’s been an Autobot for at least a century and a half, and even then he might have been one all along.”

“Basically yes,” Rick nodded.

“Good morning everyone,” the Voice crashed headlong into the conversation.

“And good morning to you too, Dirt Boss,” Rick shot back.

“So Voice, what’s on the torture docket for today?” Rebecca asked.

“The… what?” the Voice managed, sounding confused.

“The daily dose of pain,” Rick suggested.

“Content of the hurt locker,” Tsuneo added.

“Crude assemblage of text,” Rebecca finished.

“Oh, yes, today’s review,” the Voice replied.

“I thought putting it like that would work,” Rebecca admitted.

“For today we’ll be reading the second part of Cross in the Light,” the Voice explained.

“Does it actually end or does it just stop?” Tsuneo asked.

“Being honest here, did it ever really start?” Rick interjected.

“This is also true,” Tsuneo admitted.

“And, as always, once it’s over I would like to get your reviews and thoughts on the fic,” the Voice finished.

“What can we actually say about a fic that has nothing in it?” Dan asked.

“Strangely enough, we always manage to find some way to manage,” Rebecca countered. “Make of this what you will.”

“So beside the obvious answers of ‘nothing’, ‘cheap teen drama’ and ‘Jamie devours all of time, space and reality’ what do you think will actually happen in this chunk of the fic?” Tsuneo asked as he took his place on the couch.

“I have a radical idea,” Rick offered as he and the others joined him.

“Do tell.”

“Decepticons attack.”

“A Decepticon attack in a Transformers fanfic?” Tsuneo asked. “Don’t you think that’s a bit far-fetched?”

“I’m sorry, I have no idea what I was thinking,” Rick finished as the big screen turned on, converting the world over to script format.

> Chapter 11
> Crosshairs POV
> It's been two weeks since Jamie left.

Rick: [Crosshairs] We are but hollow shells without her.

> I don't know what Prime's plan is now, but we haven't started
> his plans for building trust with Rangeblade.

Rebecca: Instead everyone spent two weeks sitting on their hands and looking awkwardly at each other

> Fine by me if he's not bothering until Jamie comes back,

Tsuneo: Just a quick reminder that Jamie is the only thing in all of time and space that matters.

> whenever that may be. I refuse to be a part of a team with that con.

> Today is what humans call Thanksgiving. Bee and Prime know what this holiday entails,

Dan: Time to stuff your face with turkey and fall asleep in front of the game

> but Drift, Hound, and I came to Earth a few weeks before N.E.S.T. was terminated,

Rebecca: And as such they know nothing about human holidays, because there’s no way that they could learn about them otherwise

> and we had to scatter into
> hiding. We're wondering why Jamie never brought it up or invited us when this holiday took place in

> her dimension.

Rick: Because that would mean introducing you to her family, and there's no way that wouldn't be awkward

> Figures, the first year we're doing this holiday, and she's not here.

Tsuneo: Haven't they been on earth for at least three years by this point?
Rebecca: At least, yeah
Tsuneo: And spent most of that living with a human in the United States
Rebecca: Pretty much
Tsuneo: Makes you wonder why the subject had never come up before now
Rebecca: Because it wasn't about Jamie
Tsuneo: I can't argue with your logic there

> I try to think at least my sister is here, but oh yeah, that fragging con is still here.

Dan: She might as well change her name to Buzzkill at this point

> I don't think today will be a good day. Drift is already displeased our friend isn't here.

Rebecca: But he's also a try-hard weeb, so he probably doesn't care about Thanksgiving unless they have sushi rolls

> I find him in the barn a few feet from the con, talking on the phone. I assume he's talking to Jamie.

Dan: [Drift] Yeah, two large with pepperoni, and a side of wings. Here by seven.
Tsuneo: [Crosshairs] Yep, definitely Jamie.

> I don't stay for long, but I think he'll be on the phone for a while.

> In her holoform, Lightning helps Tessa and Vivian

Rebecca: Just a quick reminder that Tessa and Vivian exist and we're good.

> set up for dinner as Cade and Hot Rod, in his
> holoform, cook dinner. Wonder if Lightning bought a nice dress?

Dan: It's a hologram; she can just change her appearance as she needs
Rick: But it's the thought that counts.

> That would explain why she went
> out with Tessa the other day. I have no problem if she wants to spend time with Tessa or go into
> town.

Dan: [Crosshairs] After all, Tessa isn't a filthy Decepticon.

> It's when she wants to spend time with Rangeblade, I have a problem with, even if it's around
> the property.

Rebecca: Crosshairs, you need to accept that she's a grown robot and can make her own choices

> Optimus Prime POV

Rick: [Prime] Man, I feel like I've been sitting this one out.

> This year's Thanksgiving doesn't feel complete, no matter what I tell myself.

Tsuneo: He wanted to get some squash for the side dish but the store was all out.

> Yes, Lighting is here, but Jamie isn't. Even if she was here, we'd have Crosshairs not liking
> Rangeblade.

Dan: So is the fic actually going to start or just keep looping itself?
Rick: Depends. Is that Sonny and Cher that I hear in the background?

> The others still aren't sure about letting her stay, but they take the avoiding her
> approach rather than trying to get her to leave.

Tsuneo: There is a two mile exclusion zone around Rangeblade

> It'll be some time before Crosshairs trusts Rangeblade and for her to feel welcomed.

Rebecca: Really fic? I never would have figured that out for myself

> I worry about what'll happen until that day.

Dan: Probably nothing, judging by what's happened so far.

> "Sir, are you sure this is a good idea?" Lightning asks

Rick: Standing on stacked lawn chairs, trying to string up lights.

> once I tell everyone, but Crosshairs, Rangeblade should have a holoform.

Rebecca: Because everyone wants her to sit with them for dinner.

> "I still can't believe Drift lied before," Hound comments.

Dan: Did we just skip a line there?

> "It was for a good reason,

Rick: He just didn't want to split the cheque, that's all

> though we all knew he'd be pissed," Drift explains,

Tsuneo: So what you're saying is that he told the truth form a certain point of view.

> "and still will be."
> "But it's an important step in the plan.

Dan: Then all you need is the free bird seed and the anvil and you're good.

> You know how bad things will turn out if we use our bipedal form," Bee adds.

Rebecca: Bringing giant robots to a Thanksgiving dinner would be very awkward

> While we have guns on our holoforms,

Tsuneo: I have numerous questions about that, not the least of which is 'why'?

> I will take them from everyone and lock them up.

Dan: It's not a proper Thanksgiving unless somebody has a gun at the table,

> I know the speech Crosshairs will give me.

Rebecca: And how it will turn into the Democrats being communists who want to take away free speech so they can implement the New World Order

> Enough of this for now.

Dan: [Prime] You know what, all things considered, what say we just scrap dinner so nobody has to talk to anyone?

> "So, I know it's likely too soon, but when is Jamie coming back?" Lightning asks.

Rick: Quick, this conversation wasn't about Jamie so let's make it about Jamie.

> "I don't know," Drift says, sadness in his voice. I don't know if he's always like this when she leaves
> or not.

Rebecca: Prime has never paid attention to Drift before, and frankly I don't blame him.

> I have him stay with me as the others go off to do their own thing to talk to him.

> Lightning POV
> With Crosshairs somewhere else around the property, Hound and I can program Rangeblade's
> holoform. She's happy to hear Jamie, and I designed her holoform before Jamie left.

Dan: [Lightning] Which is why we sat on it for two weeks.

> Tessa doesn't like how Rangeblade's holoform has a goth style.

Rick: She doesn't like her constant raids on the borders of the Roman Empire

> "I thought we were trying to show Crosshairs she's not a con?"
> "A con would pick any style to blend in. Jamie and I think this style suites Rangeblade."

Dan: Does Rangeblade get a say in this?

> Though I picked out the formal attire, the short black dress, black leggings, and knee-high black
> boots fit. Rangeblade didn't want to add the makeup and black fingernails Jamie and I decided
> would fit the outfit.

Rebecca: Meanwhile Rangeblade had her heart set on a retro pastels look

> I picked up a nice red dress that ends at my knees, light tan tights, and half-inch black heels.

Rick: The phased plasma rifle in the 40 watt range goes wonderfully with the heels.

> I found a black jacket that matches perfectly with the dress.

Dan: More words have been spent on describing their outfits then Hound's dialogue so far. Make of this what you will

> Rangeblade, Tessa, and I will change later when dinner is almost ready.

Rebecca: [Lighting] And what's the point if we don't keep everyone waiting?

> Not sure what Vivian is doing with her outfit for dinner.

Tsuneo: Nor does she care

> I suspect Drift has something nice.

Rick: In keeping in the spirit of the season, Drift is wearing a traditional hakama with a kimono, accessorised with tabi socks and a kataginu.

> Not sure if Bumblebee, Crosshairs, Hot Rod or Hound have something nice or don't care.

Dan: Bumblebee is wearing a black t-shirt, yellow jacket, yellow shorts and a cap with cute little horns on it
Rebecca: Meanwhile, Hound is just wearing his bowling team uniform

> "All you're doing is not wearing your trench coat," I comment, seeing Crosshairs' idea of formal
> attire,

Rick: Hey, don’t go knocking on his Columbo cosplay.

> "though it makes what you're wearing much nicer."
> "Exactly," he smiles as he sits on the bed beside me.
> I think it's the best we'll get from Crosshairs.

Dan: Making an effort is a bit too much for him.

> I tried to see what Drift is doing and possibly wearing at dinner, but he wants to be left alone, which
> even concerns Crosshairs.

Tsuneo: This has been ‘Robots getting dressed.’
Rebecca: Come on, it’s much more than that.
Tsuneo: Seriously?
Rebecca: Yeah, it’s ‘Robots’ fake avatars getting dressed for a dinner they can’t eat.’
Tsuneo: Of course, that’s so much more important.

> Cade POV

Rick: [Cade] I am still in this fic.

> Like everyone else, it's hard for me to think this is a good day, even though I haven't done
> Thanksgiving since the shit with KSI and the seed.

Dan: ‘The shit with KSI and the seed’ is also my review of Age of Extinction

> Though Thanksgiving hasn't been great since
> Tessa's mom died. It's been nothing but another Thursday since Tessa left for college

Rebecca: And her voice changed

> since I couldn't talk to or visit her.

Rick: [Cade] I keep calling her, but strangely her phone is never on…

> Crosshairs' sister is back, so this should be a good day for all of us, but it's not.

Rebecca: And it will never be a good day as long as you’re Mark Whalberg.

> We can only make the best out of the day.

> Rangeblade POV

Rick: [Cade] No, wait, guess I’m not in this fic after all.

> I don't understand what this Thanksgiving holiday is about,

Rick: Mostly stuffing your face with turkey

> but there's a mix of emotions around here.

Dan: Deep-seated resentment seems to be the main one here.

> Even though I haven't been here for long, it seems unusual for Drift to be down.

Tsuneo: Because the silent, disciplined warrior is usually the life of the party.

> I'm glad I'm able to get into his room without Crosshairs seeing me.

Rebecca: She had to hide behind a potplant and sneak food off the table while he wasn’t looking, but it’s the thought that counts

> I'm tired of him yelling at me. Though I'm not sure how to cheer him up.

Dan: Sugar in the fuel tank usually works.

> Oh, duh, it's easy, but it's likely temporary.

> Third-person POV
> Dinner is ready three hours later.

Rebecca: Lightning is still getting changed, Crosshairs is banging on the table demanding food, and Prime and Hound have wandered off to watch the game. Ah, Thanksgiving.

> Crosshairs is displeased Rangeblade is allowed to be with them and that she has a holoform,

Rick: Meanwhile, in the last nine million chapters.

> but he's more bothered by how unhappy Drift is.

Dan: Drift has spent all day writing a haiku and sharpening his sword.
Tsuneo: Dark.

> Everyone is disappointed Jamie can't be here,

Rebecca: Are they? Are they really?

> but he's really disappointed. Crosshairs thought. It's
> not exactly the same, but I hate I have my sister back, but Drift's girl isn't here.

Tsuneo: Crosshairs is strongly considering a prisoner exchange.

> Everyone talked about what they are thankful for,

Rick: There will never be another Transformers film featuring Marky Mark.

> even though mentioning Jamie was hard on everyone.

Tsuneo: Since they all know she’s never coming back again. [Pause] Oh wait, she’s just gone for a couple of weeks. Never mind.

> Crosshairs did a speech about how happy he is Lightning is back, but of course, he threw
> in how displeased he is Rangeblade is with them.

Rick: Hound accuses him of having a one-track mind.

> It disgusts everyone he did this and tries to
> change the subject. The problem is what to talk about?

Dan: So...
Rick: So...
Dan: Well, um...
Rick: Yeah

[Pause]

Rick: I like Zabanya
Dan: Oh god damn it Kale!

> Hound POV
> I can't believe Crosshairs had to ruin the dinner. As if this feels a little off to begin with.

Dan [Hound]: Also I am still in this fic

> Bumblebee POV
> I'm not surprised Crosshairs had to ruin the dinner.

Rick: Prime POV.
Tsuneo: [Prime] I'm disappointed that Crosshairs had to ruin the dinner.
Rick: Drift POV.
Tsuneo: [Drift] I'm indifferent that Crosshairs had to ruin the dinner.
Rick: Jolt POV.
Tsuneo: [Jolt] I am ambivalent that Crosshairs had to ruin the dinner. Also, I am still in this fic.
Rick: Hot Rod POV.
Tsuneo: [Hot Rod] Forget it, Dude. Let's go bowling.

> He'll take any opportunity he can to remind us how much he hates Rangeblade.

Rick [Bumblebee]: Also, I too am still in this fic.

> Drift POV
> We all know Crosshairs hates Rangeblade,

Dan: He even set his Facebook status to 'hates Rangeblade'

> but I feel like part of why he brought his hate for her up
> is to hide how disappointed he is Jamie can't be here.

Rebecca: Of course, it must be Jamie. There is no other possible explanation

> "Come on, let's go for a walk," Lightning insists.

Dan: Going for walks. It's what this fic does when it's not stewing in silent resentment.

> She also gets Crosshairs to join us.
> The sun is setting as we walk to the hill where Crosshairs made the memorial for Lightning. Though
> it's gone now.

Dan: It was torn down and replaced with a block of townhouses

> "Yes, I destroyed it. Why keep it? I'm here," Lightning explains, seeing how displeased Crosshairs
> is.

Tsuneo: Did she consider asking him about it first?
Rebecca: The idea of people actually talking to each other is an alien concept to this fic.

> "But-."
> "But nothing, Crosshairs!" She scolds.

Rebecca: [Lighting] I'm mad at how you keep getting angry!

> I sit on the ground, not caring what the problem is.

Tsuneo: Drift has had enough of this horse hockey, and frankly I'm with him.

> Instead of continuing the discussion, Crosshairs
> and Lightning sit with me, and we watch the sunset.

Dan: All quietly stewing in their unresolved tension

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> Chapter 12
> Rangeblade POV
> I've been here six weeks and tore apart Crosshairs' friendship with Jamie. What else can I
> unintentionally ruin without even trying?

Rebecca: [Rangeblade] I don't know yet, but it's going to be fun finding out!

> Oh scrap, that's what else I can unintentionally ruin.

Rick: Christmas. It's coming up soon.

> Forget it, I'm better off being found and killed by Megatron.

Dan: [Rangeblade] Maybe I can sell their location to Megatron, and he'll let me off the hook.
Everybody wins.

> I thought the others were still asleep as I quietly walk out of the barn. I don't know why they don't
> have rooms in the house

Tsuneo: Maybe because they're giant robots and as such couldn't fit inside the house?
Rick: You may be on to something there

> or do they and they feel the need to sleep in the barn to keep an eye on me?

Rebecca: Or maybe they just want to be as far away from Marky Mark as possible.

> That is apparently what's going on as I find Drift sitting on the ground by the barn. Yet his back is
> facing the barn.

Tsuneo: The concept of setting a guard seems entirely foreign to her.

> He turns to see who's approaches him but allows me to sit beside him. I don't know
> what to say. There's a lot that goes through my processor when I think of Drift.

Rick: Mostly about being carried slowly on the wind or water

> Do I even bring up the past?

Dan: Why not? Everyone else does.

> "Took you centuries, but I believe you're finally on the right path," he finally says, smiling.

Tsuneo: [Rangeblade] Mate, if you start going on about the eightfold paths, I'm leaving.

> Again, I don't know what to say. I'm not mad Drift switched sides,

Rebecca: [Rangeblade] I just wish he hadn't taken all the cool ranch Doritos with him.

> leaving me with no one during the war,

Tsuneo: She's all along among this army of killer space robots.

> or that he chose a human to love even though I like Drift.

Rebecca: I see a 'not that there's anything wrong with that' coming.

> For all I know, he might have thought I was killed in the war, or we'd never see each other again.

Tsuneo: [Rangeblade] Sorry, hoping. Hoping we'd never see each other again.

> Drift and I unofficially dated for a few years

Rebecca: My, what an incredible and not even slightly forced coincidence

> before he was attacked for saving innocent Cybertronians who didn't pick a side in the war.

Dan: Suddenly, Drift has backstory!
Rebecca: Rangeblade however remains a cardboard standee.

> I was told he was killed by Autobots. I didn't believe
> that; I feared Turmoil killed him after finding out we were unofficially dating,

Rick: The Decepticons have very strict rules on these things.

> but he never came after
> me. The only other reason Turmoil would kill Deadlock is his attitude.

Dan: He couldn't stand Deadlock's love of skateboarding and wearing his baseball cap backwards

> Deadlock didn't always act as
> second in command, but more like Starscream, looking to be in command.

Rebecca: Deadlock was the Bill Shorten of their team

> Not sure if Megatron would've wanted Deadlock dead.

Tsuneo: Megatron's response to the situation was 'Deadlock who?'

> I discovered Deadlock was still alive when we accidentally ran into
> each other years later.

Rebecca: Well, gee, maybe if you'd brought any of this up any time in the last six weeks rather than endlessly moping…

> He was with a team of Autobots, searching for Cybertronians.

> **Flashback**
> Walking around a destroyed city, minding my own business.

Rick: Casually strolling through the desolate warzone

> I see a Cybertronian who, I swear, looks like Deadlock.

Dan: Maybe it’s just a Generic reusing the same CG model

> I must be hallucinating.
> The hallucination grabbed my hand and led me to an abandoned building.

Rebecca: It’s a very grabby hallucination

> "Yes, it's me," Deadlock says, "I miss you so much."
> I said nothing as he hugs me.

Tsuneo: [Rangeblade] Okay, so this is nice and all, but I have like a thousand questions.

> A hallucination can't touch like this. He's alive, but...
> "Y-you joined the Autobots?"

Rick: Yep; fully baptised and everything. Even had his first communion.

> "Yes, I did, and you should as well.

Dan: [Drift] They pay well above minimum and the benefits are amazing.

> I have come to realize Megatron has been in the wrong this whole time.

Tsuneo: At first he was okay with the whole ‘genocide’ thing, but now he’s having some doubts.

> I am so ashamed of all the Cybertronians I killed thinking Megatron was right."
> "How do you know they aren't lying?"

Rebecca: I think that ‘killing innocent people is wrong’ is a pretty convincing argument.

> "Think about it, Rangeblade."
> "No!" I slap him across the faceplate, "they reprogrammed your processor!"

Tsuneo: Conversely, I think her counter-argument needs some work

> I slap him again before running out of the building.

Dan: Then run back in and slap him a third time for good measure.

> "A Decepticon!" An Autobot yells.
> "Let them go!" The leader of the Autobots orders.

Rick: [Prime] Don’t mind me, just getting my appearance fee.

> I run as fast as I can away from the scene, away from the one I love, knowing we'll never be
> together again.

> **Flashback ends**

Rebecca: [Rangeblade] And now we are together again.

> "I'm sorry for slapping you," I apologize.

Dan: [Drift] That’s okay. I’m sorry for betraying everything we both stood for.

> "What..oh, that.

Rick: [Drift] That’s like, every day for me. Twice on Sundays.

> I know you were angery at me."
> "But you were right; I can't believe I thought Megatron was doing good.

Rick: He was burning down cities and slaughtering the innocent for purely peaceful purposes

> I should have followed you
> to Earth centuries ago, instead of waiting for Megatron to tell me to come."

Dan: Rangeblade spent centuries staring at her phone, waiting for Megatron to call

> "I KNEW IT!" Crosshairs yells.
> Drift, and I get up to see all the Autobots standing at the barn's entrance,

Dan: [Rangeblade] How long have you all been there?
Rick: [Hound] Way, way too long.

> but not for long as Crosshairs walks up to me.
> "Crosshairs, stop," Lightning begs, knowing what he's about to do.
> Crosshairs slaps me hard across the faceplate that I fall to the ground before he shoves Drift out of
> the way and attacks me.

Rebecca: [Lightning] Being a seasoned robot warrior, I was powerless to defend myself.

> He's blinded by anger that he doesn't see Lighting approach, and he punches her out.

Dan: Oh, he knew. He’s been waiting a long time to do that.

> Hound and Prime are able to pull him away, but he's fighting their hold on him.

Dan: Crosshairs is making a solid point as to who is the dangerous one within their ranks.

> "I TOLD YOU, SHE PLANS ON KILLING US!" He rages before Bee injects him with something that
> knocks him out.

Rebecca: You go to snooze now.
Rick: SNOOZE!

> Hound and Prime take him into the barm and lay him on a berth while Drift looks over Lightning.

Tsuneo: Well I see no way at all this could make the situation worse
Rebecca: Gods no

> "She's fine besides being knocked out," he tells me.

Dan: She’s fine save for the blow to the head
Rick: The NFL has already cleared her to play

> "For now," I fret, my mind thinking, what if Crosshairs fights me again and seriously injures Lightning
> when she steps in to end the fight?

Tsuneo: [Rangeblade] I'm fine, by the way.

> "Are you ok?" Bee frets.
> I feel dizzy, and myself falling to the ground before everything goes black.

Rebecca: …is it too soon for another 'Snooze?'
Rick: Yeah, probably.

> Drift POV

Tsuneo: [Drift] Seriously, what the crap guys?

> We put Lighting and Rangeblade on berths, away from Crosshairs. We have no other safe place to
> keep them away from Crosshairs while they're in their bipedal mode.

Dan: You can say robot mode, you know.
Tsuneo: I'm just happy they're not saying anthropomorphic or whatever mode.

> Crosshairs will be out for six hours.

Rebecca: More if the lazy bum sleeps in.

> Hopefully, Lightning wakes up before him, or things will get worse.
> "How the hell was Rangeblade a con?" Hound questions.

Rebecca: Didn't you already establish that?

> "I believe she wanted to change sides or forget the war altogether. She likely fled from Megatron
> and is afraid he'll find her," I tell him.

Rick: [Drift] I base this on the elaborate backstory we've established for her.

> "She said Megatron contacted her," Hound reminds us.
> "She likely obeyed, but some point afterward, she fled," I explain though I'm only guessing.

Dan: Maybe she just got lost along the way

> The others want to know what happened,

Rebecca: Cheap drama

> but getting Rangeblade to tell her story will be a challenge.

Tsuneo: Maybe if someone asked her?
Dan: Whoah there, don't want to go overboard chief.

> We all believe Crosshairs needs to hear this part of Rangeblade's story but know he will
> not listen.
> For once, I am glad Jamie had to leave for a while.

Rick: You can just say that you don't like her.

> Rangeblade wakes up quickly but is worried about Lightning. I have her take a walk with me.

Tsuneo: Mostly we're just getting her out of the way.

> Hot Rod asks to join us, aware there likely won't be any conversations during the walk.

Rebecca: Which given his ridiculous French accent is something that we're all okay with

> Hot Rod POV
> I feel bad for Rangeblade. She doesn't want to be a Decepticon.

Tsuneo: Really fic? I would have never guessed that if you didn't keep endlessly harping on the same point

> There's no way a con can fake the way she's been behaving.

Rebecca: Hot Rod's used to women faking things around him

> I don't like how I'm likely getting an idea of how Drift was treated when Prime let him join his team.

Tsuneo: They made him get them lunch and sit at the front of the class and everything.

> Drift, Lightning, and I being her friends is a good start, but Crosshairs'
> behavior towards her is a serious problem.

Rebecca: And we're almost at the point of considering thinking about doing something about it. Maybe.

> "Do you trust me?" Rangeblade shyly asks me.
> "Yes, I do. You don't display actions a con would.

Dan: [Hot Rod] You haven't cackled evilly once, for example.

> Even with a calculated plan to gain our trust, a
> con wouldn't be able to act like you. It would be a challenge for a con to want to spend time with us.

Rick: Because there are absolutely no deceptive Decepticons at all. They're all very straightforward and honest. Just ask Starscream, Barricade, Swindle, Shatter, Blackjack, Doubledealer or Octane, for example

> I believe they'd angrily refuse for some time — or at the very least, have a hard time acting afraid of
> how the others treat them."
> "I believe everything will be ok.

Rick: Really?
Dan: No.

> It's just going to take time,"

Dan: A whole lot of precious time.

> Drift adds, smiling.

> -----

> Chapter 13
> Lightning POV
> I don't like how Crosshairs had to be drugged, how he would have taken the fight further.

Tsuneo: Well gee willikers, maybe if you hadn't let it get to this point?

> Even if we
> all used holoforms for some time; Crosshairs can still harm Rangeblade. Heck, he'd protest the idea
> is letting us be vulnerable to Rangeblade's planned attack.

Rebecca: At this point Crosshairs might as well be writing a manifesto in an isolated cabin

> I fear there are going to be many physical altercations no matter what we do.

Rick: From now on we're resolving all conflicts through Hungry Hungry Hippos.

> I must talk to Prime about what we can do to keep Rangeblade safe.

Dan: Have you considered putting her into witness protection?

> "...I'm sorry, but we have to do this," Prime finishes.
> In all honesty, I'm amazed he didn't think to build a brig in the barn already.

Tsuneo: Because a wooden barn would be a great way to contain a giant robot.

> No way there hasn't been issues; even a team that gets along well can have issues.

Rebecca: You know, constantly attacking each other. Issues.

> I assume then that the punishment was being confined to the bots' chosen bedroom in the house.

Rick: Go to your garage and think about what you just did.

> Which will not work in this case. I
> hope we're wrong, and Crosshairs will not attack Rangeblade further than he did earlier today.

Tsuneo: No, you're right. He's going to be reasonable, go and cool off, get his head straight and the like. Then attack her tomorrow.

> I'm glad to see Rangeblade spending time with the others, though it's only been with Drift and Hot
> Rod. At least most of the others don't hate her as they did when we first brought her.

Dan: Hound now begrudgingly accepts her existence. It's a start.

> "Are you ok?" I ask, unsure what Crosshairs might have done once he accidentally knocked me out.
> "I'm fine...this time."
> I hate how she already thinks Crosshairs will fight her again as much as I know it's very likely.

Dan: They hate that she thinks it's going to happen even though it's going to happen.

> "What are we going to do about this, sir?" Hot Rod asks.
> "It's going to be a challenge. We can't keep Crosshairs locked up, even if it means Rangeblade'will
> be safe."

Rebecca: The idea of taking steps to ensure that a perpetrator can't get to their victim is beyond them

> This made Rangeblade afraid.
> "Then I will protect her," Hot Rod declares.
> "I can't believe we're going to have fighting among teammates for a while," Bee frets.

Dan: Bee's going to ditch these losers and hang out with Bulkhead and Arcee.

> "This is going to make the plan a challenge to do," Hound frets.
> "The plan is a challenge

Tsuneo: It’s a challenge and it’s a challenge

> even if Crosshairs didn't fight Rangeblade, even if we didn't think he would fight her,"

Tsuneo: He won’t fight her unless he does.
Dan: You are doing that a lot.
Tsuneo: It worries me.

> Prime explains, "I am not sure how to go about this, but something needs to be done."

Rick: He has the combined total wisdom of his race stored in his chest. I’m sure there’s some stuff in there about conflict management

> Drift walks away, which confuses all of us.

Tsuneo: Drift’s trying to maintain his cool loner image. Doting on the human really isn’t helping.

> Hound POV
> It's unusual for Drift to be this down about Jamie being gone.

Rebecca: Usually he’s elated to be separated from her.

The more I think about it, I think he's
> worried about how things will be when she returns, which could be months from now.

Dan: Do you think the fact that it could be months before she returns might have something to do with it?
Rick: You might be on to something there

> "Leave him alone for a while," Prime instructs us.

Tsuneo: Do nothing, because it’s worked so well thus far.

> Bumblebee, Hot Rod, Lightning, and I find a movie to watch in the house.

Rick: It’s a true-to-life documentary on the adaptation of human military and paramilitary structures to the shifting balance of power resulting from the alien robot war.
Dan: Cool, what’s it called?
Rick: GI Joe.

> Rangeblade had a hard time relaxing. I still don't know if this is a good idea, but I'm not going to
> fight her. I doubt Bee will fight her.

Tsuneo: But the instant she steps out of line, Bee will kill her without a second thought

> Rangeblade POV
> I know Bumblebee and Hound don't trust me, but I know they're trying. They're relaxed watching the
> movie while I worry Crosshairs is going to find me in here.
> "I'm sorry I can't stay here," I tell them before running out of the house and into the woods.

Rebecca: Rangeblade’s main goal is to make things as difficult on herself as possible

> Optimus Prime POV

Tsuneo: I’m getting whiplash from these POV changes. Is it too hard to write in a consistent narration style?
Rebecca: Given that languages from all over the world have been doing it since the dawn of written

history… Yes. Yes it is.

> I left Drift alone for an hour before going to talk to him. I never thought Jamie would be together with
> an Autobot

Rick: He think this because of Jamie's deep and well-defined character.

> though I know she says she and Drift aren't in a relationship, I know she has reasons for
> thinking that way.

Rebecca: For starters, there's an age gap. Like, millions of years worth.

> This isn't the first time Jamie has left since the fight with Unicron and Quintessa,

Dan: As we obviously know.

> but it's the first time I've seen Drift this unhappy she left.

Tsuneo: Usually he's overjoyed

> I understand his concern about how things will be when she
> returns. I didn't know he feels Crosshairs' relationship with her is on thin ice, nor did I not know she's
> trying to return for a couple of weeks before Christmas.

Dan: Jamie's travel itinerary is a vital part of their lives

> "...I want her to stay for Christmas, but it's looking very unlikely." Drift finishes.

Rebecca: Well, what if she wants to stay with her family?
Tsuneo: Wait, does she have a family?
Rebecca: I have no earthly clue.

> "This situation is a challenge, but I believe things will be ok.

Tsuneo: As long as we continue to do nothing about it, everything will be okay.

> Unfortunately, things will be rough before that."

Rebecca: Is getting people to sit down and actually talk things though like adults really too much to ask?

> As I finish talking to Drift, Bumblebee, Hot Rod, and Hound Rush towards us. They tell me
> Rangeblade has left.

Rick: They all did this at the same time rather than one of them going after her to make sure she's okay. Clearly this is the best plan.

> I don't like what happened before she ran into the woods. Every day she
> becomes more frightened, and being attacked by Crosshairs today didn't help.

Rebecca: Really? I thought it would calm her down immensely.

> Drift, and I go to find her while the others stay behind.

> Hot Rod POV
> If this is close to what Drift dealt with before the Autobots trusted him, I believe things will get better,
> but I worry things will get a lot more challenging.

Tsuneo: Things will get better, unless they don’t

> I'd rather not see Crosshairs fight Rangeblade. I'd
> rather not see Crosshairs think his friendship with Jamie is over, but we all know this isn't going to
> be easy. I will protect Rangeblade, even if it means fighting Crosshairs.

> Five hours later

Dan: If this is what Drift dealt with, I’m sure it will get better.
Rick: Crosshairs must think that his friendship with Jamie is over.
Rebecca: Rangeblade must be scared of what’s happening.
Tsuneo: Five more hours later.
Rick: Crosshairs must be worried that Jamie isn’t his friend any more.
Rebecca: All of this is making Rangeblade more scared.
Dan: Drift must have gone through this all, so it will surely get better.
Tsuneo: And five more hours later…

> Crosshairs POV
> Lighting is by the berth I lie on.

Tsuneo: [Crosshairs] Get your leg actuator off my chest.

> I feel groggy and don't know why. The last thing I remember is
> fighting that con. Lightning hugs me once I sit at the edge of the berth.

Tsuneo: He might be a violent abuser, but he could still use a hug.

> I hate hearing the fear in her voice as she pleads with me not to fight Rangeblade. I don't want to
> argue with her, but that con needs to go. I'll kill her if I have to.

Rebecca: Thank you for your well considered and impassioned plea. But I’m still going to ignore it

> -----

> Chapter 14
> Rangeblade POV
> I didn't know one of the others got Optimus Prime to come to talk to me. What's there to talk about?

Dan: The mysterious group of humans in giant robot suits that captured her earlier?
Tsuneo: Well that sounds like an actually interesting plot, and we can’t have that
Dan: Silly me

> Crosshairs hates me; no doubt he'll try to kill me. I worry he'll harm the others if they try to protect
> me.

Rebecca: Crosshairs has already branded them as race traitors.

> I need to leave before anyone gets seriously injured. I insisted on leaving, but Prime won't let
> me, no matter what I tell him could happen by letting me stay.

Rick: Freedom is the right of all sentient beings, except her.

> "So what's the plan now? You know what will happen if Crosshairs is near me."
> "You must tell Crosshairs your story. I know the others would like to know."

Tsuneo: Just not Crosshairs.

> "Nothing will change his mind. Sure, it's true. I hate the destruction Megatron and Sentinel did.

> Something just didn't feel right knowing they killed humans, then..."

Rebecca: She’s vaguely uncomfortable with the idea that they killed innocent people

> "You thought of the Cybertronians killed in the war.

Dan: [Rangeblade] Yeah, well, never liked those jerks anyway.

> We may be more advanced than humans in many ways,

Rick: They have potato flavoured ice-cream and jetpacks

> but we are as humans in other ways.

Tsuneo: Just a lot less squishy.

> Not all humans realize they're doing wrong, and
> not all Cybertronians realize they're doing wrong.

Dan: ‘I was just following orders’ is a common claim among Decepticons

> All we can do is hope Crosshairs realizes what he's doing wrong before further harm is done."
> Prime insists I return to the property with him.

Rick: [Prime] Ready to be attacked and run off scared again?
Tsuneo: [Rangeblade] You know it.

> As I feared, Crosshairs is awake.

Tsuneo: Great. Now he’ll want breakfast.

> I tried to walk the other way, but Prime stops me. He insists I tell
> Crosshairs and the others what I told him. He ordered Crosshairs to stay and listen to me.

Rick: Listen to your giant robot dad.

> I nervously tell the Autobots and humans what I told Prime. I know I didn't tell Prime when or why I
> came to Earth, and I'd rather not say.

Rebecca: She travelled coach and got held up at customs. Mostly she just found the whole experience to be mildly annoying.

> It's not like it's going to help the situation.

Tsuneo: So… basically you told them nothing?
Rick: Yup. Really helped, too.

> The others are happy I realized how the cons are wrong,

Rebecca: Yay for denunciations

> but Crosshairs thinks I'm lying and walks away furious.

Tsuneo: I mean, the logical thing to do would be to get him to stay and talk through his issues, but no, more cheap drama it is

> "At least he didn't fight you," Lightning points out.

Dan: I guess that’s an improvement or something. Yay?

> "I'll talk to him," Drift says.
> "No, Drift, don't!" I plea, but he ignores me.

Rick: Don’t you dare try and reason with him

> I fall to my knees, terrified I just ruined another friendship,

Rebecca: [Rangeblade] Yes, my plan is working. I mean, oh no, boo hoo.

> unaware Hot Rod and Lightning are hugging me.

> Crosshairs POV

Dan: [Crosshairs] The heck am I the bad guy in this? I’m just a cool dude with a trenchcoat.

> I can't believe that con made up a story claiming she realized the cons have been in the wrong all
> this time.

Rebecca: What did you expect her to do? Admit that she’s evil and trying to kill them all?

> Damn, a junk car would come in handy right now.
> "Crosshairs-," Drift starts.
> "DON'T TELL ME YOU BELIEVE HER!?" I rage.

Tsuneo: [Drift] Actually, I was going to ask if you wanted dinner, but since you mention it.

> Without thinking or giving Drift a chance to answer, I punched him in the helm, causing him to fall to
> the ground. I thought that's all I did, but I knocked him out.

Rick: Crosshairs learned that technique outside an Australian pub just after closing time

> I can't get him to wake up. I'm going to be in a lot of trouble

Rebecca: Yeah, they might let you off without a reprimand again.

> if the others are still around the barn, but I can't leave Drift here. I'm able to pick
> him up and carry him to the barn.

> "What did you do?" Lightning asks as I lie Drift on the berth.

Dan [Crosshairs]: Er that? Drift totally punched himself in the head and knocked himself out. Yeah.

> "I didn't mean to, I swear," I tell her as she looks over Drift.

Rebecca: Yes, his head just happened to get in the way of your fist.

> It doesn't matter if I leave the barn or not, there's no lie, Lightning, or I can tell the others.

Dan: Claim that a ninja did it. Given how much of a weeb Drift already is, it will make perfect sense

> I'm busted if anyone walks in before Drift wakes up or if he's pissed at me when he wakes up.

Rebecca: Nah, I’m sure he’ll be perfectly fine with what happened.

> Lightning and I stayed in the barn, waiting for Drift to
> wake up. Lightning tells me she's worried Drift will fight me. If that's what he'll do, I deserve it.

Rick: Grudge match it is.

> I'm lucky the others didn't come by. Drift is out for four hours before waking up.

Tsuneo: Absolutely nothing happens in the meantime. [Pause] I mean it, that's pretty standard for this fic.

> He sits at the edge of the berth and looks at Lightning and me.

Dan: [Drift] …wait, you're still in this?
Rick: [Lightning] You know, I wonder that myself.

> I waste no time apologizing and hugging him.
> "It's alright, Crosshairs," Drift assures me while hugging me.

Tsuneo: Drift often gets punched in the head.
Rebecca: It would explain a lot.

> "How can you be ok with him knocking you out?" Lightning asks.
> Drift looks at her silently saying they'll talk later, before insisting we go for a walk.

Tsuneo: Never put off until tomorrow what you can put off forever, it seems.

> Lightning says she wants to see what the others are doing.

Rick: At a guess, I'd say they're talking about Jamie
Rebecca: You may be on to something there

> Lightning POV
> I don't know how Drift can forgive Crosshairs for knocking him out. Crosshairs' anger is a serious
> problem.

Dan: Last time he got angry he turned into a big green monster in shredded purple pants

> I'm glad Rangeblade is attempting to spend time with the others, who seem to be more accepting of
> her.

Tsuneo: And remember, tell, don't show. Or in this case, tell a million times.

> I doubt they completely trust her, but enough not to make her feel like she needs to stay in the
> barn.

Rebecca: We don't trust you, but you can sleep in the same room as the rest of us anyway

> I activate my holoform and join them in watching a movie.

> Hot Rod asks Rangeblade to join him for lunch. She's adjusting well to eating human foods.

Tsuneo: Why she does this is another question

> I stay in
> the living room and wait for Drift. I was expecting him to call me, but he walks into the living room an
> hour later.

Dan: [Lightning] I could have called him, but I'm not a character in this fic.

> Thankfully, his holoform doesn't show any injury from Crosshairs punching him.

Rick: Which wouldn’t make any sense to begin with, but whatever.

> He sits
> next to me, smiling. I am certain he had a conversation with Crosshairs once I walked away.

Dan: [Crosshairs] So.
Rick: [Drift] So.
Dan: [Crosshairs] Remember how I punched you?
Rick: [Drift] Yeah.
Dan: [Crosshairs] Well...
Rick: [Drift] Yeah?
Dan: [Crosshairs] I punched you.
Rick: [Drift] Yep.

[Pause]

Rick: [Drift] That you did.

> "I don't think I could even forgive Crosshairs for knocking me out," I tell him.

Dan: [Drift] Eh, one concussion is pretty much like any other.

> "You don't understand, do you? We all thought you were killed on Cybertron.

Rick: Did they? I thought she left them a year ago on Earth.
Tsuneo: She left them on Earth to get killed on Cybertron.
Rick: Sure, that makes sense.

> We didn't know you've
> been on Earth all this time. Though even if Bee told us, we wouldn't have been able to find you with
> Cemetery Wind hunting us.

Rebecca: Remember when Lighting’s return was the central plot of this fic?
Tsuneo: Not at all
Rebecca: Me neither

> Crosshairs is afraid what we thought happened to you will happen,

Rebecca: [Lightning] But nothing happened to me?
Rick: [Drift] Crosshairs is not the smartest bot.

> and having Rangeblade around isn't helping."

Dan: [Drift] Since they’re completely separate matters and all.

> "What did you tell him?"
> "That you know the dangers of letting a con be around us,

Rebecca: Drift holds a big neon sign saying ‘Former Decepticon’ over his head.

> but you know what you're doing. Also, if
> Prime thought this would be a trap, he wouldn't let Rangeblade stay.

Rick: And in case you’d missed the fic so far, here it is again

> He's still not going to trust Rangeblade for a while, but this should set him in the right direction.

Dan: Meanwhile, Crosshairs sucker-punches Jolt for looking at Rangeblade once.

> Hopefully, to avoid fighting her
> and trusting her enough to work on the same team with her when Prime decides we'll start his trust-
> building plan."

Tsuneo: In the meantime he’s apparently fine with his team being a mess of tensions ready to explode at the slightest provocation

> I wonder when we'll start that plan?

Dan: At this rate? Never.

> "Do you think Crosshairs is right?" I ask.

Tsuneo: [Drift] Oh, totally. Decepticons can never change. Can’t trust a single one of them.
Rebecca: [Lightning] Didn’t you used to be…
Tsuneo: [Drift] No idea what you’re talking about.

> Drift doesn't answer; he takes out his phone and looks at a picture which answers my question,

Rick [Drift]: Oh Deputy Dog, you’re the only one who truly understands me

> scrap.

> I find Crosshairs and suggest we go for a drive.

Dan: So, which one will blow up and storm off within seconds this time?
Rebecca: I’m going to go out on a limb and say both.

> Optimus Prime POV
> This is a challenge; I have to make sure things don't turn violent before having Crosshairs work
> together with Rangeblade. The problem is the longer I wait, the more furious Crosshairs gets
> Rangeblade is here.

Tsuneo: So why are you waiting?
Dan: That’s a very good question.

[Pause]

Tsuneo: And?
Dan: Didn’t say I could think of an answer.

> His belief he's no longer friends with Jamie isn't helping.

Rebecca: By this point in the fic, Crosshairs is not only actively and knowingly making all the wrong decisions, but he’s then continuing to dig himself in deeper.

> Rangeblade POV

Dan: Thank you, that helped.

> I have nowhere to go, but away from here is better than destroying more friendships.
> Jamie, Drift... who's next?

Rick: Bulletbike? Roadfire? Salt Man Z?

> Crosshairs hating his sister, who he thought was dead? I'll go through the

> woods instead of driving off at the driveway. Not sure how much woods I'll have to walk through,

Dan: But she passed Robert Redford and Nick Nolte along the way

> but it'll be harder for them to find me.

Rick: Five minutes later, she gets tired and heads home.

> They'll realize I'm gone even if I don't write a note, so I'm leaving
> my apology before leaving.

> Autobots and humans,

Dan: And whatever the hell Jamie actually is.
Tsuneo: I'm thinking some sort of cosmic horror myself.

> I'm sorry I've caused friendships to be torn apart and violence among you.

Rebecca: [Rangeblade] Although really, it is all you guys' fault.

> I see Megatron has destroyed any chances of the two sides coming together,

Dan: Megatron totally ruined the inter-company picnic.

> even on a planet where the war hasn't affected the planet as it has Cybertron.

Rick: Please ignore the fact that Cybertron is now stuck to the Earth and covering half its surface.

> It's better I leave.
> Rangeblade

> I quietly make my way towards the woods, unsure where to go once I find my way out of the woods.

Dan: [Rangeblade] Maybe I'll find more woods? I don't know, I didn't really think this through.

> I didn't even take any Energon with me, which may prove to be a terrible choice,

Rebecca: It'd be like setting off on an expedition without any food or water, so yeah.

> but I don't want Crosshairs to be pissed I took Energon.

Dan: Because he's been so calm and rational about you so far.

> To him, it'll be I stole it. Even if I took only one cube, he'd be furious.

Tsuneo: One time somebody took a second biscuit from the jar and he went off about it for weeks.

> -----

> Chapter 15
> Drift POV
> Rangeblade is nowhere to be found,

Dan: [Drift] Party incoming.

> which is unusual. Even with Hound and Hot Rod spending time with her,

Rebecca: They split the difference and taught her Petanque.

> I know she's still very cautious. If she's not with them watching a movie, she'd go back to
> the barn,

Tsuneo: Rangeblade needs a hobby.

> but she's not there. I find a note left on Cade's desk,

Dan: And then he realised it was half-finished song lyrics, and so burnt it as a precaution

> which is unusual; who'd leave a note?

Rebecca: Anyone capable of writing.
Tsuneo: Well that narrows it down.

> I quickly get my answer; this isn't good.

> "She's getting Megatron and the other cons.

Rick: That plan hinges on their being Decepticons in this fic, something that I find very unlikely.

> This note is fake to get us to let our guard firm," Crosshairs argues.

Dan: Mostly he’s upset about the postscript reading “Crosshairs is a poopy head.”

> Bumblebee, Hound, and Hot Rod argue with him how Rangeblade isn't a con.

Tsuneo: Helped by her astute refusal to defend herself.

> There's only one way I can get Crosshairs to stop now.

Rebecca: Adult colouring books it is

> Lightning is right here, but it's not keeping Crosshairs from raging.
> "Crosshairs, stop!" I yell, "what would Jamie think, seeing this?"

Dan: That this entire situation could have been avoided by people talking to each other like adults?
Tsuneo: You could be on to something there.

> Tessa POV

Rebecca [Tessa]: Also I am still in this fic

> You've got to be kidding me.
> "SERIOUSLY DRIFT!? RANGEBLADE IS GONE, CROSSHAIRS IS ARGUING WITH THE
> OTHERS, AND FOUGHT RANGEBLADE; KNOCKING LIGHTNING OUT IN THE PROCESS-!"

Rick: Whoah, okay.

> "What?" Crosshairs asks, looking at Lightning.

Dan: [Crosshairs] Can this meatbag talk to me like that?

> "I'm fine, Crosshairs, and Tessa Drift is right. I know what he's getting to."
> "NO! JAMIE ISN'T HERE, RANGEBLADE'S IS GONE! GET YOUR PRIORITIES STRAIGHT! I'M
> GOING TO SHANE'S!"

Rebecca: Assuming that Shane still exists, something that I’m not willing to bet on

> "Tessa, you don't understand..." My dad tries to explain, but I'm not listening.

Dan: He’s got two things going against him. The first is that he’s a really sucky dad. The second is that he’s Mark Whalberg.

> Bumblebee insists on taking me to Shane's house.

Rick: You could call Rollbar and let him pick you up

> I should have known he'd lecture me.
> "You haven't seen how close Crosshairs is to Jamie," Bee tells me.

Rebecca: Since after all, this fracture in the Autobot ranks is all about Jamie.
Dan: Jamie is love, Jamie is life.

> "So we're going to let Rangeblade feel unwelcomed!?"

Tsuneo: [Bumblebee] Yeah, that’s pretty much been the plan so far.

> "There's no simple way to explain-."
> "BECAUSE IT'S ALL A LIE!"

Rebecca: The fic’s going full Weisau on us

> Bee sighs and drops the subject.

Dan [Bumblebee]: Well she shouted in all caps, so there’s no way I can respond.

> Unbelievable, they're putting a human who isn't even here before their own.

Rebecca: Yes, but that’s Jamie. She is the be all and end all of existence.
Tsuneo: Jamie is all, and all is Jamie.

> "What happened?" Shane asks as I slam the door, and Bee drives off.

Rick: She’s having a fight with her robot boyfriend again.

> "NOTHING!" I yell before going into the house.
> He doesn't know what's been going on. He'd find out if I go back to my dad on Christmas, but I don't
> know if I will.

Rebeca [Tessa]: Nothing for it but to change my voice again

> Cade POV

Dan: [Cade] I wish I wasn’t in this fic.

> This can't be good, but Tessa may just need time away from here.

Tsuneo: [Cade] At least it’s one less mouth to feed. Especially with these robots eating everything.

> We need to find Rangeblade.

Dan: I mean, need is such a strong word…

> "Is she going to be ok, Cade? Lightning asks.

Tsuneo: [Cade] Beats me, I barely know her.

> "She'll calm down within a few days. We need to find Rangeblade. Who knows if Megatron is
> around."

Rick: For all you know, he could be lurking just outside right now

> The problem is finding anyone, human or Cybertronian, in the woods.

Dan: Didn't they have, like, energon detectors or something?
Rick: Yes. Next question?

> No doubt Rangeblade turned off her commlink. I don't know how far these woods go.
> "These woods go for twenty miles,"

Tsuneo: They form a perfect circle around the farm.

> Vivian informs us, "that is if Rangeblade kept going straight.

Dan: Mostly she's been driving around in circles for hours.

> If she turned to head towards the road, she's likely driven off by now."

> Optimus Prime POV
> We must find Rangeblade quickly, but teams are the better option for this, even if it lessens our
> search area.

Dan: Split up to cover... less ground. Sure, makes sense.

> Another problem we have is the woods are too thick for Drift to spot Rangeblade from the sky.

Tsuneo: Do not question that they can cover a giant robot or car crashing through them.

> With a map of the area Vivian gives us, I divide the woods into three sections. Bumblebee
> and Hot Rod search the far left of the woods,

Dan: [Bumblebee] Is that like, my left or your left…
Rick: [Prime] It's magnetic left.
Dan: [Bumblebee] Okay.

> Crosshairs and Lightning search the center area, while Drift and Hound search the right.

Tsuneo: Five minutes later, Drift and Hound had parked to share some beers.

> Cade volunteers to search for Rangeblade in the streets.

Tsuneo: In the streets of the woods

> I'm staying behind as backup.

Rebecca: Prime is just so done with all this.

> "Everyone carry Energon with you. At least we don't need to return to recharge for a few days."

Dan: Just how big are these woods anyway?

> "What? You think this will take days to find her?" Cade frets.
> "I hope not, Cade," I reply.

> If Rangeblade is still in the woods, then one team will find her within hours, but it'll be a challenge if
> she's already driving away from the area.

Rebecca: They could have Drift survey the roads in helicopter mode, but that would make too much sense.

> Lightning POV
> "I told you, letting that con here was a bad idea!" Crosshairs rages.

Tsuneo: This has been another presentation from one note theatre

> Seriously, not even in the woods for five minutes, and he's already starting.

Dan: [Lightning] Is it too late to change teams?

> "You know what?! Go back, I'll find her myself!" I yell in his face before walking away,

Rebecca: Yep, really helping there

> ignoring his calls for me. I'm so tired of his scrap.

Tsuneo: My review of the fic.

> I'm tempted to leave the team until Crosshairs' attitude changed,

Dan: Because it’s obviously the team’s fault.

> but he'd be furious I left with Rangeblade.
> I sit on the ground by a tree and cry.

Rebecca: Well, Lightning sure is contributing to this thing.

> I knew this would be a challenge, but I didn't think it would be this challenging.

Rick: But is it Challenge of the Gobots level challenging?

> Crosshairs POV
> I heard Lightning cry and rushed back to her.
> I apologize as I kneel beside her with a servo on her rotator cup.

Tsuneo: I can’t tell if that’s meant to be comforting, aggressive or what. Well done fic.

> She doesn't tell me to go away, but she's ignoring me.

Dan: [Crosshairs] It’s an improvement, so I’ll take it.

> You know I'm terrified I'll truly lose you.

Tsuneo: The key central message of this fic is that nobody can talk to anyone else like a sensible adult.

> We can't go back; Prime would be furious we're not looking for that con.

Tsuneo: Smash cut to Prime drinking with Drift and Hound.

> I doubt Lightning would come back to the property; she'd insist we have to find Rangeblade.

Dan: [Crosshairs] Gah, her and her, ugh, following orders crap.

> "Come on, let's get moving."
> I help her up, and we resume our search.

Rebecca: Intense stage direction action!

> Lightning says nothing as we walk through the woods for a good hour before finding Rangeblade. I
> may not like her,

Dan: No, really? I never would have guessed.

> but I think I'd rather she kept walking towards the road than stopping to harm herself.
> Rangeblade sees us and starts running away from us.
> "Rangeblade, come back!" Lightning yells before going after her.

Tsuneo: Gee, I wonder why she ran off, says the guy who's been relentlessly attacking her.

> I inform the others we found Rangeblade and the direction she's heading

Dan: So they can get the nets and tranq guns ready.

> before running after Lightning. We're searching the
> right side of the area and screwed if Rangeblade gets to the road before stopping her.

Rick: Because... you both can turn into cars and thus could chase after her?

> I notice how much Energon Rangeblade is losing shit.

Rebecca: Rangeblade's terrible decisions are coming back to haunt her.
Tsuneo: Which ones?
Rebecca: I don't know… Um, pretty much any of them?

> Rangeblade POV
> I didn't think anyone would find me. Crosshairs being one of the bots who found me is the problem.
> I'm trying to get far from him, but I'm losing Energon running.

Rick: Just ask them to hold up while you take a breather.

> Stasis lock must be my only option to avoid Crosshairs' shit,

Dan: She would literally rather pass out than deal with his crap.

> but he'd argue with the others I should be left to die.
> I run a mile before my legs give out.

Rebecca: If only she had some way to move that didn't involve running
Tsuneo: Like turning into some sort of wheeled vehicle, maybe?
Rebecca: You may be on to something there

> "Rangeblade!" Lightning panics.

> Lightning POV
> She's lost too much Energon and slowly fading into stasis lock.

Dan: You can hear the batteries running down.

> There's nothing I can do but wonder
> if she would have been better off if we escaped that human's lair, and I told her to leave before

> Crosshairs and Drift got to me?

Rick: Don’t go down that path of ‘what if’s, because it inevitably leads to Hitler winning the Second World War.

> I wouldn't have been able to tell Drift and Jamie to leave
> Rangeblade after seeing she was in stasis lock.

Tsuneo: [Lightning] I’ll just have to shuffle her behind a bush and pretend I didn’t see her.

> Crosshairs gets to us as Rangeblade goes into stasis lock.

Dan: Going into Stasis Lock is her only character trait

> Even he's shocked at what just happened.

Rick: [Crosshairs] I wanted to finish her off myself. Oh well, can’t have everything.

>:: We need help here now!:: He comms the others.
> The Energon we are carrying won't help until we stop the Energon from leaking from the wounds
> Rangeblade gave herself.

Tsuneo: I’m pretty sure Transformers don’t work like that.
Rick: Well, maybe if they were Transformers rather than humans in robot drag.

> I'm heartbroken watching this, but also amazed Crosshairs is concerned.
> "She'll be ok," he assures me as he hugs me.

Rick: Really?
Dan: No.

> -----

> Chapter 16
> Hot Rod POV
> Anger fills me as I see Rangeblade lying on the ground, unconscious, and Lightning crying.

Dan: Yeah, that’s how I feel about this scene too.

> "You fragging piece of scrap!" I yell and kick Crosshairs in the lower area.

Tsuneo: Robot warriors from deep space!

> This hurts but not as much as if Crosshairs was using his holoform.

Rebecca: Because kicking somebody in their forum avatar really hurts, I guess.

> Lightning begs me to stop, telling me this wasn't Crosshairs' doing.

Dan: I mean it was, but who cares?

> The others get to us before I continue to fight Crosshairs. Optimus immediately tells me to stop and
> for Hound to carry Rangeblade back to the property. No one thought we'd need a medkit,

Tsuneo: She’s running off on her own while clearly distraught, but there’s no way that she could possibly need medical help

> but Energon is still leaking from Rangeblade's wounds.

Rick: Alright, we need to improvise a bandage from some old tires and hose pipes.

> Cade helps Prime and Hound tend to Rangeblade while Drift watches, worried.

Dan: [Drift] You guys alright? You got… yeah, looks like you got this. Go team.

> Crosshairs comforters Lightning, I go for a drive to avoid fighting Crosshairs...for now...

> I return three hours later. Rangeblade has been repaired, but it's hard to know when she'll wake up.

Rick: She got the comfortable loft to recover, and she's totally milking it now.

> Both Crosshairs and Drift sit by the barn, displeased. I might be wrong, but Drift and Rangeblade
> must have been friends when he was a con.

Tsuneo: They met in the giant robot war.

> As for Crosshairs, what an aft, faking how concerned he is.
> "Drop the act!" I yell and kick Crosshairs again.

Rebecca: This fic is a never-ending stream of cheap drama.

> Drift tries to stop me, but I shove him away before
> dragging Crosshairs away from the barn for a fight.

Dan: I keep telling you, if you're going to fight, do it in the pig sty.

> Come on, let me get one good punch.

Rick: Take that, Guy Gardner

> Crosshairs wouldn't fight back as a fought him and finally landed a good punch and knocked him
> out.

Tsuneo: Crosshairs has had enough of this drama too.

> "Why don't I just take care of the problem now."
> "STOP!" Prime yells as I pull out my gun and aim at Crosshairs' head.

Rebeca: Well that escalated quickly
Tsuneo: Like everything else in the fic, when you think about it
Rebecca: There's a lot of that going on

> "What the frag is wrong with you?!" Hound asks.
> "You should have stayed, or at least let Crosshairs explain before fighting him!" Bee rages.

Dan: I can only assume that at this point Bee has managed to get his voice back
Rick: Maybe he's just really good at stringing together soundbites

> "What's there to explain?! He hates Rangeblade and hurt her!"

Rebecca: I mean, you could ask Lighting since she was there and all, but I guess attempted murder is also an acceptable option

> Drift takes Crosshairs to the barn as Lightning explains what happened.

Rick: [Lightning] …so he merged with the others to make Big Powered and they used the Rainbow

Powered Attack to destroy Violengiguar and used the power of the Zodiac to revive the tenth planet…
Tsuneo: [Hot Rod] Wot.

> Like we didn't need more problems to deal with.

> The next day

Rebecca: More problems to deal with.

> I didn't think I'd be able to recharge,

Dan: He couldn’t find a compatible outlet

> but I did. I awake to discover Crosshairs and Drift are not in the barn.

Tsuneo: 90% chance they went for a walk.
Dan: And by “went for a walk,” you mean…
Tsuneo: Actually went for a walk.

> I figured they both slept in their rooms in the house, but I didn't find their bipedal mode or alt
> mode near the house.

Rebecca: Seriously, did you misplace a pair of robot warriors from deep space again?

> Turns out no one knows where Crosshairs is,

Tsuneo: And so the fic continues to circle itself.

> and Drift went to Jamie's dimension last night.

Rick: Oh yeah, just pops over there all the time.

> Crosshairs was around before Drift left. Great, this adds to our problems.

> "I'm leaving with Rangeblade when she's healed. This will solve all our problems,"; I tell Prime.

Dan: [Hot Rod] Because I’ve got to do something in this fic, at least.

> "That's not going to solve anything," Lightning tells me, "Crosshairs will still be pissed at
> Rangeblade."

Rick: So what exactly was Prime’s plan to get everyone to trust each other?
Rebecca: At this point I can only assume that the attempted murder was a part of it

> "And she'd be safe away from him!" I yell.
> "No, there's a right way to deal with this.

Tsuneo: Not this. This is the exact wrong way to deal with everything.

> It will take time. Taking Rangeblade away won't solve everything.

Dan: No Rangeblade until you two apologise to each other

> Do you think she'd be happy to know you left the team?"
> "Crosshairs is already being punished enough," Bee reminds me.

Tsuneo: I’d argue that; after all, he’s not reading this

> "It's kinda my fault," Lightning informs me, "I was so afraid we couldn't help Rangeblade, and you
> know the rest."

Dan: Let’s just say that we all did everything wrong and leave it at that.

> Ouch, Bee is right.

> Crosshairs POV
> This wouldn't have happened if Rangeblade didn't think running off and harming herself was her
> only answer.

Rebecca: Well gee, maybe if you hadn’t relentlessly bullied her in front of everyone else then maybe this wouldn’t have happened.

> I don't know what to do.

Dan: Start grovelling?

> Hot Rod will fight me if I return to the property, and
> Rangeblade may go further; instead of harming herself, she might try to offline herself. I think I got
> my punishment.
> What a cruel universe we live in. My sister is back, but in return, friendships have ended.

Dan: [Crosshairs] And it’s all that filthy Decepticon’s fault.

> All I wanted to do was protect her; instead, I've doubted her. I don't know what to do. Hot Rod will
> fight me if I go back to the property.

Tsuneo: Maybe if you tried stepping forward, admitting your mistakes, acknowledging the harm that you did and asking for a second chance you might avoid that.
Rick: Well that sounds like a sensible plan, so nobody’s going to think of that.

> Lightning POV
> Four days have passed, and Crosshairs isn't back.

Rebecca: And apparently during that time nobody’s tried looking for him, or trying to communicate with him or anything else

> Optimus insists I leave Crosshairs alone, but I can't nor can Drift.

Dan: Actually, do you know what this fic could use?
Tsuneo: What?
Dan: Jenga.
Tsuneo: Shockingly enough, you’re right.

> "I will fight him if he comes back," Hot Rod threatens.

Dan: Presumably while twirling his little moustache and, I don’t know, eating a baguette

> "You will not fight him. He's been punished enough," I tell him before walking towards the woods.

Rebecca: He’s pretending to feel bad about what he did. All is forgiven.

> I know Crosshairs went a different direction than we went to find Rangeblade.

> I walk an hour before finding Crosshairs sitting by a river.

Rick: And he’s been gone four days, you say.

Dan: Being fair, the playoffs were on.

> I sit on the large boulder beside him.
> Listening to the river's water flow and the birds talking, waiting for Crosshairs to say something.

Tsuneo: Only to be interrupted by the inappropriate comedic school bell

> A long five minutes pass before Crosshairs finally speaks.
> "Is-is she awake?"
> "No," I tell him in a sad tone.

Dan: [Crosshairs] Oh good. Wait, no, crap, didn't mean that…

> "I'm sorry this is my fault. If I trusted your judgment and tried to get along with her-."

Rick: In his defence, 'jerk' is one of his only to discernible personality traits.
Tsuneo: What's the other one?
Rick: Being vaguely Australian

> "It's ok; I know you just want to protect the team. She'll be ok once she wakes up...at least
> physically."
> Crosshairs is taking the first step towards trusting Rangeblade,

Dan: He's done a number of repeatable reputation quests for her.

> but I doubt his anger has ceased, and he'll be like the others,

Rebecca: Repeatedly pummelled by Hot Rod.

> not trusting Rangeblade completely but attempting to spend time with her rather than avoiding her.,

Tsuneo: He won't trust her, but he'll happily sleep in the same room as her.

> I think this is a temporary concern for Rangeblade.

Dan: Oh yes, I'm sure she'll be perfectly fine with him after all this.

> Perhaps he's not thinking about killing Rangeblade, but still wants her away from us.

Rick: Maybe they should get a barn in the next state over, give everyone some space.

> This is still very complicated.
> "I can't go back; Hot Rod wants to fight me,

Dan: [Lightning] Don't be silly, we all want that.

> the others likely hate me, and Rangeblade..."

Dan: [Lightning] She hates you too.

> "Hot Rod is the only one still mad at you.

Rebecca: Although that was mad enough to put a gun to your head, so take that how you will

> Drift and Prime are worried about you.

Dan: They need a third to face Hound's bowling team.

> You need to come back, please."
> "This isn't the solution, Crosshairs," Prime adds as he stands by the boulder.

Tsuneo: By the way, I have been here all along

> Turns out everyone
> but Hot Rod is worried about him. They didn't think I could get Crosshairs to come back, and I think
> they're right.

> -----

> Chapter 17
> Drift POV
> I hate this;

Tsuneo: My review of the fic.
Rebecca: You already did that.
Tsuneo: Damn!

> the one I once loved is seriously injured.

Dan: Great time to bring that up.

> Lightning had Jamie come by to help
> Rangeblade, but that resulted in Jamie believing Crosshairs harmed Rangeblade.

Tsuneo: And so the drama only continues to grow until it occupies all available space

> I've never seen Jamie leave the dimension so quickly.

Rick: Usually she lingers before tearing holes in the fabric of time, space and reality

> It might have been a good thing considering the fight Hot Rod
> and Crosshairs had, and Crosshairs leaving for four days.

Dan: [Jamie] Seriously, I leave you guys alone for a while and this is what happens?

> Things keep getting more complicated. I'm not leaving until everything is ok here.

Rebecca: It will never be okay

> Jamie told me to contact her when Rangeblade wakes up.

Dan: Jamie’s not going to stick around and wait; she’s got shows to binge.

> Something tells me it's not just to see that Rangeblade is ok.

> Crosshairs walks into the barn and sits on the berth close to Rangeblade's.

Rebecca: With all the Transformers they’ve brought home lately, they’re going to need an extension on this place.

> It's not long before we hear Hot Rod yelling,

Rick: Making sure Rangeblade gets the rest she needs, I see.

> displeased not only is Crosshairs back but also sitting five feet away from Rangeblade's berth.

Tsuneo: If it was six feet away then he'd be fine with it.

> We hear Prime yelling as Hot Rod runs towards us. Crosshairs is going to be pissed at me.

Dan: [Drift] But seriously, what did I do?

> "Come on."
> I grab his wrist, and we run out of the barn towards the house before activating our holoforms and
> going up to my room.

Tsuneo: That… doesn't actually do anything about their robot forms, does it? Like, they're still just sitting there, aren't they?
Rick: Yeah, but they're listed as AFK so they can just ignore everyone.

> "I told Prime I couldn't come back," Crosshairs says while sitting on my bed.
> "That will not resolve anything."

Dan: [Drift] I don't know, you not being here would solve a lot.

> I think I'd rather he'd be mad at me for taking him to hide than this; so much sadness and regret.

Rick: Sadness is reign

> It's quiet for a few minutes until Hot Rod barges in with a knife used to cut raw meat in hand.

Dan: As opposed to any other kind of knife, that is
Rick: He might be in a homicidal rage but at least he's selected the proper tools for it.

> He doesn't care; bipedal mode or holoform, he wants to hurt Crosshairs.

Tsuneo: Oh no! He'll have to… completely ignore the disruption to his hologram, I guess?

> Crosshairs shoves me onto the bed, out of the way, and Lightning begs Hot Rod not to fight
> Crosshairs.

Rebecca: By the way where's Prime in all this?

> Crosshairs POV
> He seriously wants me dead!

Dan: [Crosshairs] And to think, all I did was try and execute him.

> Are they not telling me Rangeblade will die? Scrap.

Tsuneo: Slightly more important matters at the moment.

> "You piece of scrap," Hot Rod yells as he runs towards me.
> I dodged his first attempt to stab me.

Dan: And if you dodge all three, you can disarm and counter him.
Tsuneo: I could never get that combo right.

> "Hot Rod, stop!" I yell while dodging his attempts to stab me.

Rebecca: Want to step in here, Drift?

> He's going to keep trying until he
> succeeds, pushing me onto the floor and stabbing me in the abdomen:

Rick: Oh look, he succeeded. He can stop now.

> pushing the knife deep. All I can do is scream in pain.

Tsuneo: As opposed to running a marathon or cooking a four-course dinner, I suppose

> "GET OUT!" Drift yells and pushes Hot Rod towards the door.

Dan: [Hot Rod] My work here is done.

> "CROSSHAIRS!" Lightning yells.

Rebecca: Also I am here

> Drift POV
> Fear is on Crosshairs' face as blood rushes out from the stab wound.

Rick: But since this is just a virtual representation and not actually a part of his body, he realised that the injury was entirely meaningless.

> "Go get help!" I order Lightning.
> Crosshairs stares at me;

Dan: [Crosshairs] Duuuhhh…

> I can tell in his eyes; he's begging me to help him. I can reach a blanket
> hanging on the edge of the bed.
> Crosshairs doesn't make a sound as I press the blanket on the wound. Not as effective with the
> knife still in Crosshairs, but I can't remove it here.

Tsuneo: Because reasons or something. Look, it’s a hologram, I don’t know how it works.

> Crosshairs is unconscious within seconds.

> The scene once Hound and Prime get to the room was chaos.

Dan: Prime just shakes his head and nopes right out of there.

> I watched, but I heard nothing until... "This carpet is a mess!" Cogman rages, "ruined!"

Rick [Cogman]: I shall find the man who did this and kill him, his family and all his kin for seven generations for this trespass! [Pause] Also I am here now

> The blood...is he...?

Tsuneo: Completely faking it for sympathy?
Rick: I mean, it makes no sense at all otherwise.

> I don't feel Vivian take my arm and lead me to another room.

> "Lie down," she instructs.
> I did as she told me, but lying down makes me feel dizzy.

Rebecca: Oh dear, he’d better lie down then.

> Vivian POV
> I know he's going to pass out; at least now he'll be safe. It's right at night; hopefully, Drift will sleep

> all night.

Dan: Once he got a glass of warm milk and a cookie.

> I take off his boots and cover him with a couple spare blankets before getting a pitcher of water and
> a glass.

Rebecca: Meanwhile Crosshairs is bleeding out in agony in the next room.

> "You need to drink water when you wake up," I tell Drift as if he can hear me, but he's asleep.

Rick: [Vivian] Also, a hologram or something? IDK, makes no sense to me.

> How likely is he going to have nightmares about what happened?

Rebecca: Given that the average Transformer has been fighting in a genocidal civil war for millions of years, I'd image that he's pretty much a mess already

> Cogman is raging about the carpet as I walk by the room. He's going to be busy with the carpet for
> a while.

Rick [Cogman]: Only one thing to do. Kill everybody then burn down the house.

> I'm about to walk out of the house when Lightning runs in, bawling.
> Fuck, this isn't good.

Dan: One of her housemates just tried to kill the other.
Rebecca: Yeah, but Lightning's upset, and that's what matters.

> I take her into the living room and let her cry as I hug her.
> He was afraid he'd lose his sister, don't let it be the other way around.

Tsuneo: This scene is moving because of the deep friendship that has built up between Vivian and Lightning so far.

> -----

> Chapter 18
> Bumblebee POV

Rebecca: Bumblebee was hoping to keep his head down and let it all blow over, but no dice.

> "...not a word to anyone," Optimus instructs Hound and me before walking through the portal.
> I hate we had no choice.

Dan: You could have chosen not to take the portal.
Rick: Maybe there's only one company that makes portals and they have a monopoly on the market
Dan: Quite possibly.

> "I'm sorry, Jamie," I mumble.
> How can we not keep this a secret?

Rebecca: Well, with the caution and subtlety that's been displayed so far, I imagine they'll be shouting it to the hills.

> Sure, it's easy for now; don't mention Jamie had to come to
> heal Crosshairs, but how will she be when she returns?

Tsuneo: Don’t tell Jamie that Jamie’s here

> "Well, the good news is this didn't affect his bipedal mode," Hound tells me,

Tsuneo: Because it’s literally just a holographic image. What happened would be like trying to stab a Vocaloid to death
Rebecca: And you know that Vocaloid fans have tried.

> "and he'll likely wake up tomorrow morning. He can recover in his room."

Dan: [Bumblebee] Likely wake up?
Rick: [Hound] Look, do you see a medic around here or something?

[Dan points at Rick]

Rick: [Hound] Oh yeah. Forgot.

> I catch Hot Rod walking away. How long has he been watching us?

> Hot Rod POV
> I've been acting like Crosshairs,

Rick: Just with a different silly accent

> but he hasn't harmed Rangeblade. Though the worst he would have done was knock her out.

Rebecca: The worst he would have done is physically assault her. Seems fine to me

> Come to think of it, he still has his guns; he could have shot and killed Rangeblade,

Tsuneo: Not to sound horrible, but at least it would have made this thing shorter.

> but he hasn't. All he's done is yell at her.

Tsuneo: Clearly not shooting her is a good sign

> Scrap, does Jamie know I harmed Crosshairs?

Dan: Does Jamie care? So far Jamie’s just sat this whole thing out.

> I might not be friends with her or Crosshairs, and Crosshairs thinks his friendship with Jamie is over;
> I'm such an idiot.

Tsuneo: This fic in a nutshell

> I better sleep in my room at the house, but I think Lightning is there.

> I hear crying once I walk into the house.

Rebecca: [Hot Rod] Huh. I wonder what that could be about?

> Vivian is trying to comfort Lightning in the living room. I
> can't go to bed knowing Lighting is crying. I walk into the room, not expecting Lighting to get up and
> slap me.

Rebecca: [Hot Rod] You know, I can’t think why she’d do that…

> "YOU KILLED CROSSHAIRS!" She sobs as Vivian hugs her.

Rebecca: [Hot Rod] Oh. Yeah, that.

> "He'll be ok;

Dan [Lightning]: Oh. Well okay then. Never mind.

> he should wake up tomorrow and can recover in his room," I tell the two femmes.

Tsuneo: You only lightly stabbed him to death.

> Cade walks in and demands I leave. I do as he tells me.

Dan: [Cade] You killed Crosshairs. You have to leave now.
Rick: [Hot Rod] Okay then.

> Everyone hates me now, and I deserve it.

Dan: But that's because you're French.

> Walking by a bedroom, I hear Drift talking in his sleep.

Rick: This being Drift, he's probably going through the lyrics of his favourite anime theme songs

> I'm not sure how much help I'll be, but I'm not
> going to let him deal with these Nightmares, whatever it may be.

Dan: In his dreams, Drift is chasing bunnies

> I'll stay here all night if I have to.

Rebecca: [Hot Rod] He's scared that the knife wielding maniac will come for him next. Better make sure I'm here to comfort him.

> The next day

> Crosshairs POV
> I wake up in the worst pain I've felt in a long time.

Rick [Crosshairs]: Crikey, it's like I've been attacked by a bloody drop bear

> I hear things being moved before a voice whispers 'sorry'.

Dan: [Whispered] I think he's still out, just don't tell him we've dropped him.

> I don't dare move as the pain will get worse. Whoever is here isn't by my head, so I
> don't know who's here,

Tsuneo: Looking is too hard, he's going to give up forever.

> but I see I'm by Rangeblade, who is still in stasis lock.

Dan: Rangeblade's decided she's just going to sleep through the rest of the fic.
Rebecca: Rangeblade's the smart one.

> "Move him once he's asleep. It'll be better in terms of his pain."
> I can't tell who's talking. I worry I'm going to hear crying again...or was I dreaming? I hope I was; I'd
> hate it if my two femmes were crying.

Dan: And now he’s delusional

> Whoever is around must have given me pain medication. I feel tired and unable to stay awake.

Rebecca: To quickly summarise, Transformers are mechanical and thus they take injuries differently to how humans do.
Rick: Correct
Rebecca: Also he was stabbed in a virtual avatar that has no physical connection to his body
Rick: Also correct
Rebecca: And on top of that, Hound is a medic
Rick: Right again.
Rebecca: Good to know we’re all on the same page here, and that page is not where the fic’s at.

> Four hours later

> I wake up, not in pain, and in a familiar place. I must be in my room.

Dan: Nope, you’re in the NERV sickbay. Tom and Shinji are in the next room over.

> Lightning and Drift sit by the bed, happy I'm awake like I've been in a coma.

Rick: He may be a violent bigot, but he got stabbed so we love him again.

> Have I been asleep for days?

Dan: [Crosshairs] What did I miss?
Tsuneo: Absolutely nothing.

> "Crosshairs? You'll be ok," Lightning assures me, "can you sit up and drink?"
> The two of them help me sit up and drink from a water bottle with a straw.

Rebecca: The answer apparently is ‘yes’

> There's a little pain, but I can ignore it.

Rick: At least it’s not leaking straight out again

> I see they've both been crying. Was I close to dying?

Dan: Not only that, but you owed both of them money

> Then why am I in my room?

Tsuneo: Because it was a logical place for you to rest after you were injured?
Rebecca: You may be on to something there.

> Unless...oh scrap. I'm not even going to ask. If Jamie did come by, then I don't think she's coming
> back.

Dan: [Crosshairs] I got stabbed, but it’s Jamie that matters.
Tsuneo: [Crosshairs] Jamie is all things to all people.

> Lightning asks if I want to eat before she and Drift go downstairs to make food. I look at the
> bandages on my abdomen; how bad are my injuries that Jamie couldn't heal them completely?

Rick: You’ve got Internal Bleeding II. There’s nothing we can do.

> Unless I'm wrong, and she didn't come here to heal me.

Dan: Jamie don’t give no craps about nobody.
Rebecca: Your drama is interrupting her couch time.

> I'll find out in a few weeks.

Rick: That’s when the court date is set for.

> "How is Rangeblade?" I ask, hoping Drift and Lightning haven't been crying because she died.

Tsuneo: I mean, would it make any difference?

> "Still in stasis lock," Lightning replies in a sad tone.
> She sits next to me on the bed as I eat.

Dan: They’re serving him high grade Energon a la Antoine.

> A few minutes pass before she hands me a note from Hot Rod;

> I'm sorry, Crosshairs, I have been a fool. I'm not coming up to your room until you want to see me.

Rick: Also go away, or else I will taunt you a second time.

> "Did he leave?" I ask.
> "No, he's just going to stay away from you."

Tsuneo: There’s a two mile exclusion zone around you

> If Jamie did come by, then he's thinking like me; that he lost a friend — or two if he thinks we're not
> friends.

Dan: [Crosshairs] Also there was something else… Now what was it? Can’t quite remember…
Probably wasn’t important, but still it’s been nagging at me… Oh yeah, I got freaking stabbed!

> Chapter 19
> Crosshairs POV
> Two days have passed; Hound tells me about my injuries

Dan: [Hound] So he got a knife, right?
Tsuneo: [Crosshairs] No, I know.
Dan: [Hound] And stuck it in you, like this.
Tsuneo: [Crosshairs] Yeah, I see that.
Dan: [Hound] Thus… You got stabbed.
Tsuneo: [Crosshairs] Really helping here.

> but is doing a horrible job avoiding the fact that Jamie came by to heal me.

Dan: Because nobody in the universe as any medical skills otherwise
Rick: I mean, besides Hound, Cade’s been able to repair damaged Autobots and...
Dan: Nobody

> I know with the injuries I had, I would have needed surgery.

Rebecca: He’d need to upload a new profile photo

> No way I'd be able to recover in my room this soon after surgery.

Rick: I still can’t believe all this is about stabbing what is essentially a cardboard standee that only exists so their car modes look like they have drivers.

> I'm not sure if I'd still be unconscious or not.

Dan: Or able to throw Jeff Garyn off a cliff
Tsuneo: Deep cut

> Hound couldn't lie about my injuries either. The knife went deep in my abdomen.

Rebecca: On the other hand, it made a good impromptu appendectomy.

> "Yes, she came here," Hound finally replies in a sad tone.

Tsuneo: And how was that so hard to admit?
Rick: Mostly he’s embarrassed that he had to subcontract.

> I did hear my two femmes cry. It's likely why I'm not entirely healed.

Rebecca: He’s not healed because they’re crying. Makes sense to me.

> At least Jamie was able to concentrate and heal my internal injuries.

Dan: Now wait until you see her bill.

> "Good news is you'll be fully recovered in a week,"

Dan: It was only a minor deep stab wound

> Hound tells me before leaving. Which might mean I can get off IV medication in a few days.

Tsuneo: The fic is really missing the point of this ‘holographic avatar’ thing, isn’t it?

> Aside from going downstairs to eat with everyone, there's not much I'm missing out on.

Rick: Socialising is for losers

> Everyone, but Hot Rod, comes to visit once a day.

Tsuneo: They set up a schedule. Hound is upset that it clashes with his bowling league.

> Of course, Drift, Lightning, and Hound come by several times a day.

Dan: Drift, Lightning and Hound; of course they would.
Tsuneo: And why is that?
Dan: Well, because they’re Drift, Lightning and Hound, naturally.
Tsuneo: You have no idea, do you?
Dan: I do not.

> Hot Rod POV
> I tried to contact Jamie to apologize after the message she sent me. Jamie could threaten no one;
> instead, she sent a crushing video message.

Rebecca: So rather than threats, she went for gratuitous emotional manipulation instead

> I couldn't make out everything she said, but hearing

> her cry hurt. I can't show Drift this, but I worry about her.
> "You need to show Drift this,"

Dan: I can’t show him this
Rick: But you must
Tsuneo: This fic in a nutshell

> Prime insists, "it wasn't wise for you to wait this long to show me."
> "She wouldn't...?"
> "I don't know."

Rick: Well it all depends on if she owns a goat.

> I know how to get to Jamie's dimension.

Dan: He knows a back route through the alleyways.

> I didn't think Lightning would want to come with me.

Tsuneo: Would anyone right now?
Rebecca: I don’t know, they seem to be pretty okay with the whole “you tried to kill your buddy” thing.

> "I need to talk to her," she tells me.
> "Why do I hear guilt in your voice?"
> "Because it's my belief Rangeblade is lost and needs guidance that's ruining friendships."

Tsuneo: And not people being homicidal jackarses at all.

> "You're right, though.

Dan: [Hot Rod] It’s your fault for being compassionate and understanding. Stop that at once.

> The issue is Rangeblade is — was — a con, and that's not something that can be forgotten.

Rebecca: Just in case you’d missed the entire fic so far.

> Crosshairs wants to protect you and Jamie, but it caused a mess.

Tsuneo: Oh no, it’s working great so far.

> Just like I did thinking I'm protecting Rangeblade."
> I show Lightning the video Jamie sent me.

Rick: [Lightning] I don’t know, I think the puppy ears filter somewhat clashes with the message.

> "So, she doesn't know Crosshairs has been recovering? Why would Prime not tell her?" Lightning
> frets.

Dan: You know what this Transformers fic could use? Actual Transformers instead of a bunch of random people with Transformer names having soap opera drama
Rick: Hey, it worked for IDW for years.

> "I didn't know he didn't. I watched him carry Jamie through the portal as she cried after seeing
> Crosshairs and healing him.

Tsuneo: Rather than showing us plot developments let’s just talk about them instead.

> I thought he would have told her when Crosshairs woke up and how his recovery is going."

Tsuneo: So why didn’t they?

[Rebecca shrugs]

Tsuneo: Yeah, that’s what I thought.

> "I think Drift needs to come with Prime and us."

Rebecca: For people who all live together in the same house, they’re remarkably bad at talking to each other

> Within ten minutes, we have plans.

Tsuneo: This is their plan to go to Jamie’s dimension – which, apparently is about as hard as popping over to your neighbour’s house – and it’s taking them ten minutes to put it together?
Dan: They’re just not that good at this… whatever this is meant to be.

> Crosshairs is displeased he can't come with us since he's still on
> IV painkillers and Hound just started an infusion.

Rebecca: He started an infusion of high-proof whiskey. Not sure if it’ll work, but it makes Hound feel better.

> It's a pain to go anywhere with an IV pole.

Tsuneo: So why doesn’t he deactivate his avatar and just do it as his normal giant robot self?
Rick: Stop making this easy. We have to ensure that everything is as over-complicated as possible
Tsuneo: Silly me

> "I think she needs to come back and see Crosshairs is ok," Drift suggests.

Tsuneo: [Hot Rod] I… you know what? Let’s just call her.

> "Hopefully, she's back in her dimension," Prime worries.

Rebecca: Meanwhile, Jamie is vacationing on Earth-23

> Optimus Prime POV
> Drift, Lightning, Hot Rod, and I go to Jamie's dimension.

Rick: Its most important defining trait is that Jamie lives there

> Drift is uncertain about letting Hot Rod come with us.

Rebecca: Maybe you could have mentioned that during the elaborate planning session beforehand?

> This is without him seeing the video message Jamie sent Hot Rod.
> Jamie is at the training grounds,

Tsuneo: Training grounds, huh. She’s just got some of those, does she?

> training alone, which is unusual.
> "LEAVE!" she yells while shooting fire at Hot Rod.

Dan: By the way, she can do this

> "Stay back, Hot Rod," I order.

> "She rarely uses fire bending,

Tsuneo: Also she is a Jedi, has a Green Lantern ring, can talk to animals and can regenerate from a single drop of blood. But her parfaits are only adequate.

> and at this moment, she's furious," Drift adds, before slowly approaching Jamie.

Rick: Anything to add there, Jamie?
Rebecca: I suspect she’s fine with people talking about her

> Hot Rod POV
> I don't know all of Jamie's powers,

Rebecca: I’m beginning to suspect they’re whatever the author needs at the time

> but I can tell she's furious at me and believes Crosshairs is dead.

Tsuneo: Oh no! If only anyone had tried to communicate anything at all!

> "I shouldn't have come," I whisper before stepping back. I should leave, but I can't while Jamie is
> like this,

Rick: So I’ll just stay here and make her even angrier

> even if they'll bring her back I can't believe what I've done.

Dan: [Hot Rod] I should up without bringing a cake, what was I thinking?

> Crosshairs POV
> They've been gone for three hours. This can't be good. It's only two in the afternoon; doubt Jamie is
> asleep,

Tsuneo: Conveniently, our house and Jamie’s dimension are in the same timezone

> and the others are waiting for her to wake up.

Rebecca: Scheduling is like, really really hard.

> Hot Rod walks in, sits on the edge of the bed, and sighs.
> "I'm sorry," he apologizes, "I never want to see her that angry again, but I likely will... often."

Tsuneo: Forgiveness is forbidden

> He tells me what happened. I didn't tell him that's not the angriest Jamie can get.

Dan: Once she got so angry that she didn’t use Twitter for a whole day
Rebecca: I’m shocked

> Hot Rod POV
> Crosshairs gets a text from Drift

Rebecca: Text messaging, wow. They really are super-advanced alien robot warriors, huh.

> telling him Jamie is frightened and furious. He'll be staying with
> Jamie in her dimension for a while.

Tsuneo: Drift has had enough of the lot of you, and frankly I don’t blame him.

> I know she's furious at me, but I hate she's still frightened.
> Unless there's another reason besides Crosshairs' injuries.

Rick: Jamie’s behind on her rent and she knows it.

> I leave the room before Crosshairs can yell at me.

Dan: [Hot Rod] I mean, come one. It was only a mild stabbing. What’s he so mad about?

> "What a mess," I hear Cade comment, "Crosshairs doesn't trust Rangeblade, though It's clear he
> won't hurt her. Hot Rod wants to protect Rangeblade to the point he'll hurt anyone. Jamie knows,
> and I think she hates him. The only good has been Bee, Hound, and Hot Rod attempt to spend time
> with Rangeblade, though they may still not agree with letting her stay on the team."

Dan: A quick refresh of the character relationship chart and we’re good.

> "This is a complicated situation," Prime tells him, " unfortunately, we'd likely be in this position if we
> started my plan immediately even though Jamie had to leave."

Rebecca: He had a plan. We have no idea what it was or why he didn’t implement it, but just take our word on it

> "Damn and getting things to where they should be is going to take a lot of time and work. I hope it
> doesn't involve more injuries."

Dan: Best to lock up every knife in the house just to be sure

> "I was worried about Crosshairs and Rangeblade's injuries; I failed to think about how seeing
> Crosshairs injured would affect Jamie,

Rebecca: He just assumed she was a handy healing dispensary and forgot about her as a character.

> but... Crosshairs would have died without Jamie's help, and it
> never crossed my mind to tell her how he's doing," Prime sighs.

Tsuneo: You’d think it would be obvious
Rebecca: ‘Obvious’ and this fic are not friends

> Fuck, I know I am the one who hurt him, but I feel sick hearing Crosshairs would have died.

Dan: Who would have thought stabbing him would come to that?
Rick: I know, right?

> Now I've caused more problems.

> Hot Rod: I am so sorry, Jamie.
> Jamie: YOU TRIED TO KILL CROSSHAIRS! I'LL NEVER FORGIVE YOU!

Tsuneo: Uh, what happened?
Dan: I think the fic switched over to script format.
Rebecca: Weird. Try switching the TV off and on and see if that fixes it.

> Drift: leave her alone. You got her crying again.
> Crosshairs: I'll be ok, Jamie.
> Lightning: you have no idea how much Hot Rod regrets this, Jamie.
> Drift: leave her alone for now.

Rick: This has been plot recap theatre

> I can't leave her alone, even if Drift means a day. What can I even do to show Jamie I'm sorry?

Tsuneo: Try actually communicating with her?
Rebecca: I think you're asking a bit much there

> Is she going to come back after this scrap?

Dan: Seriously, she's got like everything in her own dimension. Why would she bother?

> "So, are we having a Christmas party?" I hear Cogman ask Vivian.

Rick [Cogman]: We are going to have a jolly old Christmas complete with carols, turkey, plum pudding and presents under the tree or else people will die.

> Oh fuck, even if it's twenty-five days until Christmas, I'm worried about how ruined Christmas will be.

Dan: Here's an idea.
Rick: Shoot.
Dan: Decepticons attack.
Rick: Now you're being crazy

> -----

> Chapter 20
> Hot Rod POV
> Four days have passed; Jamie doesn't want to come back,

Dan: She wants to see other robots

> and Crosshairs hates he still can't go to Jamie's dimension.

Rick: He left his favourite book there and has been dying to read it again.

> He's off IV pain medication, but both Hound and Prime tell him he's not
> recovered enough to go,

Tsuneo: I'm sorry, you're not yet strong enough to tear through the barriers of time, space and reality

> which is scrap. As for Rangeblade, it's a damn waiting game.

> Hound POV
> I don't know when Rangeblade will wake up,

Dan: [Hound] But I just hope it's after the football season.

> only that she will not be in stasis lock for months.

Tsuneo: In case you missed the previous line, here it is again

> She didn't hurt herself to cause herself to be in a long stasis lock.

Rebecca: She chose her own coma

> I am not looking forward to catching her up on what's been happening.

> Lightning POV
> I will not be able to get Crosshairs to Jamie,

Tsuneo: I mean, you people are doing video chats and everything, so…
Rebecca: Stop trying to solve problems! You're meant to whine about them for days instead.

> but I can go see her. I have an idea.

Rick: One that's not likely to get anyone arrested this time

> "No, I don't want her to be furious at you," Hot Rod tells me when I tell him my plan.
> "She'll just think you're lying," I reply.

Rebecca: Try bringing a large hairless cat with you. That will sort things out.

> "It's true, at most, she'll think you're lying, Hot Rod," Crosshairs confirms, "be careful with her. I
> know it might seem like she's acting like a child; it's complicated."

Dan: After all, we all know she's a… How old is Jamie again?
Rebecca: Jamie is both a singular point in space, and yet Jamie also contains space itself. The nexus of Jamie is without dimension. The moment of Jamie's creation and the eventual heat death of the universe are inexorably the same.
Dan: Thought so.

> "I can't judge when I know little about her,"

Tsuneo: Time to stalk her Instagram and go through her garbage

> I tell Crosshairs. Hot Rod nods in agreement.

> Twenty minutes pass before Hot Rod hands me his phone,

Dan: He realised that he can't unlock it without a fingerprint.

> telling me it would be better to show
> Jamie the video from his phone so I can keep the video call with Crosshairs going.
> "You big softie," I tease, seeing he ended up crying,

Rick: And crying in fake French at that

> but I don't like this is how unhappy he is with what's been happening.

Tsuneo: How unhappy he is that he tried to kill your brother, you mean.

> "Come here, softie," Crosshairs jokes as he stands up to hug Hot Rod,

Dan: And Hot Rod takes the opportunity to stab him again.

> "I don't think Jamie hates you to the point you two are no longer friends; just what you did."

Tsuneo: She doesn't hate you for the attempted murder

> I know Crosshairs would like to come with us, but there's a logical reason Hound and Prime would
> tell him no.

Dan: Logic has nothing to do with this fic, you filthy liar.

> They still want Crosshairs resting, even though Crosshairs' pain is no longer excruciating.

Rebecca: Crosshairs, I envy you right now.

> I told him I'll video call him when I get to Jamie's dimension.

Dan: I wonder what service they have that can cross dimensional barriers
Rick: It’s probably costing them a fortune per minute

> Crosshairs POV
> I need to go with them, but I'd be in trouble if I went.

Rebecca: They have a strict no fake Australians rule

> I doubt I can repair the damage done by going.
> "Thought you'd go with her," Hound comments as he walks in. I give him a look of disgust as he sits
> on the chair by the bed. I'm not surprised Hot Rod didn't stay.

Tsuneo: Hot Rod’s just bored of all this crap

> Hound is about to say something as my phone goes off.

Dan: [Crosshairs] Hold on, I need to answer some questions about an extended warranty.

> Lightning started a video call before going by Drift and Jamie.
> I didn't expect Jamie to be scared to see Lightning.

Tsuneo: After Lightning did… Wait, what did Lightning do?
Rebecca: Absolutely nothing.

> She shows Jamie her phone.
> "He's ok," Lighting assures her.
> "I'm fine," I tell Jamie, "show her the video."

Rick: It’s a cat pushing a glass off the table, it’s so hilarious.

> Drift takes Lightning's phone, so Lightning can get the video from Hot Rod's phone before handing
> Jamie the phone.

Tsuneo: He showed her the phone so he could show her the phone

> "I'm sorry, Jamie; I thought I was protecting Rangeblade, but I did what I was afraid Crosshairs
> would do."
> Tears roll down Hot Rod's face.
> "He's ok, just in a bit of pain. I know he could have died."

Rebecca: He could have died, but it’s fine

> By now, it's a little hard to know what Hot Rod is saying as Hot Rod started sobbing.

Rick: Between that and the accent he must be incomprehensible

> "I know you're furious and don't want to be friends with me."
> The video ends.

Dan: [Hot Rod] Also, I would have called you directly, but you don’t deserve that respect.
Rick: [Hound] Yup, really helping.

> "Wow, I didn't think he was that upset," Hound comments.

> We watch Jamie crush the phone into pieces before going upstairs.

Rebecca: Well he’s just offered a heartfelt apology and shown genuine regret for his actions, so I suppose there’s nothing for it but a childish tantrum

> "Go!" Lightning demands.
> Drift follows Jamie upstairs.

Dan: [Lightning] No! Away! Not what I meant.

> I tell Lightning to leave a note for me before coming back. I don't think it'll matter if I send a video
> message to Drift's phone or not. This ISS just another issue we'll be dealing with.

Rick: What’s the International Space Station got to do with anything?

> All I wanted to do was protect my friends and my sister, but look at what I've caused.

Tsuneo: The moral of this story? If you are concerned that a member of an enemy faction that you have been at war with for millennia and that you have only just met might not be trustworthy then you are an awful person.

> Hound leaves the room to talk to Prime. I sit at the edge of the bed, waiting for Lightning to return.

Dan: Uh… I was going to make a joke here, but I lost track of whose POV it’s meant to be.
Rebecca: Honestly, I doubt it matters.

> I knew she'd be upset. She walks into the room and into my arms. I stand up to hug her.
> "This isn't what I wanted to happen," Lighting says in a sad tone.

Rick: This fic isn’t what I wanted to happen either.

> "I know; everything will be ok."

Dan: [Hound] Rangeblade is breathing her last!
Tsuneo: [Crosshairs] Everything will be okay.

> I might be lying, but I hope not. It's Jamie I'm uncertain about.

Tsuneo: Since Jamie was the one who was stabbed… Wait…

> Hot Rod is already begging for forgiveness. I don't think Rangeblade hates me,

Rick: But Bonecrusher still does

> but afraid.
> I didn't think Hot Rod would come back to my room. He and Lightning talk about wanting Jamie to
> come back now instead of Christmas.

Tsuneo: Do you want to talk to Jamie about that?
Rebecca: Why would anyone do that?

> I don't know if it's wise to have Jamie come back, at least for a week. She should calm down by
> then.

Rebecca: Jamie can hold a grudge like nobody’s business.
Rick: The fic is basically a succession of things for Jamie to be annoyed by.

> Lightning, Hot Rod, and I talk to Drift when he returns three hours later. He tells us Jamie told him to
> contact her when Rangeblade wakes up,

Tsuneo: Phone tag, the fanfic!

> and while he agrees Jamie being here with me is a good idea, I can video chat with her for now.

Dan: Crosshairs has to spend five minutes getting Zoom to work first, then Jamie spends the call looking up his nostrils.
Tsuneo: Olfactory scanners.
Dan: Eh, whatever.

> This should help her.
> Hot Rod is displeased with this, even though Drift knows Jamie a lot better than he does.
> He walks out of the house.

> -----

> Chapter 21
> Optimus Prime POV
> The past five days have been a disaster;

Tsuneo: And you're sure I can't use this as my review?
Rebecca: Nice try, but no.

> Crosshairs' video calls with Jamie helps a little, but Drift
> became too concerned and went to her dimension.

Rebecca: You know what? Let's stop trying to narrate the fic all together. From here on in, we'll make everything forced recaps.

> We're all getting worried about Rangeblade, who's been in stasis lock for twelve days.

Rick: Rangeblade is getting the best of this story.

> The fact it's from self-inflicted wounds is more concerning than how it's been twelve days.

Tsuneo: This whole fic is a self-inflicted wound.

> Hot Rod is in a depressed mood. I think he's mourning two lost friendships,

Rick: Things got awkward between him and Firebolt

> even if Crosshairs forgave him.

Dan: [Hot Rod] After all, what's a little stabbing between friends?

> He stays in the barn by Rangeblade, waiting for her to wake up.

Tsuneo: Nobody has been on patrol for forty-three days.
Rebecca: That's okay, since Decepticons don't actually exist.

> I'm hoping she'll wake up today, but worried; why does Jamie plan on returning when
> Rangeblade wakes up?

Rebecca: Could it be because she wants to talk to Rangeblade?
Tsuneo: You may be on to something there

> Three hours pass before Rangeblade finally wakes up.

Dan: Well that was an effortlessly resolved situation

> Hot Rod is relieved and wastes no time hugging her.

Rebecca: We'll just assume that she has no lingering injuries and move on.

> Once Hound is sure Rangeblade is ok, we leave the barn to tell the others.

Dan: [Hot Rod] Glad you're okay, bye now.
Rebecca: [Rangeblade] But I've missed out on so much! I have to know that everyone's okay!
Dan: [Hot Rod] No time for that, see you later.

> Rangeblade POV
> Hot Rod quickly filled me in on the scrap that's been going on the past twelve days.

Rebecca: [Rangeblade] All of you people are idiots.

> I watch tears roll down his face by the end. I can't believe he tried to kill Crosshairs.

Tsuneo: [Rangeblade] I wanted to kill Crosshairs, now everyone's just going to call me a copycat.

> Even if Crosshairs was trying
> to kill me, I don't think I can approve of Hot Rod's attempt to murder.

Rebecca: She's not sure how she feels about attempted murder

> He tells me he's been punished enough for his action.

Dan: They told him "no" in a stern voice.

> "I don't think the others forgive me, and Jamie hates me," Hot Rod finishes.

Tsuneo: …at least they've got a reason for this recap, I guess.

> Though I'm not sure if he wants to see me, I go to the house to see Crosshairs.

> Standing at the doorway, watching Crosshairs look out the window, shirtless.

Rick: This is now a CW show

> I'm troubled by his bandaged abdomen.

Tsuneo: I think the fic has actually forgotten they're meant to be robots by now.

> Even though I know nothing about human first aid or what happens when our
> holoforms are injured,

Tsuneo: A lot more than you'd think, despite the fact that it makes no sense.

> this is shocking to see. That and the apparent pain Crosshairs is in twelve
> days after what Hot Rod did.

Dan: Because holograms heal slowly or something.

> "What are you planning on doing, Jamie?" He says while looking at his phone.

Rebecca: Dunno. Maybe develop some more superpowers or something.

> I knock on the door to get his attention but freeze the second he looks at me.

Tsuneo: And remembers that he’s meant to hate her, as if that wasn’t half the fic so far.

> Crosshairs POV
> I didn't think Rangeblade would see me when she woke up — or at all

Dan: His plan was to go full ninja and stay hidden at all times.

> — but I hate she's afraid I'm looking at her. "Are you ok?" I ask her.

Rebecca: And that’s when she hauls off and shoots him for all he’s done.

> I see the fear on her face. Oh boy, so this is the damage done.

Rebecca: No? Just going to go back to sobbing? Okay then.

> Looks like Prime's plan will be further delayed.

Tsuneo: Prime never had a plan, did he?

> At this point, not only is the plan is to build trust with her, though I know I'm the
> main focus with the plan, now we need to add Jamie trusting Hot Rod again.

Dan: Have you tried hiding in a cave and eating fish? That seems to work
Rick: Yeah, good fish

> It would be great to get them back to being friends, but one step at a time.

Tsuneo: Everyone seems strangely fine with Hot Rod by now.

> I don't know what to say to Rangeblade,

Rick [Crosshairs]: Antidisestablishmentarianism

> but I need to lie down. Damn, I can't believe I'm still dealing with this much pain.

Dan: I’d say his doctor did a lousy job, but I imagine all hound did was put an ice pack on him to cool his beer.

> Rangeblade wastes no time leaving.

> One hour later

> Jamie POV
> Drift goes to the house to talk to Crosshairs while I talk to Rangeblade, who is in the barn.

Dan: Bumblebee goes to find Hot Rod by the hayshed, Hound catches up with Jolt at the pig trough and Dai Atlas seeks out Pipo at the crawfish pond.

> She's already stressed about what happened after Crosshairs and Lightning found her.

Rebecca: You mean when they fought the humans in the robot suits who had captured her?
Rick: The what now?
Rebecca: Yeah, silly me

> I don't think
> this will help much — since Crosshairs would still worry about Lightning — but he'd relax a little.

> "What's wrong?" Rangeblade asks.

[Rebecca gestures vaguely at everything]

Tsuneo: You shouldn’t have to keep doing that.
Rebecca: I should not.

> Damn, how does she know already?

Tsuneo: The fact that you’re all living in the same house might have something to do with it.

> Drift POV
> I thought Jamie would have come with me to Crosshairs' room.
> "She wanted to come back once Rangeblade woke up. What is she doing?" Crosshairs wonders,

Rebecca: [Crosshairs] Why would she want to see the person who just woke up when I’m here?

> "what are you doing?"

Rick: What is anyone doing, really?

> I pick Crosshairs up bridal style and rush out of the room.

Rebecca: And now it turns slashfic.

> I know he's embarrassed, but he's still slow to move around.

> My action resulted in a little pain for Crosshairs, but he tells me he's fine once he's standing by the
> wall. It's hard to find a place to hide and listen to the femmes' conversion.

Tsuneo: I mean, you could respect their privacy, but why?

> "... it's better if I leave."
> We both wanted to intrude on the conversation, but we wait.
> "...Tessa hates me,

Dan: Wait, is Tessa still in this fic?
Rick: It’s not like she’s still in the movies

> Hot Rod was so close to killing Crosshairs-."

Rebecca: [Jamie] Would have pulled it off too, if he hadn’t chickened out. Seriously, one more inch…

> "Wait, how do you know Tessa hates you, and Hot Rod hurt Crosshairs a lot worse than what I
> saw?"

Rick: She read the cliff notes version
Rebecca: This fic is the cliff notes version

> Rangeblade POV
> I can't believe what I'm hearing. The scrap that happened soon after the bots got me to the barn.

Tsuneo: They were fighting over Rangeblade without Rangeblade having to be present. I think that says everything about her character in this fic.

> I need to have a talk with Hot Rod. Not sure if I can do anything about Tessa.

Dan: Have you tried spraying?

> Not surprised Jamie secretly came back.

Tsuneo: Literally nobody else deserves to bask in the glory of Jamie.

> While I know little about her, it's obvious she'd come back to her friends during a situation like this.

Tsuneo: Of course it is
Dan: Well yeah, it’s what Jamie does.

[Pause]

Tsuneo: Is it?
Dan: Truth being told, I have no idea.

> She likely would refuse to leave if all this happened before she needed to leave.

Rick: But you know how it is. Netflix and Ben& Jerry’s needed her.

> Damn, how much did she worry while she was away?
> I didn't think Jamie would spy on Tessa.

Rebecca: Jamie knows all and sees all

> I'm too bothered by what I hear to question how Jamie knew Tessa left.

Tsuneo: She also knows what they had for breakfast every day she was away, but read nothing into that.

> "I overheard Cade and Prime talking about Tessa.

Dan: [Prime] Tessa sure is your daughter.
Rick: [Cade] Yep, she sure is.

[Pause]

Dan: [Prime] That’s all I got, sorry.

> Prime asking when she'd come back.

Rebecca: Or if she’s just going to phone it in from now on.

> I went to
> Shane's house, and she was ranting about me," Jamie explains before playing the audio recording.

Rebecca: Anyone else here find this a touch creepy?

> "I can't believe how worried they are about Jamie while Rangeblade is unconscious thanks to
> Crosshairs. How can they ignore how one of their own hurt another one of their race? "

Tsuneo: It might have something to do with centuries of fratricidal civil war.
Rick: You could be on to something there

> "You haven't been around them in five years.

Tsuneo: I suppose you could use that to figure out how long after the films this fic takes place.
Rick: I could, but I won’t.

> You can't understand their relationship with Jamie in four months.

Dan: Has it been four months since the start of the fic?
Rebecca: It certainly feels like it

> You really think they should ignore one of their human friends?"
> "YES!"

Rick: Why not? It’s what the film did with her.

> The clip ends. Obviously, this guy Tessa is talking to didn't know what to say.

Tsuneo: And not because the author couldn’t be bothered writing dialogue for him at all.

> We already have a lot to deal with, but I don't want to ignore the fact Tessa dislikes Jamie

Rebecca: Have you considered that Tessa might dislike her for perfectly legitimate reasons?
Rick: All must love Jamie. It is the law.

> and believes the Autobots
> should forget about her. How to get Jamie to stay here?
> I activate my holoform and hug her.

Dan: Can’t think of what to do, so do that.

> "Stay here," I insist.

Tsuneo: Who could have imagined such genius?

> I want her to stay since she's one of the few here who like me,

Rick: And let’s be honest here, it’s not like he does much to be likeable to begin with.

> but also I want this issue with Tessa
> to be dealt with. Lightning mentioned something called girls' night.

Tsuneo: They’re going to drink cosmopolitans and do each others’… um… cranial fiber extensions?
Rick: Don’t even try.

> She didn't explain what it is, but it's obviously something good.

Rebecca: It’s a night for girls. Figure it out.

> I watch Drift help Crosshairs walk towards us.

Dan: Drift has be demoted to ‘crutch.’

> I try to silently tell them to go back to Crosshairs'
> room; it's obvious Crosshairs' pain is slowly returning.
> "I want you to stay here," Crosshairs insists. He's doing great hiding how much pain he's in.

Tsuneo: Better than we are.

> "Can't your healing help with pain?" Drift asks as Lightning walks in. As if he's trying to get Jamie to
> leave.
> Crosshairs, Drift, and Jamie leave the barn.

Dan: Worked like a charm.

> Lightning is displeased with what I tell her. She tells me to stay here as she goes to get Prime.

Tsuneo: At this point, Prime is the dad they all go to with their drama, and he's just sick of it all.

> Crosshairs POV
> Jamie didn't like how my wound still looks.

Rebecca: She was hoping that he was going to have a dramatic scar

> Unfortunately, she can't heal it any further since it's been nine days.

Rick: Are you saying that Jamie has limits to her powers?
Rebecca: Nah, it's just that malpractice insurance won't cover it after that long and she wants to keep her payments down.

> At least she's able to help with pain, and I can skip pain medication for now.

Dan: But he's still going to guzzle the OxyCotin at every chance he gets.

> I'm glad Vivian came by to get Jamie.
> "I can't believe this," Drift comments while getting supplies to re-bandage my abdomen.

Rebecca: Re-bandaging supplies, also known as bandages.

> Hound says
> I'm healing but still need stitches. I know what's troubling Drift as it's troubling me, but I say nothing.

Tsuneo: Transformers!
Rick: Robots in disguise!
Dan: Autobots wage their battles to destroy the evil forces of the Decepticons!

> Cade, Lightning, and Prime walk in as Drift finishes.

Dan: Cade's wondering if he's still needed in this fic. Frankly, we've got no idea either.

> I notice Lightning got ahold of Jamie's phone. Did they hear what Jamie recorded?

Rebecca: Once you've illegally recorded somebody's personal conversation the next logical step is to share it with as many people as possible

> "So, how much more is added to our list of problems?" Hound asks as he walks in.

Dan: And is it going to get in the way of his bowling?

> I hate how he knows there's a problem instead of thinking maybe we're talking about my recovery.

Tsuneo: Curse him for being practical!

> I've created a set and the cast of this story to take screenshots. Posted on my instagram;
> jamielynnhero

Rick: This is either going to be done entirely in Poser or be one of those creepy fictional cast things, and I'm not sure which is worse

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> Chapter 23

> Lightning POV
> I swear it's like we're meant to have an endless list of problems to deal with.

Tsuneo: I think that the fic's becoming self-aware.

> Not even hearing Crosshairs was worried about her is cheering up Rangeblade.

Rebecca: And to think, the misery of others usually delights her.

> We're in the living room with Jamie and Vivian. With Cogman cooking dinner

Rick [Cogman]: I have made you White Tuna poached in olive oil. You will like it, or else.

> and the mechs talking about the scrap going on,

Rick: Locusts are all bitchy chatterboxes.

> I think
> this is a good time for time with Jamie and Rangeblade. Not sure if Vivian will stay if Rangeblade is
> here.

Rebecca: Given that she's barely contributed to the fic so far, I'm not sure how much of a difference it would make

> I'm half watching the movie and half thinking, how can we deal with this scrap? Is Jamie blaming
> herself, and that's why she didn't want to stay?

Tsuneo: Since she's been so heavily involved in the drama thus far.

> Optimus Prime POV
> Cade is unhappy about what Tessa said and that Jamie heard it.

Rebecca: He's the father of a teenage girl. He can't stand anything she does.

> Crosshairs and Drift are concerned about what Jamie has been thinking after that.

Rick: And for dinner tonight, everyone can sit around and mope.

> I think I see why Jamie doesn't want to stay, but why did she tell only Rangeblade?

> Tessa POV

Dan: [Tessa] Where in space am I meant to be?

> I'm not happy Jamie spied on Shane and me, but at the same time, I'm glad she did.

Rick: Nothing brings people together like invading their privacy.

> Now I don't have to repeat myself.

Rebecca: Anything to avoid talking to people.

> Maybe she'll be gone by Christmas.

> Shane POV

Dan [Shane]: Also I'm in this fic.

> I can't believe Tessa is happy Jamie heard her or that she's thinking this way.

Tsuneo: I can’t believe you can’t believe Tessa is happy Jamie heard her.
Dan: I can’t believe you can’t believe he can’t believe Tessa is happy Jamie heard her.
Tsuneo: I can’t believe that you –
Rebecca: Okay, how many ‘I can’t believes’ were you two going for?
Dan: I was reaching for about twenty myself.
Rebecca: Let’s just nip it in the bud there.

> There's nothing I can do without getting a mouthful from Tessa.

Rick: Shane’s beginning to regret eloping with her.

> I think it might be better to not go back to Vivian's house for Christmas.

Rebecca: Nothing to do with the situation. He just doesn’t want to hang out with Vivian’s boozy mom.

> Crosshairs POV
> Drift, and I go downstairs to the living room.

Dan: Drift is hoping to catch them in the middle of a sexy pillow fight or something.

> All four femme are happy I'm downstairs but distracted by everything we need to fix.

Dan: They’re happy, but not too happy

> I think I'd rather we have to fix the old castle Vivian inherited

Rick: Complete with an eccentric collection of generic Transformers.

> along with this house than deal with this scrap

Tsuneo: Also, just to clarify, does that mean you could all be living in an actual castle instead of crammed into this barn?
Rick: Well yes, but they may have to share it with the watch that killed Hitler.
Tsuneo: Hmmm. Tricky.

> Rangeblade leaves immediately after I sit between her and Jamie.

Tsuneo: Well no way this is going to be awkward.

> Drift follows her as Jamie and Lightning watch, worried.

Rick: Way to kill the mood, man.

> I know Lightning told Rangeblade I was worried about her after
> Rangeblade went into stasis lock.

Dan: It’s not so much that the dialogue in this fic loops itself as it is a perfect circle

> I know that wouldn't be enough to get her to stop being afraid of
> me, but I thought at least she wouldn't want to avoid me. She still thinks I'm going to try to fight her,
> damn.

Rick [Crosshairs]: Rangeblade has come here herself! Okay! I will get Rangeblade to fight me! Heh, heh.

> Rangeblade POV

> I go to Jamie's room

Dan: Doesn’t she have her own room?
Tsuneo: Being honest, I don’t remember. Also being honest, I don’t think I care either.

> and sit on the bed after closing the door. Sure, I could've gone to one of the
> many guest rooms, but I wanted to sit in this room.

Rick: Besides, it has the comfiest chair.

> I didn't think Jamie left things behind since she
> didn't know when she'd come back to stay for a while.

Tsuneo: But despite apparently having to put up the holographic avatars of a half-dozen transformers, they still keep a room for the girl who has an entire dimension to himself.
Dan: I mean, when you put it like that it sounds a little silly.

> At least it seemed she'd come back for Christmas, but uncertain if she could stay.

Rebecca: And by this point in the fic, the drama has ground down to fretting over living arrangements.
Dan: Crosshairs says he’s forgiven Hot Rod, but still doesn’t want the room next to him. But the only other option is the one across the hall, yet Drift says he needs the balcony on that one and refuses to move.

> "If you didn't want to be found,

Dan: Then don’t pick an obvious place to hide.
Rick: This is how not to be seen

> you should have gone to one of the many guest rooms," Drift jokes as he closes the door.
> "I'm sure you would have eventually found me," I smile as I sit next to me.

Tsuneo: Rangeblade has discovered how to duplicate herself.
Rebecca: I suppose she’s got to amplify her drama somehow.

> We end up talking about Crosshairs and Jamie,

Rick: Even Godzilla thinks that too much of the dialogue is about her

> though Drift still won't tell me everything about Jamie;

Rebecca: Nothing for it but going through her personal emails.

> he says it's nothing I have to worry about right now.

Tsuneo: She occupies her own dimension, can teleport, heal and throw fire. Perfectly normal, nothing to worry about.

> "Come on," Drift insists, " you know Crosshairs can't fight you if he wanted to,

Rick: But you get in a thumb war and you’re toast.

> but I don't think he wants to."

Dan: He might not try to kill you is not the most reassuring statement

> At least I don't have to sit next to Crosshairs as Lighting and Jamie and sitting on either side of him.

Tsuneo: Intense seating arrangement action!

> Both leaning on him as he has his arms around them. Drift leads me to sit with him on the other
> couch.

Rick: But who sits with Tessa? Is Tessa even here? What about Vivian? Was Vivian invited? We need to know where they're seated!

> We watch what's left of the movie. The movie finished in time for dinner.

Rebecca: Thrill as a movie finishes its run-time

> I watch Crosshairs in pain as he stands up.

Tsuneo: I'm so glad they've found the new point of "Crosshairs is in pain" to belabour.

> Hot Rod POV
> I am happy Jamie is here, but I should avoid her.

Rick: He's happy, but he's not that happy

> It's not like I must eat now.

Tsuneo: Has he actually remembered that he's more than his holomatter avatar and humanising themselves like this is a hollow gesture?
Rick: Nah, he just snuck some cookies before dinner and isn't hungry.

> I can wait until everyone goes to bed. I ignore the text messages Crosshairs sends me.

Dan: He files them under spam and goes back to looking at pictures of cats

> Interestingly, Prime doesn't send me any messages.

Tsuneo: Is that really interesting?
Rebecca: No it's not

> A half-hour passes before Crosshairs walks into my room.
> "Avoiding me now?" He jokes.

Dan: [Hot Rod] You want another stabbing? It can be arranged.

> "No, it's best I stay away from Jamie. She's furious at me," then it dawned on me, "how likely is she
> to do the same as I did to you?"

Rick: How likely is it that we invited a homicidal killer over for dinner?

> He looks at me, concerned, before we hear someone running down the hall.

Tsuneo: Grimlock's been left out of this long enough.

> I look and see it's Jamie. I walk into the hallway before she unintentionally hurts Crosshairs.

Dan: Oh no, nothing unintentional about it.

> Even though all she can do is cause more pain, she'd feel terrible.

Rebecca: I'm sure that the subject of her attack would be just fine

> I should know by now not to be fooled by her small size,

Rick: Since it’s well known Jamie weighs as much as a neutron star, but uses her innate gravity control to keep such in check.

> but I was as she tackled me to the ground.
> I grab her wrists, but I'm struggling to keep her from punching me.

Dan: And Jamie’s got into the mount position. It’s all over now, folks.

> I didn't know Crosshairs sat on
> the floor — which had to have been painful — until he moves Jamie off me and onto his lap. Instead
> of breaking free, Jamie hugs Crosshairs.

Tsuneo: And I’m sure that’s perfectly fine for his stitches too

> "I'm sorry, I know what I did was a huge mistake," I tell her, not knowing if she's paying attention,
> before walking away.

Dan: That’s when she pounces on him from behind.

> Crosshairs POV
> Yes, sitting on the floor hurts, but it's better than the injuries Jamie can inflict on Hot Rod.

Rebecca: You’re going to stop her from attacking him by sitting on the floor. This makes perfect sense to me

> I worry she was having nightmares alone. Was that why Drift went to her dimension?

Dan: Maybe he just doesn’t like you.

> I see why he didn't tell me.

Rebecca: [Crosshairs] About this thing I just made up, I mean.

> Why didn't Prime tell her I was doing much better when I woke up?

Tsuneo: Because basic communication skills are beyond the grasp of the entire cast.

> Rangeblade and Drift stand beside me for a minute before

Dan: [Crosshairs] Yeah, fat lot of help you two were.

> Drift takes Jamie so Rangeblade can help me up. I clench my side in pain.

Rebecca: [Crosshairs] I’m going to milk this for all it’s worth.

> This worries both Jamie and Rangeblade. I assure them I'm
> fine before going back to my room to lay on my bed.

Dan: Please ignore the popped stitches and obvious bleeding.

> Rangeblade walks in and sits on the edge of the bed.

Rebecca: Doesn’t anyone have a chair int their rooms?

> Either she's concerned about what Hot Rod did or enjoying this.

Rick: Why not both?

> Ten minutes pass before Hound walks in.

Tsuneo: Pass in deathly silence, no doubt.

> He didn't tell Rangeblade to leave before removing my bandages.

Dan: [Hound] She can gawp all she wants as far as I'm concerned.

> He finally takes out the stitches. Good, I can stick to my plan Tuesday after the damn
> storm passes.

Tsuneo: Then he's going antiquing

> Two more days to rest — or deal with Jamie's anger towards Hot Rod.

Dan: Hot Rod was found at dawn swinging from the old gnarled tree at the crossroads.
Rebecca: But it doesn't matter, because he's just a hologram.
Dan: Oh, of course not.

> I can do both;

Rick: Mostly by hiding in his room.

> my pain isn't too bad. Hound tells me to be careful before leaving. I forgot Rangeblade has been
> here the whole time.

Rebecca: Somehow he didn't notice her lurking in his room for two days.

> "I'm not going to yell at you," I assure her.

Tsuneo: [Rangeblade] Good, it's my turn.

> I know the look on her face too well. I realize not now, in a way, she's like a Cybertronian version of
> Jamie.

Dan: In that she is the centre of everything, develops new powers as the plot needs and will fly off the hook at a moment's notice

> The difference being Rangeblade's shyness is likely temporary and due to knowing
> switching sides isn't easy.

Rebecca: [Crosshairs] Hmm, gee, I wonder whose fault that is?

> We already have an ex-con on our side

Rick: He was released early for good behaviour

> ... unless something happened to him; damn humans.

Dan: [Drift] I'm okay!
Rick: [Crosshairs] What could the humans have done to him?
Dan: [Drift] Seriously, I'm right down the hall!

> Rangeblade rushes out of the room as I sit up. Oh boy, in a way, progress has been made, but...

Tsuneo: In the same way that Sisyphus made progress.

> Rangeblade POV
> I don't know what to think at this point.

Rick: Forget these losers and go back to conquering the galaxy?
Rebecca: Honestly doesn’t sound like a bad idea right now.

> Is Crosshairs beginning to trust me, or is he hoping to trick me?
> This is now tricky, but this can't be one-sided. Optimus said he thinks Jamie can be a big help, and I
> think I see how she can be tonight.

Dan: She can randomly assault people! That will help.

> "... you're right, everyone talks about getting Crosshairs to trust you, but forget you have to work on
> trusting him," Drift explains.

Rebecca: It’s almost like he’s been unceasingly hostile or something.

> "He's hoping to trick me then fight me."

Dan: [Hot Rod] Or he could just stab you. Ha ha, who would even do that, right?

> "He wouldn't do that even if he's still furious, you're here — though I doubt he is."

Rebecca: You’re really not helping there

> We join Jamie and Lightning watching their movie,

Rick: They’re still amazed that somebody thought a Valliant Cinematic Universe would be a good idea

> which turns into a marathon — or so that's what Janie wanted.

Dan: All must obey Jamie

> "So much for watching movies all night," Drift laughs before texting Crosshairs,

Rick: [Drift] Seriously, can’t I just veg out on the couch for once without somebody starting something?

> "ok, go ahead," he tells me.
> Did Drift tell Crosshairs I'm coming up with Jamie?

> Crosshairs sits on the bed until I walk into the room. He stands up to take Jamie from me.

Dan: [Rangeblade] Your turn to look after the brat.

> I can't get myself to say anything. This isn't going as I wanted.

Tsuneo: On account of the violent assault and whatnot.

> I run out of the room, running into Drift. I break down and cry while hugging him.

> Drift POV
> I take Rangeblade to my room, and we sit on the bed.
> "I take it you couldn't say anything?" I ask.

Rick: Could she try miming it instead?

> "No," she sobs.
> "You need to relax. You know this is going to take time."
> I honestly don't think the others, aside from Lightning, trust her enough to go on missions with her,

Tsuneo: What missions? So far all you've done in this fic is hang around and have cheap teen drama.
Rick: Ah, but at any moment they could go to the mall.

> so while we're thinking everyone but Crosshairs trusts her, the others might not fully trust her.

Rebecca: They might trust her, but they might not
Tsuneo: This has been another presentation of circling the drain theatre

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> Chapter 24
> Crosshairs POV
> I stayed in bed for most of the past two days. Hot Rod has been avoiding everyone. I hope he didn't
> go in the woods during the snowstorm.

Dan: I mean, there could be bears or something out there.
Rick: Or even worse, he runs into a cheesy Christmas movie

> I don't know if I should be concerned Jamie hasn't asked where Hot Rod is.

Rebecca: I wonder if it's occurred to him that she might have asked someone who isn't in his room?
Rick: Or if they might have seen each other somewhere outside his room?
Dan: Crosshairs is going more than a little stir crazy in here.

> She'd usually be concerned, but if she's still furious at him...

> Actually, no one is concerned about him not being around, so he must be in the barn. Well, since
> I'm only dealing with a little pain,

Rebecca: It's only light internal bleeding

> I'm going out to the barn.

> I find Hot Rod - using his holoform-

Dan: Because honestly, why wouldn't he in this fic?

> in the barn, sitting on a bed left in the barn.

Tsuneo: He was in the barn which was in the barn

> I think it's for Cade
> when he works late at night, though no one can hear anyone walking down the hall if the door to the
> bedroom is closed.

Rick: [Crosshairs] Which kind of negates my suspicion about the bed. Not sure why I brought it up in the first place, really.

> "The house is huge;

Rebecca: Apparently they live in a sprawling country house in the middle of nowhere

> you don't need to stay out here while Jamie is here."
> "There's still a chance she'll find me," Hot Rod replies in a sad tone.

Tsuneo: Well maybe if somebody was actually willing to call Jamie on her bad behaviour and drama-mongering then we wouldn't be in this mess.
Rebecca: Perish the thought

> "How the hell is Prime letting you stay in here?"

Dan: [Hot Rod] Prime doesn't know. I've put three pillows under my blankets.

> "He insisted I stay in the house, but I think he gave up the other day."

Rebecca: Prime is so over all this drama that he's not bothering anymore.

> I think Hot Rod thinks Jamie will harm him as he did me. She knows such actions of revenge are
> wrong,

Tsuneo: She's aware of the idea that killing somebody is bad.

> but I'm uncertain if she'd still do something since I could've died.

Dan: So they're just going to let the homicidal maniac wander the house?
Rebecca: Jamie is all powerful. They couldn't stop her if they tried.

> Hot Rod tells me to go back to the house.

Dan: [Crosshairs] Yep, good talk. Glad I got out here.

> Lightning isn't pleased Hot Rod doesn't want to come back to the house,

Rebecca: Last time Hot Rod hid out here was when it was his turn to take out the garbage.

> or he possibly believes Jamie will harm him as he did to me.
> I'm expecting her to force Hot Rod to come back.

Dan: At gunpoint if needs be

> She leaves with a plate for Hot Rod, walking out the door as Drift and Jamie walk into the kitchen.

Rebecca: And, with great ceremony and unbroken eye contact, dumps it in the pig trough.

> It's one of those days where everyone gets
> breakfast whenever instead of waiting for most of us to be downstairs.

Rick: You know, those sorts of days

> Lightning and I have been waiting for Drift and Jamie to come down before getting breakfast.

Tsuneo: Since we all get breakfast whenever today instead of waiting for people.

> I've told Lightning what my plan is for today;

Dan: Go out hunting for rouge Decepticons or the humans that attacked them?
Tsuneo: What the hell are you thinking?
Dan: I'm sorry, I have no idea what came over me.

> she told me she wants Drift, Jamie, and Rangeblade to come with us.

Rick: Please tell me this is a shopping montage involving lots of laughing and trying on hats.

Tsuneo: Sure, why not?

> Drift and Jamie
> might come with us or argue it's an opportunity for Lightning and me to spend time together. As for
> Rangeblade,

Tsuneo: The perpetual third wheel.

> I doubt she wants to do anything with me,

Dan: [Crosshairs] And for the life of me, I can't imagine why.

> even if the others are with us. It's going to be a problem once we start Prime's plan.

Rebecca: Prime's five-year plan to modernise the economy and improve industrial output

> As I thought, Drift and Jamie insist I spend the day with Lightning, but Lightning insists they come
> with us.

Dan: Spend a day out with us or else!

> I'd love to spend the day with my sister and friends. Lighting tells me she'll see if she can
> get Rangeblade to join us.

Tsuneo: And so, nobody goes anywhere and they just stand around looking awkward all day.
Rebecca: Folks, the fic.

> Lightning POV
> I was hoping Rangeblade would come with us. I know I shouldn't make her come with us. She's
> likely going to spend time with Hot Rod.
> "Have him come in the house. We're going to be out all day."

Dan: It's his turn to sit on the couch and be generally miserable.

> Optimus and Cade are out on a mission again.

Tsuneo: I sincerely doubt this claim

> So odd they won't tell us what they're up to. There are a few things they could be doing.

Rick: They could be going fishing and drinking cheap beer for all we know
Dan: I'd be down with that

> I'm sure we'll find out what they've been up to soon.

> Cade POV
> Optimus has asked me to design a course for the trust exercises and create a map for a specific
> exercise. Glad Vivian inherited the old castle; this makes things easier.

Rick: Having a castle makes trust exercises a lot easier. Makes sense to me.

> I know what Prime has been
> up to — at least one thing — I've been part of a few meetings, but I've been asked to keep it a
> secret.

Tsuneo: This is the castle in the English countryside, right?
Rick: Yep.
Tsuneo: And Cade's barn is what, somewhere in the Midwest?

Rick: That’s correct.
Tsuneo: So they’re going half-way across the world for this silly plan?
Rick: The real trust exercise is the extended stop-over at JFK.

> Rangeblade POV
> I want to go with Lighting, but I don't want to ruin her time with Crosshairs.

Rebecca: They’re going to take longer arranging this excursion than the actual trip will take.
Dan: So where are they going anyway?
Rebecca: Down to the shops. They’re out of milk again.

> I don't know if Crosshairs
> would be pissed I joined them, and I'd rather not find out.
> Hot Rod agrees to go to the house and watch a movie with me.

Dan: Staying home and watching movies is the only thing they ever do
Rick: It’s the 2020 experience

> "Finally came back?" Vivian asks.
> "Only for a few hours," Hot Rod replies,

Tsuneo: The barn doesn’t get wi-fi, so he’s going to hide in here instead.

> "I'd rather not cause more scrap with everything we already have to deal with."
> Vivian said nothing more and went upstairs.

Rebecca: Vivian’s had enough of this crap. She’s out of here.

> Lightning POV
> I thought we would skate at the river, not at an ice skating rink in town. In that case, Crosshairs
> must have more than ice skating planned. Good thing we don't need sleep.

Tsuneo: Please disregard all the time that they have spent sleeping in the fic so far

> "You asked Vivian to pay for us to have the rink to ourselves, and she agreed?"

Rebecca: Flagrantly throwing around her wealth on petty vanities. It’s the Neuveau Rich lifestyle

> I ask as I put my skates on.
> "Yes!" Crosshairs chirps, "only for two hours."

Dan: [Lightning] Good thing we ditched her for the lake, then.

> We both have ice skated a little before today. Enough to not spend most of our time on our afts.

Rick: Doubtless they fought bad guys on some generic ice planet in the past.

> Though we struggled to get our balance for a good five minutes, laughing as we try to help each
> other stay standing.

Dan: Soon enough they’re just wrestling on the ice, trying to drown each other. It’s how all my ice skating trips ended.
Rebecca: Dan, I am immensely relieved to say this, but not everyone is you.

> Once we stopped falling the second, we stand up; Crosshairs started doing a common couple's
> dance. It was fun even though we fell at the end. We laugh and have a good time.

Rebecca: Remember the creepy undertones between these two early in the fic?

Tsuneo: I do, and I’m really not sure about how I feel about them returning
Rebecca: It’s a lot like that

> Before we knew it, our time was up.

Dan: Now they’ve got to spend three hours arguing about who goes home with who.

> "All right, let's go get dinner," Crosshairs says as we return our rented skates. I have a new
> message from Drift.

Rick: [Lightning] Something about paying off my debts with iTunes cards.

> Drift: I'm sorry, but Jamie insists you and Crosshairs had time together without us,

Rebecca: How dare you not include her in every aspect of your lives

> even though she
> knows Crosshairs would be disappointed. She ended up crying by the end of her sentence.

Tsuneo: Have some heavy-handed guilt tripping.

> Oh boy, I do not know what to do.

Dan: Scream and shoot people.
Rick: Sounds like the only option at this point.

> I feel, as the humans say, caught between a rock and a hard
> place. I'm enjoying my time with Crosshairs, but I was hoping to spend time with Crosshairs, Drift,
> and Jamie.

Rebecca: Nobody asked Crosshairs, but nobody cares about Crosshairs either.

> Actually, it would be great if everyone was here.

Rick: Ratchet, Ironhide, Jazz, Jolt, Muflap, Skids, Leadfoot, Topspin, Roadbuster, Cliffjumper, Gears, Longarm, Chevy Aevo Swerve... everyone.

> Crosshairs tries to hide how disappointed he is, but he's terrible at it.

Tsuneo: Mostly, Crosshairs is just terrible.

> So this is how you treat my brother, Jamie? Was I wrong to think we could be friends?

Dan: Yes. Next question.

With that final comment, the big screen switched off, reverting the world back to prose format. “And that was the last part of Cross in the Light,” Tsuneo commented. “A fic that never ended, which is appropriate, given that it never actually started.”

“There’s a lot of that,” Rebecca agreed. “This is probably the most front-loaded fic I’ve ever seen.”

“It’s not so much that all the action was at the start as that all the content was at the start full stop,” Rick nodded. “Finding Lighting, rescuing Rangeblade, the ship and all that stuff is the first quarter of the fic.”

“And after that?” Dan shrugged. “Nothing at all. And lots of it.”

“Although when you look at it, Lightning was somewhat redundant to the fic anyway,” Tsuneo spoke up. “Yes, the fic opens with Crosshairs moping over her, but that story arc just kind of stops dead given that she basically shows up out of nowhere with nary an explanation in the first chapter.”

“Which is something that struck me,” Rebecca nodded. “There’s no questions as to where she’s been, what she’s been doing, how she’s alive when everyone thought she was dead or even why she left in the first place. And, by the same token, Lightning never once offers any sort of explanation to any of this.”

“All of which could have made for an interesting story in and of itself, or at least further developed her character, because she’s pretty damn flat otherwise,” Dan noted.

“And it’s not like Rangeblade’s any better, mind you,” Rick offered.

“I see it like this. Rangeblade’s personality is that she’s overly dramatic,” Rebecca explained. “Lighting’s personality is that Rangeblade is overly dramatic.”

“Which is one of the fic’s problems nicely summed up,” Tsuneo continued. “After the bit with the spaceship, everything that happens is purely reactive. Somebody does something stupid, so everyone else has to carry on like screaming teenagers. And then repeat the process until the end of all time, it seems.”

“I can say that there’s one upside to Lightning being sidelined in what was supposedly her fic,” Rebecca added. “It cut off the creepy undertones between her and Crosshairs. So, um, yay, I guess.”

“I’ll count that as a win,” Dan shuddered.

“Of course, I can offer a theory as to why all that was dropped,” Rick spoke up.

“I suspect I know what this is, but do go on,” Tsuneo nodded.

“Jamie,” Rick confirmed. “Because at the end of the day, the fic’s not about Lightning or Rangeblade or any one of the six dozen actual Transformers characters that were squeezed into it one way or another. It was about Jamie.”

“You know what would have been nice?” Dan continued. “Any explanation of anything at all.”

“I think you’re asking a bit much there,” Rebecca countered. “Because really, the fic doesn’t need one. The fic only exists for one reason, and that’s to showcase the author’s amazing OC. And as the reader, you shouldn’t need to think about anything that isn’t said character.”

“Isn’t that a bit of a harsh read on it?” Tsuneo asked.

“On the contrary, it’s a common mindset among fanfic authors,” she countered. “And admit it, we see it all the time.”

“Just look at…” Dan began, then paused as he began counting off his fingers. “Well actually, all of our B-Team fics we read.”

“I concede your point,” Tsuneo shrugged. He paused and then added, “This fic could have really used an inappropriate comedic school bell.”

“Not even going to ask,” Rebecca shook her head.

“You know what’s the worst part of it?” Dan then added. “Mysterious humans in robot suits who are capturing Transformers for some nefarious purpose could actually be a solid premise for a fic.”

“It’s not a bad idea at all,” Rebecca agreed. “But instead we got this.”

“That’s about the best summary of the fic I could think of, really,” Rick sighed.

“Well I can see that you have a lot to say about the fic already,” the Voice crashed into the conversation.

“Which is quite remarkable given its lack of actual content,” Tsuneo replied.

“Much ado about nothing,” Rick smirked.

“So then I would be very eager to hear what you have to say about it,” the Voice continued.

“And we are very eager to comply,” Dan replied. “If only because it means we’re getting this fic over and done with and never have to speak of it again.”

“That’s the spirit,” Rick nodded.

“So let’s start with the premise of the fic, as much as there was one there,” Rebecca began. “When the fic opens, we have several things going on. There’s the sudden reappearance of Lightning, who has been presumed dead for some time. Then there’s the mysterious group of humans who have giant robot suits, a spaceship and other advanced technology and are capturing and torturing Transformers for some unknown reason. And finally we have Rangeblade, a Decepticon who is apparently reconsidering her allegiance.”

“And then the fic flushes all of that,” she continued. “Of those three elements, only one of them is bought up in any capacity after that. Lighting’s sudden reappearance is never bought up again, and nobody ever asks where she was all that time. The humans are never even mentioned again after the escape from the ship, and there’s no effort at all to further investigate them. And Rangeblade’s past is never explored at all beyond being used as a catalyst for the drama that ensues.”

“Which is what the fic is all about, really. All that I mentioned is just setup; it’s the stage dressing for a festival of pointless, stupid and petty soap-opera level drama that has nothing to do with any of the events I mentioned before. The humans could have been left out of the fic. Hell, Lighting could have been left out of the fic for how little she actually does for it. Either the author chose to abandon their initial premise early on, or the whole thing was a pointless waste of time before settling into the soap. Neither is a good move for the fic.”

“Now that we know the fic is all about the drama, the question is what is the drama all about?” Dan put forward. “You’ve got distrust, betrayal, fights, attempted murder, a threatened execution… And it’s actually surprisingly not about Rangeblade being a former Decepticon. Because in all of that, people’s motivations come back to pleasing Jamie.

“Here’s the thing. Any time anyone gets into a conflict, they worry about Jamie. Solving everything seems to somehow involve Jamie being here. And the main concern for several characters is less that they’ve betrayed each other than that Jamie won’t like them for it. It’s remarkable how she’s absent for most of the fic, and yet every other line and half the character’s motivations seems to be about her.

“Now you’d think this would make Jamie into a big thing, but it comes off as really hollow. See, we don’t actually know a thing about Jamie; where she comes from, why she has these powers, how she joined the Autoboots, what’s her history with Lightning… There’s nothing. And even her amazing list of powers are irrelevant, since she rarely does anything with her. Take them away, and it makes almost no difference. Heck, instead of living in another dimension, she could just retreat to the next state over. For a character that the fic is all about… She’s just not much of a character.”

Tsuneo nodded his agreement. “While those are certainly problems, my main issue was with the sheer repetition in this fic. Any time a new point arises – and I’m careful to avoid implying that they advance the fic – it has to be laboured over and over again. Someone will have an issue with their teammates, and everyone will have to talk about it, saying the same things endlessly. Even bringing

Jamie into it will be repeated endlessly; so many characters worried that Jamie wouldn't like Crosshairs any more, for example.

"The thing is, this is enforced and deliberate. The constantly changing point of view only serves so multiple characters can observe and repeat the same event. So many times it just went from one character to the other, barely changing the text just to reiterate the same point. And the story deliberately avoids resolving any of its issues by having characters constantly running away from each other, clamming up and not talking, or just plain hiding.

"Even as the issues change, they're still handled pretty much the same. It got hard to tell exactly what was going on or who was mad at who because it all felt so similar. The same characters repeating near-identical points. Even when Jamie was brought back from her exile, all it did was have her join in the chorus; first by acting out in the exact same way, then by causing her own drama in attacking Hot Rod. It was monotonous, it was endless, and all that made it really pointless."

"This fic takes a common trend I've seen in Transformers fic, and pushes it to its furthest extremes," Rick continued. "This is not a Transformers fic. It doesn't have Transformers in it. What it has is a bunch of people in funny robot costumes that occasionally turn into cars but otherwise act so ridiculously human that you wonder what the point was of making them Transfomers in the first place."

"Putting aside the opening couple of chapters, which might as well have been a different fic, the characters just don't do anything, well, Transfomer-y," he explained. "The characters engage in soap opera antics. They go on dates. They sit around the house and watch TV. They pick out clothes. They sulk in their rooms. They have Thanksgiving dinner. And so on and so forth. None of this requires them to actually, you know, be Transformers. This fic could have just as easily been about normal people and it would have ultimately made little actual difference."

"In a strange way, the awkward use of 'Transformers' terminology for body parts; helmet, servo, digits and so on, is even more out of place given how little the characters actually need to be Transformers for it all to work. Instead the biggest problem comes from the whole 'holoform' plot device the fic used to justify this state of affairs. If you need to go out of your way to create a way to have your characters act so out of character, then maybe there's a problem with your fic's premise that you need to consider." He sighed. "Otherwise what's the point of writing a fic about giant alien war robots if they're not going to actually be giant alien war robots?"

"It really did push the whole 'humans in funny robot suits' style to its limits, didn't it?" Rebecca asked.

"To the point where they effectively abandoned the funny robot suits," Rick agreed. "Really, the whole holoform thing was just an excuse to have the Transformers be humans and do human things."

"Which makes you wonder why the Author didn't just write 'Transformers as humans' fic in the first place," Rebecca continued. "Given how common a subgenre it is."

"I was wondering that myself," Rick shrugged. "And the only explanation I can think of is that the setup wouldn't work with that. But then if they went with the Transformers as humans subgenre then they wouldn't need to have that setup in the first place."

"So there you have it, Voice," Tsuneo concluded. "The fic ignored its own premise, ignored the material it was based on, took forever to go nowhere and was actually about an all-consuming cosmic horror of an OC to the point where everything that's not about them is completely irrelevant."

"Thank you all for that," The Voice replied. "As always, your feedback is greatly appreciated, and helps to inform future review choices."

"If it means we don't read something like this again, then that pain will totally have been worth it," Dan added.

"Really?" Tsuneo asked.

“Not one bit.”

“But we are done, right?” Dan asked. “Please say we’re done.”

“We are, yes,” the Voice concluded. “I will see you all next week.”

“I’m thrilled,” Rebecca sighed as she stood. “Also, I am out of here, as I’ve had about as much as I think I can handle.”

“Likewise,” Dan agreed as the pair of them headed for the door. “I’m amazed that this had even less going for it then Tale of the Nightbird. That takes effort.”

“I won’t even ask,” she shook her head. “Although it does make me feel kind of glad that I’m reading Storm Force instead.”

“Lucky,” Dan sighed as the pair of them headed out.

“So Rick,” Tsuneo considered, “looping back to what we said earlier about Movie Decepticons, I did have another thought.”

“What’s that?”

“I know that there are a lot of toyline only characters in the Transformers movie lines,” he continued. “Both in terms of reuses of movie designs or entirely new characters.”

“Sure thing,” Rick nodded. “What’s up?”

“Obviously said characters have to rely entirely on secondary media for their characterisations. So I’m just curious if they’re any less bloodthirsty then the actual movie characters.”

“Well, let’s see…” Rick considered. “There’s Incinerator, who enjoys capturing people and then dropping them from great heights or into volcanos. Or Vortex, who is a sadistic torturer. Or Hardtop who’s a psycho stalker sniper. Or Stockade who basically is a mafia thug who enjoys breaking kneecaps.”

“So… no,” Tsuneo finished.

“Basically,” Rick nodded. “Barring some other outside cases of course.”

“Like who?”

“Well there’s Fracture. She’s a cackling psycho who just enjoys getting into fights and trashing things for the sake of it.”

“How’s that different to any of the others?”

“Because she’s actually the Gobot Crasher,” Rick finished. “It’s complicated.”

“I…” Tsuneo considered. “You know what, I won’t even ask.”

“That’s probably for the best.”

Author’s notes:

What was the point of this fic? As best as I can tell, the answer is ‘Jamie’, given that she is the be all and end all of existence. Given that she had water healing powers and was explicitly described as having ‘firebending’ powers as well, I can also assume that Jamie is meant to be the Avatar, which at this point is only really adding to her list of stupid superpowers.

I have ragged a lot on IDW’s Transformers comics for their turning into ‘humans in funny robot suits that occasionally turn into cars’ as their primary form of storytelling. Even then, that’s still nothing on the direction that this fic took the idea in. I am really struggling to think of what it actually achieved by being about Transformers in the first place beyond giving the author a fandom to insert their character into.

Next time, mutants. You can decide what type.

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Cross in The Light written by Autobot2001

Rebecca Bartley and Rick R. Mortis created by Rick R. (natch)
Tsuneo Tateo and Dan created by Zogster

Questions? Comments? Complaints? Creepy robot girls? Email us at elmerstudios00 (at) gmail.com and register your Jeff.

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> I'm worried about how ruined Christmas will be.