

**The Adventures of  
Kid America  
and the  
Action Figures**

**Prologue**

**The Story  
So Far**

**the following alphabet chapters  
tell a short pre-fable which catapults us to the origin of Ultra-Teen #3,472,250:  
Billy Kazoo,  
our rubber masked protagonist**

**Outside the impenetrable static of the Electric Blanket,  
25 years swiftly passed after the Great Blackout.  
Under the Blanket, however, Time itself surrendered  
to the DJ's wretched machinations.  
A baffling new Psuedoscience emerged from within,  
altogether impossible.**

If you do not seek knowledge, it will, most likely, never find you. The same is true of power. The only thing, perhaps, that will come looking for you, is friendship. This is why, when you are fortunate enough to make a friend, you ought to realize that you are partaking in something that you could never do all by yourself. A friend is the most valuable thing one could ever experience in all of life. Anyone that doesn't know this to be the truth is a fool, or worse, a villain.

**-Kydromicus Cartoon  
Encyclopedia Komica**

## **a** **playset**

**Any** of the hyper-kids that ever broke grav and got up high enough, always said the same thing.

*The new metropolis looked like it was the basement wide model kit of a cybernetic boy genius gone auto berserk.*

This was undisputed. It may have been a strangely long sentence to be re-thought by so many different kids, but this is exactly what all of them said, to the *letter*.

The overgrown playset looked as if it was either going to self-destruct or launch into outer space. How very close this was to the DJ's plot is just plain scary. If a kid made it back to the street in one piece, his eyeballs kept a spin up for days like he was wearing x-ray glasses. When the spinning stopped, the whites of his eyes were permanently stained: *ultraviolet*. And some of them *could* see through walls after that. This is no joke. Heed these words, readers, as they are graphic verbatim.

The city's panoramic view was most superior when telecast from the observation deck of the Radio Station as it sat 300 stories atop the most mighty of Plug skyscrapers, *the Alpha-structure Supreme*. The spectacle was a neon masterpiece, filled with the grid of a billion gloMilk microtubes, zig-zagging their way throughout the mid-bubble *Spread--* steadily gushing *plasmoline* throughout the city's new *Udventure™* project-constructs. Miles of molded flexicast swooped dreamily about the terrain of the upper parts of Electro City, while below, it was the DJ's nightmares that were brought to fruition. Omni-brats were shocked to find that brand-name monsters were coming out from under bunk-beds all over the place.

At ground level, the circuitronic combustions that followed the Blackout had left the asphalt blistered and boobytrap crisp. Kids were known to fall through holes and disappear underground, forever. Some parts of the city were still covered in pools of techtronic gray mash--the worst of these swamps, the ones that were as small as rain-puddles. Haphazardly placed in the middle of an avenue, ultra-punks would find

themselves sucked into the strange quicksand, becoming one with the playset for eternity.

Ud-venture Re-constuction teams had since laid quick-dry *plasmelt* in the various gorges left in the wake of the city's destruction. The more slipshod areas captured little bits of junk and garbage in the haphazard mix of concrete and neo-plastic. Stuff like candy bar wrappers, beverage containers, and even old sneakers could be seen sticking up through the otherwise smooth platarok.

Abandoned tenements were chopped in half and prepped for 'Venture construct conversion.

Splintered glass sparkled throughout the streets. Lampposts and phonebooths were molten down into rusted slop, as was all playground equipment, streetsigns, and most Floto-cars. Parks were set under 'Venture *plastology* and turned into mile-high orphanages that looked soft and toylike against the Electric Blanket.

\* \*

In the minutes before the Blackout, there came the *liquid blast*--what is now refered to as the Splurge--wherein the brand new energy *Milk* was unleashed upon the Ultra-earth. Most electrical machines were overdosed, and the explosions that followed laid waste to huge chunks of esteemed avenues, prime floto-route airdocks, and mallcentric 3-level multi-boulevards. Shadows of the explosions were frozen onto graffiti laden walls, everywhere.

After the Blackout, when the power finally came back on, the walls and grounds were beautifully gleaming, coated with an oddly lustrous silver *dust*. The dust was soon *everywhere* about the ruins of the Spread. It was as if the city were glossed over with a fairie polyurethane and transformed, inexplicably, into a 3D magazine.

\* \* \*

Suspended above refurbished street corners throughout the Spread, gigantic stereophonic loudspeakers seemed to float in the air, repeatedly blasting the staticky remains of this one ancient children's forty-five. The little record was so beat up, it sounded as if popcorn was being popped in the background of the studio.

The once frolicsome nursery rhyme was always being cut by a DJ (*the DJ*) against hi-fidelity drum machine breakbeats, backed by spooky, warbling sound effects, all charging the air in a swirling multi-phonic surround. The loudspeaker was state-of-the-art and as large as a small car; outfitted especially by *The Electric Company* for the strict purposes of mood subordination and the hype of a most indelible sort. A logo on the bottom of it's paneling read:

## BOOM

Which was the brand name of all Electric Company sonic merchandise.

Few orphans dared to actually *inspect* any of the great speakers, but those who did, found that they did *not* float, but were grafted to the streetlamps, utilizing a nigh invisible lucite. Religiously, fraidycat Juvenauts often huddled about, jaws drooping with awe, making sure to keep a reverant distance from the audio pumps. Each speaker glowed with the

fluorescence of the power Milk, which tubed in a spiral about it's diameters; ever a spot of brightness in the fake-fog infested twilight of Electro City.

The loudspeakers' illusory suspension was one of many sight-gags performed by the now *king* Disc Jockey of the region; one that went along good with the bi-evening perimeter sweeps made by remote control smoke machines which hovered down the blocks, ushering in the Blanket's version of a bogeyman-night. The song that bust it's way madly through the subwoofers was now a multi-cultural *tradition* and easily recognized by any of Electro City's orphans.

*All* of the city's children were orphans. Those that were still allowed to remain in the Company dormitories, were labeled *Norphidites*. Those that were kicked out were stamped delinquent and un-plugworthy. They were known officially as *Juvenauts*.

The song, a member of either set would tell you, was *The Muffinman's Theme*, a smash hit in and out of the blanketed cityscape; a drastic reworking of a classic nursery rhyme said to hail from an *alternate* Earth. The vocals of the song were cut into tiny pieces, using borrowed samples of pre-recorded words, both sung and spoken, to form *new* sentences of lyrical confusion and mind-numbing limerick. This particular vocal style was reminiscent of old punk rock flyers or of a kidnapper's ransom note--words and sentences that were made up of letters cut out of all sorts of magazines and newspapers. The audio version, was perhaps, much more disconcerting.

The Muffinman's Theme was a droll little number, happily speeding along, led by rollicking drums and a gleeful, yet foreboding, bassline.

Oh-oh-oh-oh-oh-oh-oh-oh-oh  
Do you know the Muffinman the Muffinman the Muffinman  
Oh yes we know the Muffinman the Muffinman the Muff  
M-m-Muffinman The Muffinman  
I'm the Drummer Man you see  
Drum so big you can't see me  
When you see me on the street  
I never miss a single beat  
So, Listen to the Radio  
Won't you listen to the radio? Listen to the Radio  
Won't you listen to the radio?  
No more candy, no more toys  
Listen to me all you Girls and Boys

-DJ Greatest Hits  
"Muffinman (Theme Song)"

On either side of the loudspeakers, hi-definition surveillance cameras, or *opticams*, swiveled and bobbed. Buglike microphones extended several inches from underneath the lenses, recording all that transpired with steadfast precision. It was set up like this, in exactly the same way, every several yards in the entire expanse of Electro City's *Spread* territory. The *Spread* covered the borough that early in the 22nd century was still referred to as Midmetron. Tubes of Milk connected each loudspeaker to the next one, with alternate tubes connecting to each speaker's corresponding camera and pixel monitor. Milk tubes crinkled all about the Spread, forming a mighty rubberclad network of power-goop that most residents marveled at, often gawking in disbelief at what had become of their once

world-reknoned city.

Midmetron: On Earth-3, it's equivalent is Manhattan - Julius Franklin, PHD

One of the first rules that the DJ enforced using the deafening Noise of Uhd, was, quite simply:

## NO CURSEWORDS

Swearing, cussing, profanity... anything like it was not only strictly prohibited, it was a vocal *impossibility*. Utilizing the mysterious properties of the Uhd, the DJ was able to practice a very physical version of censorship. Even if a kid wanted to say a dirty word, they just couldn't. The expression would *not* pop out of their mouth. Instead, through the child's mono-antenna, there'd come a very distinct gust of Uhd, sounding like a *backwards* word or a cartoon sound effect, enclustered in a flanger-like static.

It was as if the citizens were all stuck in some educational TV program. When these very common crimes were committed, a Smash team of nearby Clubs would bolt through the vicinity looking for the audio culprit within micro-threads. Multiple offenders were sometimes rendered instantly mute, others were known to have their tongues sealed to the roofs of their mouths. It was under this type of power ultimate that the Blanket children were harvested for the Electric Company.

**-Bodey Protonicus Flugel  
Encyclopedia Komica**

# **b**

## **Kazoo**

The teenager they called Billy Kazoo was never the most disobedient kid to go Juvenaut, but that didn't mean he wasn't a threat to the Electric Company. The DeeJay's elite squad of *Transistors* had their opticams in keen spy on the boy ever since he was dumped on the streets.

**The following origin data was assembled using stolen logs from the headbanks of the Transistor Number Five, in conjunction with certain recorded conversations as donated by the Automatic Ball, who you shall meet later.**

He had been booted from the Dormitories when he was 5 years old for what went on record as: "**whistles to himself**". The strange little boy had been warned twice before that he must refrain from such hullabaloo, but then, after the third incident,

he was sent before *Jim Neonerdo*, the Transistor in charge of the Electric Company's *Truancy Division*.

Jim looked at the child from behind his tremendous desk of buttons and Milktubes. The boy squinted up at the electrical man.

Jim was cranky, skinny, and tall. As was true of most Transistors, he was a Semi-man, the bionic offspring of an organic idiot and the DJ's puzzle technology. Microcircuits glowed from underneath his forehead, creeping down his long pointy nose, into large noseplugs that were connected to thin wires which ran into more circuitry underneath his pencil-neck. His adam's apple shifted every few moments, but sometimes it would move right to left instead of up and down. Jim's hair was made of rubber, and the perfect cowlic that stuck out of the back of his head was no doubt an antenna.

His teeth were silverish, and when he opened his purple mouth wide enough, his throat glowed purple with the energy turbines that powered the bionic quadrants of his "transistorized" Uhd-body. He wore intricate, beautifully designed ear-covers that equipped him with a voluminous sense of superhearing. His chest was fully robotic, adorned with various little digital screens and LCD number readouts. Buttons and control panels covered the length of both his arms to his wrists.

Jim was rarely seen without a rather large calculator in his purple hands. It was rumor that he could program Plastoids to walk and talk the way that he wished them to, using that calculator. Jim's eye visor cast a small Uhd pink-scan about the boy's head,

"They call you *Kazoo*, is that right?"

Kazoo nodded,

"*Billy Kazoo*, sir."

"Kasofritz, William, is the exact title, yes? Well, I suppose this *Kazoo* psuedonym is how the childtron shall *always* refer to you. Now, are you aware of *why* you are being expelled from the dormitory?"

"I'm getting--kicked out?"

"Indeed, varmint. Now please respond to my question. It is for the record."

Kazoo sneezed, then,

"Uh, the Attendants to my Bunk told me to stop asking when Kid America was coming to get us. They said that if I kept on asking about Kid America, I'd get kicked out. They said Kid America isn't real."

Jim turned white. He looked *really* angry now.

"Did you say the words '*Kid America*' directly to a Transistor?! Are you mad? There is, and never was any such *person* or *place* as Kid America. It's all a lot of rubbish from the mouthes of polluted little brats as you and and the rest of the childtron."

Jim took a deep breath and continued, "Anyway, that has nothing to do with it. It's been reported that you insist on performing these self-indulgent whistles. It says here that you've been caught singing to yourself as well. Very disruptive little boy. Thus, it has been proven to us that you have the tendency to *disobey orders*, and most indubitably, that you are not *Electric Company* material. Now I'm quite sure I shall have to *destroy* you one day or another. Disintegration, most likely. It won't really *hurt*, of course."

Jim looked at Kazoo, and thought briefly that the boy was almost smiling. But he couldn't be, he just looked very, very bizarre.

*A nice compact blast of Far-purple Uhd, would do the little ingrate away right now,* thought the evil Transistor.

*It would probably save the Company lots of time and gallons of Milk.*

“Yes, you look very disorderly. Not Company material at all.”

Jim paused, assessing the fear he might be inspiring in the boy. There was no noticeable change in the boy's manner. Jim continued quickly,

“Yes, well. You will obtain your Flesh-screen and mono-antenna down the corridor in just a moment. I believe The Graph Zeppelin himself will be administering the implant. He kept muttering some tripe about your genetic code. He seemed a bit excited. Quite frightful when he's happy, really.” He whispered, then, to himself, “That over-robotic nitwit.”

Jim cleared his throat passage and all that sounded was a deluge of uddified static. Kazoo covered his ears. Jim looked at him, repulsed,

“Enough of that you little ingrate. Arms down! Now. Listen. Eleven threads from, let me see... ah... *yesterday*... huh? Your birthday was only just yesterday. You turned five. Isn't that nice?”

Kazoo looked up. Jim said,

“Was it? Your birthday, I mean.”

Kazoo shrugged, having no clue what a birthday was.

Jim grinned, “It doesn't matter. *Eleven threads from yesterday you will be contacted on your fleshscreen. It will relay an address to you and you must report immediately to that address.* If you do not, a Club contingent shall be sent along to gather you up and escort you there.”

Finally Kazoo uttered,

“*Club, sir?*”

The thin electric readout that substituted for Jim's two eyeballs, made an effort to look as if it actually *was* a pair of eyeballs rolling themselves upwards. Jim proceeded, quite exasperated,

“If you choose to *dodge* us, these same Clubs will continue to chase you until you are brought in. If it comes to that you will be brought before me again, and I will *beat* you child, in every way. If by some ridiculous chance, you are able to avoid the Club, *I* will come and get you, with my--”

He paused for dramatic effect, licking his lips in reverie,

“Get you with my *Jimi-drones*. Then, only the Muffinman himself may save you. I am *Jim*, remember me boy, the Transistor *Five*.”

He wore a large 5 on his uniform,

“Some may refer to me as *Neonerdo*, for I lead the Truancy division of the Electric Company. Mine is a name no Juvenaut wishes to hear in correlation to their capture. See that we do not meet again. *Now go!*”

Kazoo scooted quickly out of the door as Jim pulled a glass of steaming Milk from beside him, and drank the whole thing down. As he gulped, the Milk glowed through his throat. He wiped his mouth and spat a glowing wad onto the floor.

\* \*

Two mentally retarded Bunk-Keepers, both rather portly, walked on either side of

Kazoo, escorting him down the corridor to a great arched metal door. Two other attendants, both of them in wheelchairs, were waiting ahead of them. A younger boy with long black hair stood waiting alongside them, chained to one of the wheelchairs. He turned to look at Kazoo. He scoped him up, then sneered him down. He spoke with an oily sort of smart aleck voice. Scrunching up his eyes, he said,

“Damn, son, you sure are *ugly*. Is that why they’re getting rid of you?”

Kazoo shook his head no, and tried not to look at the boy. The smart aleck obviously didn’t believe him. He went on,

“Yeah, I *bet*. Well, I’m outta here cause I tried to wrestle one of these *retarts* right here.”

He nodded his head at Kazoo’s Bunk-keepers. He said,

“I broke this joker’s thumb knuckle. He wasn’t a cripple like *my* two dummies, he was a *mongloid* like your bunkies.”

The kid was 4 years old if he was even that. One of Kazoo’s escorts grew offended, screaming,

“Don’t say that! Don’t say that no more!”

Kazoo did not like this kid at all. A bad egg, for sure, he was. He seemed DJ prone, smug, and smashy. Perfect for the Company.

The ultra-brat continued, pulling a fake punch on one of Kazoo’s retarded Bunk-keepers. He yelled at the Keeper,

“*What!?* *What did you say?*”

The escort jumped back some, startled. The other began to cry slightly. The brat’s two wheelchair Keepers didn’t even turn around. The kid was happy, declaring,

“I am Mortis Duel. *Who’re* you?”

Kazoo, suddenly stymied, fell into deep horror as a shadow was cast upon Mortis Duel. A seven foot man stood at the now open metal door. It was the *Graph Zeppelin*, clad in scarlet red. His voice, full of bass, was wholly robotic, with little inflection. In fact, he was difficult to understand, speaking through an Uhd-filter,

“William Kasofritz! You enter first.” Kazoo paused. The Zeppelin put his arm out and said menacingly,

“*Come* childtron.”

Even Mortis Duel was taken aback. Nevertheless, he said,

“But *I’m* next!”

But the door was already closed and Kazoo was gone.

One of the wheelchair Keepers said,

“*Quiet* Duel. You should be *glad*. The Graph Zeppelin does *experiments*. I wasn’t *born* a cripple you know.”

“Who cares! I wanna get the hell outta here. Do you believe the nerve of that ugly \$!@%&\*!”

The lone curseword sounded like a kangaroo bouce, stricken with Uhd and the sound of a laserblast. Sirens went off in the hallway. Immediately, the sound of Club footsteps could be heard charging towards them.

Mortis Duel kept his cool and grinned,

“But for real, did you *see* that kid? What a punk! Who’d he think he was?”

All of the Keepers looked about the hallway in utter dismay.

Mortis Duel teetered on his two feet, darting glares at each of them. His energy built, then without knowing what else to do, he sunk his teeth into one of the cripple’s arms. He took the chain that tied him to the wheelchair and with a sudden bright flash he snapped it in two. Screaming several more obscenities, that, of course, all sounded like boing-boings and FX nonsense, Mortis Duel ran down the hall like a jackrabbit.

**Our story picks up nearly ten threads into the future, out on the streets to which Kazoo was ejected, but still one year before he would receive a call to the academy. The boy Kazoo was as yet fifteen, and as safe as a Juvenaut could get...**

## C

### The Tape Recorder

...nevertheless, there was another electric citizen who was, at this one particular moment, in extreme danger, as one dutiful *opticom* was busy picking up something worthy to be vigil-beamed directly to a C.L.U.B. patrol.

Some transmissions were intentionally obscured by those assailants that were being recorded. Magnets were the key tool in this excessively punishable offense. In this particular video playback, which came through in a grainy static-showered black-and-white (an obvious security jam was in progress), a woman, approximately 30 years old, wearing a green hood loose about her head, could be seen holding something tightly in her arms. She seemed to cuddle it, speaking suspiciously into her chest.

The premiere Club listening Monitor put out an early warning to the foot Clubs that this offender might be in possession of a *baby*. There was an extremely high *smash* probability for such a crime as this.

Then, the offender’s voice came in--it was very fuzzy. Her voice trembled like it was put through an electronic effect. It might, however, be that she was excessively nervous.

She said, “Everything will be all right. You ought to be secure inside the *tape recorder*.”

Thereupon, the entire image and sound went disrupted for some time. Immediately, the Monitor dispatched two Club *Characters* to the scene of the disturbance. In addition, Club collection-division capitron, moniker: *Third Base*, was already in rather close proximity. Thus, 3 members of the Club descended upon our uncertain hero(es).

\* \*

The rather old little robot had turned up his magnetics field to full gain, putting an enormous strain on his aging *Lil' Zaps*® battery core. He was Robotski, a 6-inch robyte counterpart to a futuristic computer appliance most likely manufactured by *Hum Sim Tech*®, the pre-Blanket Japanimax electronics giant that had been instrumental in ushering in a new and incredible age of technology upon the Ultra-earth. *Japanimax* (stretching from Japan to Russia to Europe) was the Eastern equivalent of *Americom*, and it had sought to unite the world, infusing *Americom* with her vast technology. Thus, total peace had been established between hemispheres, technology flourished, and space exploration was instituted as the Ultra planet's prime objective.

Their given brand name was *Robytes*, those little robots similar to Robotski's make, and they were fairly common in their heyday 50 years previous. Now they were virtually extinct, but for the models possibly maintained by the city's malevolent rulers.

...This robyte, however, was the robot S.K.1. unit, the one prototype of his particular sort, the *Smark Kineticon One*, the counterpart to a now fabled "*intelliDrums*" machine, the "Crystal Model", an infamous prototype computer affectionately nicknamed the *808 Jr.*

The *808 Jr.* was legendarily rumored to have the power to kaput the DJ and his *security blanket*, equipped, (some said), with a vast artificial intelligence as well as a sonic artillery previously unheard of in the sonic technology of "Drum Mechanics".

This *808 Jr.* was alleged to have been built after the Blanket's appearance but *before* the devastation of the Blackout. The Junior drumskit and her SKI unit were the purported final products in the Hum Sim repetoir before the Neat Splurge reduced their laboratories to rubble. To the general public (or what was left of it), the mythical power and continued existence of either of the mechanical duo, were of course, all speculation.

The fact that the Blackout had happened at all made many feel that the Junior and her robot must have been the product of no more than some wishful thinking.

**-Henry Machine  
Encyclopedia Komica**

The woman featured in the scan was a legend to the fugitive Underground: Fuggager "*Mom*" *Nanogoose Pandaghast*, one of the greatest anti-Company advocates still on the loose, not to mention a known and dangerous siphon.

Her face was clear and familiar to Robotski's optical unit receptors. They'd been together for a long time. He received vibrant color video of her elegant eyes which dipped up beautifully at the sides, smeared in an orange make-up. The orange paint blurred the *orbiscans* that the Company could take at a great distance with their hi-sensitivity street cameras for positive ID on truants and *criminal* Fuggagers.

*Every* elder who walked free of the Company's grasp was considered a criminal. Adults were supposed to join the drudge labor battalions of Udvventure *RE*construction. They were audiodermically programmed, memories erased, and transformed into what the DJ called his 'puppetronic' Plastoids: re-plasticly enhanced slaves to help the city in it's

dizzying effort to transmute into an other-worldly *megalopolis*. A Glamour-land that would be run with the keenest in sci-fi scale technology.

To be grown-up was to be part of the Udvventure, infused with the constructive knowledge of *plastology*, among not much else besides the nonsense of Knoizak.

Plastology was a Milk-based process and an architect's dream come true. The process utilized newfound outerdimensional plasticlike substances that were more sturdy than any known (Ultra)earthly metal. *Plastibrium*, *Nioplas*, *Duroplas*, *Plastofluff*, and *Octoplast*, were merely a few of the compounds. Each a dirivative of Plastibrium, they were moldable through a special kind of sonic vibration.

The Udvventure neo-structures of the city were wild, each crafted into a more fantastic shape than it's predecessor, stories and stories tall. There were giant statues which were buildings unto themselves, mega-structures with exaggerated curves and slopes, bridges that stretched into rollercoaster pitfalls. All the really *fantastic* work was done above the hundred-fifty story mark, on the cloud-decks called Amusement Platforms.

For the most part, children underbubble were bred for the sole purpose of furthering the projects of Udvventure design.

The projects were advertised as,

“A Realm,” on TV monitors grafted about the city,

“--of cartoon superiority. A place where *all* things are possible. Please come visit us, in **Stereo.**”

It was rumored that some adults who were perpetually problematic to the Company had been used as guinea pigs and were transferred *particle-wise* into the fledgling realm, a place that had come to be known as:

## THE STEREO SYSTEM.

But no one had ever met anybody who had actually *been* there. No one knew what it *was*. Kids scanned the monitors, completely baffled by the commercials. Some prayed that the Stereo might offer some kind of salvation from the doom labor that lay ahead of them once plastification set in, purple and Uhdwise.

\* \* \*

Goose's long strands of dark spaghetti hair hung out of her hood as she tried to inject the small body of Robotski into an odd-looking, pre-Blanket model micro-*tape* recorder. All models after, used inch diameter CD's that looked like nickels, called PortoDots; or, micro hard-disks the size of *dice*, called (Stupid)Cubes.

She'd aquired the device from a fellow Fuggager, a shady tri-digit-izer (that's someone over 100 threads old), who claimed that his merchandise hailed from alter-cosmos. She couldn't be sure if this was so, but the tape deck on the Recorder was up to the BOOM specs she'd gotten off a Juvenaut who eventually died hacking into Company data-terminals. The logo on the Tape Recorder read 'Quadrupia', and under that, 'micro BUG model', and still under that, in even smaller print, it read, 'stereo'. This had satisfied her. It had taken her another six months to finally boost a cassette that interfaced properly with the microbug, and another six to fill it up with the proper sounds to turn it into *the* Mixtape.

That is, the Mixtape that would open up the Stereo for possible infiltration.

And so *Mom Goose* loaded the robot into the tape recorder first. She had not yet injected the cassette, because once she did, Robotski's magnetic field would have to be turned down to zero or the tape's contents would be erased.

Thin tubes seemed to be attached to the tear ducts in her eyes that streamed back to special earphones she was wearing. Robotski spoke in a cute nasal computer voice, which sounded like it was sped up. This was his preferred accent, although he could mimic almost any voice or sound he'd ever recorded,

**"But Goose,"** said the little robot, **"There will be much trouble. We must increase our preparations. We must be sure of what we are all going up against. It is still uncertain as to the true nature of the Stereo--"**

Goose smiled warmly at the robot. She held her forefinger gently to her lips.

Indeed, Robotski was by far the more mathematical mind, and possessing of much more logic than Goose, but still, she loved him as she might a *child*, and even more so, a very good friend. She knew that robots would take to planning things for years if given the opportunity. Their concepts of time were not properly adjusted to the human lifespan. And yet, Robotski was *right*. But there simply *wasn't* any more time.

She said, "Robotski, you've got to listen to me. It is up to you to find Kid America before your batteries die. You must locate him, or one of his *Action Figures*, or whatever it is that he's calling the members in his *band* nowadays. With any luck you'll be able to interface with the *Junior* at his studio. Above all, they *must get this mixtape!* Now... turn your magnetics-field *off!*"

**"Without the mixtape, how are you going to boot into the Stereo System, Goose?"**

And now she looked very grave, and older than she did before. Maybe she wasn't so young,

"There can only be *one* tape of this kind, *no copies*, Robotski... nothing but this plasti-clad data that I am entrusting to you. This mixtape represents the glitch in their system, it is probably our last chance. If they were to find it, they might make the Stereo *fullproof*, and then there would be no hope for the childtron. I have nothing but my wits to guide me inside. To enter the dread system, I will be *captured*," she paused, then said impishly,

"Now shut up. They've decoded through our scramble-loop by now. We're on infra-video and minimum any hypertypes of audio sensor. There will be Clubs here within the *minute*."

**"But--"**

Goose twisted Robotski's volume knob, and that of the tape recorder to nil. Robotski's final words would be for he himself to mull over until he would be ejected from the Tape Recorder. He finished his thought--

***Goose, what about you?***

As she kneeled at a sewer grate, she answered him mystically, as she always did, whispering near to his mic,

“I’ll be in *Stereo* within the hour. Beware of noise, Robotski. Don’t waste electricity.”

The nearest security camera’s microphones were extended to their full reach. Both audio and video were re-established to Company monitors. Goose’s final directions were heard to the letter, by all listening Club operators.

She said, “This pipe leads to the great Junkyard sector. From there you’ll have to use the ‘Corder as we’ve equipped for your transport. Do not click into manual until you’ve spit through the border, out of Spread territory. Good speed my little friend.”

With that, she dropped the tape recorder into the sewer. She heard it hit the water and get flushed along its way. Goose rose and smoothed her clothes. Then, a tinkly, deranged children’s style music, Uhd-mixed and gone miserably wrong, began to pervade the air about her. She adjusted a dial on her earphones. She walked to a lamppost, straining to listen at the coming of the ridiculous.

Suddenly, the Uhd-music grew in volume, pumping through her own earphone speakers. A Dark-pink cloud surrounded Goose as she realized the music was fueling the air around her, charging the O<sub>2</sub> molecules, infusing her headphone block-frequency with pure delirium. With anguish, she quickly tore at her earphones, and threw them to the ground. Then, she began to panic, and whispered to herself,

“It’s the Club. *They’ve come for me.*”

robyte: robots sized under 9”, made for maintenance interface with electronic appliances. They were the product of a marketing fad primarily in the early 22nd (Ultrayears)

*StupidCube* was the common slang for the highly efficient digital information storage module of the day  
childtron: The Electric Company called all children, the Childtron, seeing as they were all a little bit bionic, implanted with fleshscreens and mono-antennas in the least

**d**

**enter the C.L.U.B.**

**The C.L.U.B.** was the Electric Company police squad who patrolled Electro City, keeping hyper-kids in order and rummaging for outlawed *artifacts*. Club members were all outfitted with individual *wacky* “Character” personas and wore large computer enhanced costume-uniforms called Phun Suits, historically indigenous to amusement parks, children’s birthday parties, and baseball stadium mascotting. Although they didn’t look like it, Phun Suits were fully designed with built-in hitech weapons and the toughest armor ever made. Those that became Club *Characters* could not remove their Suits ever again, but for raising their mask-helmets for food consumption.

The Suit, grafted to the skin, handled all nasty excretions and disposed of them at the nearest Plug “Dumping” Terminals, which duelly functioned as a clean/rest area and a collections drop point.

Goose, now frantic at being on the surface without her earphones, tried to focus her strength into her eyes, which were beginning to acquire a purple frost. She began to look about, but could see nothing strange. The effect of the music in the air was at once confusing and disheartening. She did not want to hear it, yet found that she could focus on nothing else. Then, she froze, realizing--this was, after all, her *plan*. They would come for her and take her away. Her notorious record against the Company would undoubtedly find her deposited into the Stereo System by morning.

Third Base was first to the scene. He saw her, looking very frightened and frazzled, standing there, looking *dumb*. These were the sort of assignments that the Character called Base relished. He stood there, merely scanning her for several minutes, admiring her figure, from behind a large 18-wheel *McDonald's* delivery truck. He had to peek at her to get any solid optical information. His eye sockets were large and googly. His character was somewhat animal based, but much more like a fantasy creature than anything that lived and breathed on the Ultra-earth. A cross, perhaps, between a bear, a lion, and a clown. His costume was big, he stood at more than 7 feet, and he was very round. His special feature, in fact, was a *Tuck-n-Go* design, which allowed Third Base to ball himself up and *roll* at great speeds. The man underneath the costume, however, was not fond of this, although it was easily his best attribute. Third Base got on his communicator link between the Company operator and the other two Clubs who were on foot to meet him. He spoke with a gruff voice and an ancient *Junkyard* accent,

“It’s one of the Fugger-ups. Oooh. Yeah, it’s *her* this time. Yup. Uh-huh. Without no doubt. It’s Nanogoose alright. Pandaghast is right in my sights. And is she ever a number...”

The closer of the two footers, a Club dubbed *Fun Freddie*, responded,

“Have you got her, man?”

With delight, Third Base growled,

“*Yeah. She’s mine.*”

Goose could sense him then, even through the swirling 3D music which was making her ears go numb. She stepped back, trying to inch around the parked truck.

Base’s tremendous padded feet were already on top of the truck’s cab, tiptoe-ing gently to meet his prey. Without a sound, he leapt.

The music cut out, and it was the silence that made Goose turn to meet her puffed assailant. Few ever came back after grappling with a CLUB member. She had eluded them multiple times. But none had ever been *this* close before.

And with that thought, he was on her. She shut her eyes tight. It was too late to step out of the way. He made contact at her waist. They tumbled for several yards.

She would fight him, of course.

She broke free of his grasp and assumed a tactical stance. Third Base nodded. Goose was one of few Fugs that the Company actually listed to have *Siphon* powers. Base had not believed that, for he knew the other Clubs, like Stuffed Animal and Mega-Kenny, would claim anything if they had fouled up an assignment. They were afraid of the DJ. Third Base, in turn, *loved* the DJ. And he would always do the DJ's bidding as best as he could.

Well, she *was* fast, he gave that to her. Base's Phun Suit computers weren't detecting whether or not she was kicking at any super-kin intervals, but she was able to hit fast, and hard. Already she'd disabled the circuits in his right knee. This *hurt*, because all Suits were rigged to the Character's nervous systems. Base cried out, then charged at Goose, who narrowly avoided his blow, then elbowed him in the back of the neck. This, of course, was nothing much. The mask of a Club was the strongest part of their suit.

*She's not superkin at all*, he wagered. *She's just some dumb girl*. He had her in his mitts suddenly, and began to squash her, trying to bury her in the concrete. The fact that she wriggled free and was behind him within the second, annoyed him, and he began, instantly, to change his mind on whether or not she had *powers*. He said,

"I got no problem fighting girls, ma'am."

He sniggered at his own formality. He had learned much from the Electric Company. Since he joined the Club, he'd catch multiple beatings from the Transistors if he didn't speak properly in reports to his DJ.

Now this Mom Goose was becoming a problem. As she had been before to countless Clubs who had let her get away. So Base, not wasting anymore time, balled himself up and rolled at her. He was extremely fast and he hit her this time. When he rose, she was on the floor, and he had his left mitt locked onto her wrist.

Goose looked up the block and could see the figures of two other Clubs on approach. She let her head drop to the ground.

*Let them take me*, she thought, as she began to pass out,  
*To Stereo. Where anything is possible.*

McDonalds: That's right, readers, McDonalds. Apparently there is a McDonalds in every dimension, each of them exactly the same in every way.

*Electro, Electric, Electricity  
There was a blackout in New York City  
An evil DJ stole the energy  
Trapped the People in Electro City  
Electro Electric Electricity  
Your brain can be fixed using technology  
If you're epileptic or have A.D.D.  
You might need Electro Shock Therapy*

Okay guys I know the way to escape

Turn on the Stereo, play this mixtape

*Electro Electric Electricity*  
*Amplified Static got crutch crackly*  
*The soundwaves control minds electronically*  
*Bandy makes music on the drum machine*

-Bandy

“Electro City”

**From their Demo Stupid Cube**

**e**

## **electricity**

Most Fuggagers wagered that a day outside of the Blanket was equal to five days in Electro City. If so, at the time of this story, it was as if more than an entire century had passed for it's inhabitants. Many thought that the lag was due to a *dimensional* disturbance; a possible vibraphonic breach of the *Space-Time Fabrication* which bound their reality together. If a Pop in time-space *had* been manufactured, it was reasonable to assume that Electro City was at the very threshold of the catastrophe. Everything was mixed up--the Blanket had come, Milk dripped, Uhd-noise cranked; and the whims of a DJ controlled the land. The natural laws of the Ultra-earth no longer applied to the city.

In particular, the organic maturation process was thrown out of wack. Children sprouted, and grew quickly, as by the phony day/year 'threads' of the Blanket. (This means that an Electro native reaching age fifteen, would be no older than *five* outside the bubble. This was to the DJ's benefit, in raising the populations of his Reconstruction teams.)

At adulthood, however, the aging process slowed down and people aged according to the revolution of the earth. In this state, time merely groaned on. A person's thread age could reach *400* and more. In addition, Milk vitalised inhabitants, Siphons or not, and people, although mindless, were healthy enough to age into the 5 and 6 hundreds.

From a distance, the expanse of the centermost part of the city looked more magnificent than it ever had.

The skyscrapers stretched two times taller than any before the Blackout. Udvventure Plastology made possible truly fantastic futuristics, the greatest structures of which, existed at the buildingtops, in the sector-hoods of Stereo. Moving sidewalks, skyways, and stilt supported Amusement Platforms, all urged the upper city into the Stereo System, which promised to be an “Amusement *World*”. This world was said to stretch across new frontiers of dimension, time, and space; bridging, perhaps, the very Pop in reality that sent things askew.

The Company issued statements like,

**“Electro City is the first interdimensional subway station  
into an incredible realm of wonder  
such as no humanic being has ever experienced...”**

The DJ was often broadcast, sitting behind his mighty control board, the *ApeDeck*, an encapsulated machine of buttons and contraptions, that boasted two revered yet ancient Technics 1200 turntables positioned on either side of him. The broadcasts were shot like a Presidential State of the Union address, only much darker, and strobelit. He'd sit there, and barely speak, just playing with his machines and making Uhd. His shape was unclear, but for his large bulging eyes. Near to the end of his address he would lean into the camera and you could almost see his face, which appeared to be long, snoutish and mechanical.

“Cut the Strobes!” he'd hiss.

Then, he'd say,

“Citizens of Electricity! Listen to me, all! Dunce, dim and those few who still burn brightly! You shall be proud to be a part of my Udvventures... the Stereo System awaits you all! *This is humanic achievement! You are the Future! You, my childtron, you are the Power!*”

‘*You are the Power*’ was his most famous quote. Many Norphidites believed it, hence, they obeyed him and didn't become Juvenauts. He'd say his words, enclustered with Uhd and sound-effect, and you could feel it hit you, deep in your spinal cord. It was dazzling. Most people figured, *How could it not be true?*

And so, the lower parts of Electro City were as the *factory*, the power generator that fueled the ascent into the future--the DJ's great masterpiece. *A new world...*

*Stereo.*

No one quite understood what it was. There was debate amongst all as to the possibilities of it's secrets. Masses of Plastoids worked day and night, with no end in sight, towards the ominous goal of Udvventure.

“*You are the power!*”

It was true that if you pledged loyalty to the DJ you could find a job with the CLUB, or with the Venture Academy, or even in the actual *Record* label, *PLUG*. But that was impossible for most. You had to do it while you were young, that is, noise-resistant and mindful. Many, however, found it impossible to simply give up to the DJ's sadistic whims. That the DJ alleged to be working for the good of the world deterred some of his detractors. His power was undeniable, and it was hard not to revere that which seemed supernatural.

Nevertheless, he was one of the greatest villains in history. It was just that no one outside the city *knew the truth*. Many inhabitants of Electro City cowered in fear, and merely prayed that what went on under the Blanket really *was* for the good of the Ultra-earth.

Those beyond the Blanket could do nothing to disrupt the Static. What was worse, they did not seek to stifle the DJ's broadcasts, but instead, *embraced* them. His patented pogographic Arena and Stadium concerts had been sold out nightly, worldwide, steadily for the 25 years since the Blackout. His hologram style Pogo graphics were the favorites of kids everywhere. They were not so different that other holograms of the day, but if you asked a child, or even an adult fan, they would say that Pogos "just *seemed* real", or that, "they *felt* right".

Each year, new Plug *Boom* Stadiums were opened across the globe. Several were opened on close orbiting satellites/space stations. To many, the DJ's music was hope itself, a salvation from the mundane, the dullard's antidote.

His music dominated the charts like no other before it; the Electric Company's Plug Label eventually producing 85% of the world's popular music. If an act became popular outside of Electro City, the DJ would sign them to Plug. His agents were scattered around the Ultra-earth, searching for talent (wary of a band that might ultimately prove his downfall). If an act refused his incredible financial offers to sign with the Plug, the label resorted to other tactics. Many bands had been felled to their deaths in the last twenty-five years for having too much integrity.

Regardless, teenagers of the world knew his name ever fondly. He was everything to them: genius, educator, friend, even religious instructor. There were already college graduates that had grown up listening to his records. He had dedicated *fans* outside the Blanket. Only those that were older really had a clue as to his treachery. If he was not stopped soon even these Naysayers would die off, and he would easily rule the planet, much as he did the be-bubbled city.

Moreover, the dilapidation at Electro City's ground level was peaking. The city was dim but for the gloMilk fluorescence of Re-construction. Quadrants were constantly being closed off to Juvenauts, who the Electric Company saw as the new batch of workmules.

Garbage flooded the city. That which was Midmetron was now known as The Spread, stretching with skyscrapers northward into 1/3 of the old Brobinx, south into 2/3 of Brooklonia, and east into 1/2 of Queeds. What was left of each borough was known, respectively, as: Factorian, which held half it's remaining space with garbage dumps, the other, with Company factories; New Brooklyn, long relegated to a rebellion politic which still managed to send youngsters, coming of age, successfully into the underground; and Quodestran, which was simply one great Junkyard. The Blanket never, at any time, covered the area that was still known as Skatern Isles, although the interference from the Blanket, had made life unbearable in this area as well as in much of Great Germsey, and the Yorkister Scows (a neighborhood flotilla, built in the 21st century, which was eventually shipped down to Floridor as a rehabilitation clinic for losers.)

There were several Norphidite Dormitories run by the Electric Company. Most *new* babies started there, several stories above the ground. The dormitories were mostly run by computers, robots, and mentally inefficient adults that could not cut it on the Re-construction efforts. Mentally inefficient, for the most part, meant either physically

handicapable, or mentally retarded. When it came to actual birth-defects, noise-programming could not force these few people to be successful Plastoid Mechanics. Early on, they were given other jobs. Their ears were plugged, and they were sent in, unhindered by the Noise, to deal with the babies as Bunk-Keepers.

(Let us take note here that the DJ did not ever seem *murderous* to the masses. Instead, he was always interested in *using* every last body and mind available to his powers of control. He did not seem to want to *waste* any individual who may serve him or his cause. It had only been when, under every hypnotizing nudge of his Company's vast power, a player came against him whose will was strictly their own. When all attempts at conversion were met with individuality and *creativity*, it appears that annihilation was with what the DJ ultimately counterstruck.)

Little was tolerated in the dormitories. As children grew up, it was difficult to be allowed to remain in the dorms until their eighteenth birthdays, wherein, if a Norphidite behaved according to regulation, they were allowed to pass into an easier life working for the Electric Company. An Uhd-filter would be implanted into a hearing aid which allowed them a certain amount of intelligence in employment other than Plastoid. The most basic of these jobs was in computer programming for the Stereo System. There were yet higher echelons, the highest of which was actually working at the Radio Station, or in a position for the Record Label Plug. This most revered job, it turned out, had involved, since a decade after the Blackout, transfer into the as yet unfinished Stereo System. Hence, the Amusement World was full of two different species: the untrustworthy guinea pigs who tested the experimental proportions of the realm, and those who entered as Company loyalists, who took their transfer as a reward and sought to make perfect: a vacation life in-Stereo. Both were pioneers.

In contrast, if the orphan did not cooperate, they would be thrown out of the dormitories at as early an age of three years old, left as Juvenauts, to fend for themselves on the ground-level of the city. The populations of Norphidite and Juvenaut was about equal.

*All* children, regardless of rating, were issued a *McDonald's* Meal I.D. which was encoded on wrist screens *imbedded* into the flesh at the turn of delinquency. The child and his I.D. were regularly put through rigorous scans at McDonald's depots and other outdoor department lots located throughout the city. The depot was a small, indoor institution where Juvenauts went to get their food, but the lots were outdoor festivals that boasted skill games and aptitude challenges, where, at times, a Juvenaut would be found who suited a particular purpose in the DJ Projects, and taken off of the streets.

McDonald's was the *only* legitimate food supply in the city but for several hidden deposits of ancient canned food, chips, and candies. It was rumor that undergrounders *grew* food nourished by Milk and false lighting systems.

McDonald's, in fact, was the only outside force that had any relevance to the city. Early on, it appears, the DJ bought up a great deal of McDonald's stock and made a union with the already corrupt mega-corporation. McDonald's representatives were somehow entering the city, *daily*, shipping in truckloads of ironically lethargic fast food. The DJ

loved McDonald's. He entrusted them alone with a key to the city. The franchise's presence in the city was, for the most part, predictable. One thing that remained constant throughout all time and dimensions since its inception, was McDonald's hamburgers.

Juvenauts had no chance at all of anything but a Re-construction job unless they showed some sign of powers at the McDonald's Lots. Juvenauts were monitored by an unbelievable amount of state-of-the-art security video cameras and super sensitive microphones. When a disturbance to the Company was detected, the CLUB would always be sent to investigate and punish any and all participants, immediately.

Originally, the letters C.L.U.B. stood for Characters, Listeners, and Under-Bouncers. It is true that all CLUB members were physically *grafted* with their amusement uniforms, then dubbed to be specific Characters strictly by the DJ Radio Muffinman himself. Each Character was alleged to contain a little bit of the computer genius of the Stereo System in his/her outfit's high-powered computer matrix. The other two parts, Listener, and Under-Bouncer, represented the two *classes* of Club that existed. Listener was the faction of intelligence leading most missions, whereas, the Under-Bouncers were the back-ups--bruisers who carried out punishment and destruction orders.

The two main CLUB divisions that were in constant patrol of the city were the Junk Collectors (Scavenger Unit solely composed of Listeners), and The Punishment Goons, who were led by Listeners but composed primarily of Underbouncers. There was a third and fourth lesser seen division, and a never before seen elite squad known as Fifth Division. Fifth Division dealt solely in *extradimensional* matters.

The Goons' job was obvious. The Collectors, on the other hand, were a different matter. In order to ensure his grip over the populations of Electro City, the Muffinman soon realized that within the confines of the Blanket his must be the only voice heard.

The Junk Collectors were assigned to weeding out all aspects of previous *information* and *entertainment* within the city. The most desired of these objects were those that were composed to be *desirable*. That included mostly ancient relics: records, CDs, tapes and minidisks, videocassettes, laserdiscs, Toys, electronics, VCR's, stereos, radios, vehicles, any art, photographs, drawings, pencils, etc...

Children hoarded this stuff. Juvenauts, by nature, despised the Electric Company and sought out any and all alternative guidance as to their futures.

And most valuable to them, were: old *Comic Books*.

Brobinx: Ultra-earth equivalent of Earth-3's The Bronx

Brooklonia: Ultra-earth equivalent of Earth-3's Brooklyn

Queeds: Ultra-earth equivalent of Earth-3's Queens

Skatern Isles: Ultra-earth equivalent of Earth-3's Staten Island

Great Germsey: Ultra-earth equivalent of Earth-3's New Jersey

Television, then Pogo graphics, then Nueral TV... our senses were appropriately flooded. Everything had been extra-digital for centuries. Actual books and magazines had disappeared, except in crackpot circles, basements, and

museums. Then the Blanket came, and the real thing was all that we had left. That is, besides the words of our DJ. Now we must start again, with what we have. We must learn from the fictions that we were blind to for so long, and accept them as *truth*.

**--Bodey Protonicus Flugler  
in his Introduction to the  
Encyclopedia Komica**



## **Underground Comics**

Illiteracy was rampant in the ranks of the Club. Because of this, the Junk Collectors often left behind ancient reading materials. No matter how many beatings they caught for the lack of hard text they'd bring in, few could ever keep it together to alert themselves as to the importance of the written word. That's not to say that if they found stashes of comics or paperbacks they'd leave them behind. Rather, it's just that they didn't *look* for that kind of stuff.

Books were fine to some of the more egghead Juvenauts, especially science fiction novels. Still, they did not serve their purpose as much as the Comic Book did. Science Fiction stories, although very inspired, were mired down in too many rules of *reality*. They rarely went all over the place. If they tackled a supernatural issue, they tackled one issue and one alone. If you were reading a story about time travel, it was usually a mere soap opera, wherein the time traveling happened, then the characters went about their melodramatic business without anything more to do with time travel, until they'd finally get their wish and travel back to the time they were originally from. A man might turn invisible, but then that was it, he grew tortured and unhappy with his state, and would try, again and again, to become visible until the end of the story. There were few exceptions to this rule. A Sci-Fi epic depicting a futuristic society may describe several neat new inventions but it always happened that the main story was just some melodrama based on past political events. A love affair. A dethroned princess fights for her country or planet. They went on for pages and pages with words and more words and still more words. The good stuff was always sprinkled throughout, so that on the whole, the knowledge it provided was limited in relevance to a burgeoning *Siphon*.

**Comic Books**, indeed, were different. Although they were basically supernatural soap operas, just as much as a novel or a movie, they often cut through the walls of printed letters with *pictures*. Invaluable pictures, depicting multitudes of situations wherein ordinary people become inexplicably *extraordinary*. All kinds of *people with powers*. Gifted through insect bites, bioengineering, chemical explosions, spaceflights through magical starclusters, aliens come Earthside with superplanetary gifts of origin, a

magical item is unearthed and sets one full of strangeness, slight DNA deformities sprout wings; kids are breathing underwater, stretching their arms across the park, pumping off eyebeams from their retinas...

*In all, it seemed, new doors were unlocked in the humanic mind...*

In this, the Uhd Age of Noise, Comic Books were not revered by the Juvenauts for their utter stupefaction, but, rather, for their educational value. Although the printing presses within the city had stopped long ago, those copies of revered pulp that still existed were passed around and read and re-read. Many Juvenauts were simply *voracious*. The most popular titles were the ones that survived, because they seemed to have the most to teach. There were ones like *Wizards of Space*, *Robotic Fiction*, *It Went Pop*, *Blast-off!*, *Mechtronica*, *Monkeygirl*, *Zoom Comics*, *Spaceboy and Sci-Fi*, *Mad Scientist Stories*, *Astromatic*, *Children of the Ether*, *Fast-o-man and Swirl*, *Legends of 1-2-3*, *Escape to...*, *Tomik*, *Sticky Teen*, *Styrograph Fighters...* And there were thousands more.

But there were also some Comic Books that surfaced that became *really* important to the young Siphons, an epic line of stories published by a company called 'Sub-Komica'. This very special saga started in a late issue of the long-running, *Extraordinary Adventure* (#568), about a young boy who simply *decides* to become an adventurer. In the story, the teenager wound up making a mask and called himself Kid America. To help him in his adventure, the local 'Ice Cream Man' (he who rides a truck delivering ice pops and such) bestows a *magic bike* upon the young lad. The bike could go inexplicably fast, and, as faithful readers would all find out, could do many other incredible things.

The legend of 'Kid America' was then continued in his own longrunning series called, "*(Here Comes...) Kid America*" (#1-#365), and continued in wider scope, including many other teen heroes (i.e. *The Makebelievers*) and cruel villains (i.e. *Suckerboy and the Tricker-treaters*) in "*Supercandy*" (#1-#123), "*Tricycle City: The Makebelieve Quest*" (#1-#12), "*Tricycle City: The Ice Cream Wars*" (#1-#6), "*Tricycle City in Space*" (#1-#12), and finally came to an end in "*Kid America and the Cartoon Explosion*" (#1-#4). A few years later, they tried to revive the series, with "*The Cartoon Explosion Revisited: Ultraboy and the Plastic People*" (#1-#12). But it wasn't the same. Kid America was barely in it, and nobody really seemed to care anymore.

\* \*

But the groundwork had already been laid down. Because, you see, it came to be that the newest generation of Electric children were slowly finding themselves to be possessing of *powers*: those telekinetic and *beyond*--into quite odd and unexplainable feats, phenomenal, evolutionary, and as many called it, psuedoscientific. The young society, equipped with earplugs and headphones, advanced themselves in an anti-noise fashion, they took to the underground, unhindered by the Electric Company. And the practices of this society was built on a code collected from the fiber of Comic Books.

Comic books provided the young Siphon mind with *ideas* as to how to use their powers. In time, the lore of the graphics were combined by young scholars, who were able to form guidelines to help the young practitioner use his/her new gift. Thus an

Underground School had been born.

Those that were dedicated, studied the pulps diligently, and, in this way, the DJ's dominion would possibly, eventually, slip from his clutches. Suffice it to say, however, those researchers involved knew that it would take years before the young would be able to rise to justice. These enlightened Siphons called themselves Komicons.

And so, underground, a paranormal society of woebegone hooligans developed into the last hope of a dying civilization.

## **g** **Robotski**

**In the great Junkyard, known officially as Quodestran...**

The Tape Recorder's journey through the sewage pipes went for miles out of the main city Spread. Once the water flush had run to a trickle out of the city's center, the Corder was spit out of a drainpipe and Robotski shifted from autopilot to manual, putting the Deck to full use in his search for the so-called '*Kid America*'.

This switch was amazing. Robotski had remodeled the Recorder into much more than just a simple music machine. With the activation of several programs, an antigravitic field was established about it's hull, two metal wings were ejected from it's long sides, and a small little air thruster clicked out from it's butt, thus it became a Corder *ship*, and Robotski called it his *T-bug*.

Robotski did his best to maneuver the T-bug, traveling within an inch of the ground, conserving his battery stock. The craft was, after all, run on old school electricity, and *not* Milk. Unsanctioned Milk use in machines was somewhat detectable by the Company, especially in these parts of the city, and the Mixtape was too important to risk to the infernal *Club* extra-sensors.

The Company had it easy, designing Milk powered machines that were able to suck the energy they needed out of the Electro City air.

His journey had started out rather well, considering he was heading rather blindly towards his goal. Robotski combed the surfaces of the Junkyard as proficiently as he could, looking for some clue as to the entrance into the Underground that would lead him to the purported *Action Figure Studios*.

These Studios were discussed among many Juvenauts as a place of salvation from the drudge labor that lay in the wake of one's dreaded *adulthood*. By the time they had reached adolescence, most Juvenauts no longer believed in the Action Figures, their studios, and least of all *Kid America*. Most reckoned that it was an obvious fairytale,

designed to get little kids off to sleep. The legend simply offered too much. As it went, the Action Figure Studio was where Kid America and his mottley band of crusaders, were busy designing music and sound effects that would rid Electro City of the nefarious DJ, the Uhd, and the horrible horde of lackeys that went along with them.

Robotski's memory banks contained a scan of the area that had been reported as the last known sight of the entrance, but the report had been recorded one-thread previous, and the Junkyard's surface had risen nearly four stories since then.

It was important, Goose said, not to go directly underground looking for directions from just any strange Elder. The Tape Recorder, and what's more, Robotski himself, would be extremely valuable to any who found him, and it would be hard to resist (even in the purest of souls) using the booty to one's own advantage.

"Be wary of any creature with whom you may come in contact," she warned,

"If you wind up in *The Mall*, it will be most perilous, and if you're lucky enough to find a *Komicon*, you must still use caution. The legend of 'Kid America' is no longer as popular as it once was. His name often inspires *quite a bit of Smash*."

"Above all else," Goose had said,

"Do not go to the *School* of the Underground. Not under any circumstance, robot. You must heed your programmer in this! They will dissect you and strip the 'Corder for it's microparts. They'll probably dispose of the Mixtape or trade it to a Club for raw merchandise. Those of the School are not evil, but they are all too self-serving. They've lost perspective on this rebellion and have contented themselves with their underground comforts."

\* \*

After several run-ins with Club movements, Robotski's power reserves had dipped to a serious minimum. He had been able to refuel several times throughout the course of his mission but after some time he'd found no more an opportunity.

Six months since his separation from Goose, he had finally reached the dreaded dotted line in the ship's viewscreen that read: *refuel now*. Within the week the T-bug's power would all be depleted but for his own personal emergency supply, which could in no way power the ship, nor even the little robot himself for very long.

Still scanning the terrain, he did not give up until his power was at it's near last iota. He parked silently one morning, and imagined, in a robotic sort of way, that he could view the *real* sun poking through the impenetrable static-sphere.

He had glided in to a nice spot inside a junked rubber tire, and prepared to eject himself and carry the Mixtape on his back, underground. He had figured that he should be able to operate for nearly two weeks in this manner.

When he tried to run the eject sequence, however, the eject doors would not operate. He tried again to no avail, then did a system's check of the hull. As he suspected, the old style batteries that had powered the ship, had been leaking battery acid along the main seams of the entire hull, including the eject panel. He had been under Club laser fire enough times to account for the obvious. *He was stuck inside, the entire 'Corder melted shut*. He could not blast his way out for fear of damaging the Mixtape, which would be inevitable.

He turned his internal power to .1, enough to alert him of danger, and waited. He was glad he wasn't human, for there was no man, woman, or childtron, who could have the patience that he would need--to just lie there, and do absolutely *nothing*.