

# BIONICLE

SYNOPSIS





In the time before time, the great being Mata Nui brought his people, the Matoran to an island paradise. Here they worked, played, and thrived under his loving protection. So happy were the Matoran that they named the island in his honour.

But a shadow soon fell over the land. The dark spirit Makuta grew jealous of what his brother, Mata Nui, had created. And so he cast a spell that caused Mata Nui to fall into a deep sleep. Makuta's power now dominated the land, as fields withered away, sunlight grew cold, and the ancient values of the Matoran began to be forgotten.

Still, all hope was not lost. Legends spoke of six mighty heroes, the Toa, who would arrive to save Mata Nui from Makuta. Tahu, Lewa, Kopaka, Gali, Pohatu and Onua wielded great elemental powers... but even that would not be enough to dispel the shadows.

On a day unlike any other ever known, canisters containing the Toa washed up on the shores of Mata Nui... and the prophecies were fulfilled.



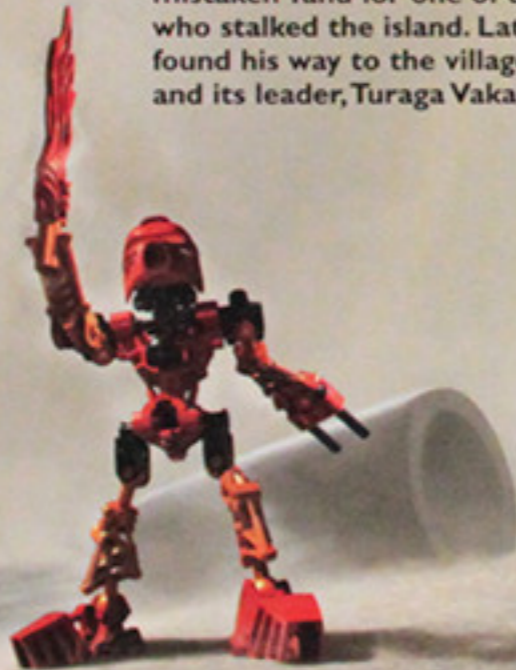
Tahu, the Toa of fire, rose on his powerful legs and fitted the Kanohi mask onto his face. His body crackled with energy and his eyes flared bright. With a single, fluid motion, he unsheathed his sword of fire and began to survey his surroundings.

The white-sand beach was free of any life save for some curious seabirds.

To the south jagged rocks made a crude wall against the ocean, and beyond that, Tahu could sense the heat of lava beds. Drawn to the heat and flame, he turned and walked in that direction.

Only once did he turn around, at the sound of movement behind him. But the being he saw was too small to pose any threat. He kept moving toward what appeared to be a great walled city, sitting in the middle of a lake of molten lava.

When he reached a charred forest, Tahu encountered a small being who reacted to him with fear. This being, a villager, had mistaken Tahu for one of the bestial Rahi who stalked the island. Later, Tahu finally found his way to the village of Ta-Koro and its leader, Turaga Vakama.



"At last, you have come," Vakama said, awe in his voice. "We have waited for so many years... while Makuta has ravaged this land and forced us to hide behind our walls for protection. But now you and the other Toa will save us."

"Other Toa?" Tahu asked. He had seen no others on his trek. Still, aid would be welcome if this Makuta was truly so powerful.

"There are five others, each representing an element, as you do. You are fire – Gali, water; Lewa, air; Kopaka, ice; Onua, earth; and Pohatu, stone. Together, you are six heroes with one destiny – to free us all from Makuta."

Although the Toa were clever and powerful, they did not yet truly understand the menace they faced. Makuta had long ago caused the Kanohi Masks of Power to be scattered all over the island. Now they lay hidden in spots no Matoran villager could ever hope to reach, from the depths of the ocean floor to the peak of Mount Ihu itself.

Not content merely to hide the masks, Makuta sent beasts called Rahi to guard the sites. The Rahi had once been simple, if fierce, animals who roamed the island. But Makuta fitted them with infected Masks of Power, turning them into his servants. For years, they had frightened the people of Mata Nui and kept them from exploring the entire island. Makuta was confident that his Rahi could stop these Toa as well...



"Then tell me where to find these others... and where to find this Makuta... and free you shall be, before another turning of this world."

Vakama shook his head. Using his firestaff, he began to sear images of strange masks into the stone wall. "It is not so easy, Toa. As powerful as you all are, Makuta is more powerful still. You will need to gather the Kanohi masks to aid you in your mission.

"There are six masks for each of you. Each confers a different power – speed, x-ray vision, shielding, water-breathing, strength, and levitation. When you have all found these masks, then... and only then... will you be prepared to face the might of Makuta."

Tahu studied the mask images carefully. As distinctive as they were, he felt certain they would be easy to find. Surely there was nothing on this island that could threaten a Toa... ?

Lewa stared into the eyes of the great Muaka. The huge beast had cornered the Toa of Air deep in the jungle, and now they both studied each other, looking for signs of weakness.

"Very large, aren't you?" Lewa said lightly. "What do they feed you? Not Toa, I hope."

The Muaka's answer was a growl. A second later, he lunged at Lewa. But the Toa had already backflipped out of the way, leaving the Rahi's claws slashing at empty air.

"Not nice. Not nice at all," Lewa said, from his refuge on a low branch. "Ordinarily, I am a very peaceful sort... but you see, there is a Mask of Power in the cave behind you and I mean to have it."

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Kopaka stepped into the light, his sword still radiating icy cold. "Your recklessness will be the end of you one day, Lewa."

Lewa laughed and climbed higher into the tree. "Not as long as I have friends like you, Kopaka."

Raising his axe, Lewa summoned a hurricane-force gust of wind. The Muaka, growling, dug his claws into the earth, but even he could not resist the power of the Toa of Air. With a howl, the Rahi was torn loose and sent flying into the trees.

So satisfied was Lewa with this outcome that he did not hear the buzzing sound behind him until it was too late. He turned just in time to see a bolt of ice strike a Nui-Rama, instantly freezing the giant insect in mid-air.

For a moment, there was no sound but the crackling of the ice. Then a voice like a winter breeze broke the stillness. "The first rule of Mata Nui... always know what's behind you."

Although the Toa shared one goal – the liberation of Mata Nui and the Matoran – they did not always agree on how best this could be achieved. All of them were strong beings, often stubborn, and each was accustomed to being a leader among his or her own people. In addition, the elements they controlled naturally clashed with each other... so could the Toa be expected to do less?

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"Then it is settled," said Tahu. "We will enter the cavern at dawn and defeat any Nui-Jaga we may find. Onua, Pohatu, it will be your job to seal up the nest when we are done. Lewa, you remain outside in the treetops to hinder any of the Rahi who may escape. Gali will..."

"Gali will protest," said the Toa of Water. "This matter is not settled. This plan is foolish and dangerous. The Nui-Jaga dislike smoke... they dislike water... using our powers, Tahu, we could force them from their nest and deal with them here in the open. Instead, you want to plunge in like a starving taku bird after a fish."

"That is enough!" Tahu snapped.

"Perhaps wise Gali has a point, brother," Onua said quietly. "We do not know how far the cavern extends, or even if Nui-Jaga are all that we shall find in there."

"You worry too much, Onua," Pohatu interjected. "We can handle Makuta's beasts in any numbers, can't we?"

Lewa turned to Kopaka, who stood apart from the group. "You're very quiet... what do you think?"

Kopaka turned and walked away from the assembled group. "I think... that 'Charge!' is not a plan."

Despite their many differences, the Toa were able to work together as a team when circumstances demanded it. Indeed, their many victories over the Rahi added to their legend, and became tales still told around the village fires to this day.

In time, the Toa collected all the Kanohi Masks of Power and travelled to Kini-Nui, the great temple in the centre of the island. There the six Masks of Power each carried were exchanged for a single golden mask... in this golden Kanohi were contained all the powers of the Kanohi.

But the Toa were still not ready to face their next great challenge. To meet the threat of the Manas, Makuta's crab-like guardians, the Toa would have to sacrifice what was most precious to them: their individuality. With a crackle of awesome energies, the six Toa merged into two Toa Kaita – larger, more powerful beings, each with the combined wisdom and might of three of the heroes. Where once had been six warriors, now there stood Toa Kaita Akamai and Toa Kaita Wairuha.

Now, at last, they were ready to descend beneath the temple and challenge the Manas...



Toa Kaita Akamai narrowly dodged the snapping claw of a Manas. The great Rahi backed off and regarded him warily. Never before had any creature of Mata Nui survived so long in combat with a Manas, and it seemed that Makuta's guardians were beginning to feel a trace of fear.

"You are frightening to tiny hoto bugs and perhaps a lame fusa, Rahi," Akamai said in a voice like thunder. "But I fear you not."

"Do not taunt them, Akamai," Toa Kaita Wairuha said. "They are servants of Makuta, no worse than the other Rahi we have conquered. Let us do this quickly."

The words were barely out of Wairuha's mouth when one of the twin Manas launched itself at him. Even with his vast power, the Toa Kaita was staggered. Employing all his might, he tore the crab-like beast from him and hurled it away.

The Manas struck the far wall and paused, stunned, for a moment. But its hard shell had protected it from any serious harm, and it soon was skittering back into the fray.

"This has gone on long enough," Wairuha said. The Toa Kaita formed from Gali, Lewa, and Kopaka drew upon the elements at his command – ice, water, and wind – creating a devastating blizzard. Little by little, he exerted his control over the storm, compressing it down into a single beam of pure energy.

Heedless of the danger, the Manas advanced into the path of the cold blast. Instantly, their limbs began to stiffen, their movements to slow. Soon, their bodies were covered with a

thick coating of ice and snow and they succumbed, at last, to the power of winter unleashed...

"Are they dead?" Akamai asked.

"No, merely frozen solid," said Wairuha. "The victory is ours, and now... and now..."

Wairuha shuddered and sagged against the wall. There was a blinding flash, and suddenly the Toa Kaita was gone. In his place were the three Toa who had merged their forms to create him. A moment later, Akamai followed suit, reverting to Tahu, Pohatu and Onua.

"The energy... to remain in that form... too great," Tahu said. "We must go on from here as individuals..."

"No, not as individuals," Onua said quietly. "As a team."



Although the Toa had successfully overcome Makuta's fearsome guardians, they had not defeated the ruler of shadows himself. Here, far beneath the surface of the island, Makuta's power was at its strongest. And so the Toa entered a chamber to find themselves confronted by dark mirror images of themselves... powerful and corrupt versions of the heroes of Mata Nui.

"What... are you?" Tahu whispered. Just the sight of these dark impostors filled him with disgust and dread.

"Don't you know, Toa of fire?" hissed the shadow Tahu. "I am you... the part of you that you try to hide. I am your power, your ambition, and my flames are not held in check by conscience. I will rule, or Mata Nui will burn."

"We are what you wish you could be," shadow Gali said, in a voice like the slithering of water snakes. "Victory is the only thing that matters. Who cares if the oceans are thrown into turmoil, or the rivers are bent and twisted to serve my ends? What possible difference could that make to me?"

"No!" Gali shouted. "To use my power without regard to what it could do to the world around me... No, spirit, I reject you!"

"We know all about rejection, don't we, brother," shadow Kopaka said softly. "We drive others away... freeze them out... so the opportunity will never arise to fail them. And we would fail them, wouldn't we? Then they would abandon us and we would be all alone, brother..."

Kopaka raised his sword of ice. "I... am... not... your... BROTHER!" he said, sending a blast of pure cold at his counterpart. But the ice passed through shadow Kopaka's form as if the dark one was not there...

"Toa, these things are not real," Onua said. "They are just illusions. Ignore them!"

"Always so wise are we," shadow Onua responded. "Always so strong are we. Strong enough, perhaps, to reach up and pull down the

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sun? Then we could walk on the surface like all the others do, see like they do, and not be blinded by infernal light. How sweet that would be..."

In the far corner, Lewa did a flip over his double. But the shadow Lewa merely dissolved and reformed in front of the Toa once again.

"Why do you run, brother?" shadow Lewa said. "We don't need them... any of them. The important thing is to have fun. Let the other Toa worry about their petty responsibilities. There is a whole world to explore!"

Faced with these dark reflections of themselves, even the Toa began to know doubt. Little by little, they backed away, as their shadow selves grew stronger and more insistent. Only Pohatu stood his ground, looking at his duplicate as if it were something he had stepped in.

"So what's your story?" Pohatu grumbled.

"I don't have one," shadow Pohatu answered. "I am invisible... unwanted... Onua is wiser, Tahu more powerful, Gali more in harmony with her world. What am I? Why am I here? What is my purpose?"

Pohatu chuckled. "Am I supposed to be scared by all that? Everybody has doubts and fears... everybody worries

sometimes that maybe they'll lose their friends, or screw something up... but you get up and you keep going and you take the chance."

The Toa of stone took a step forward... and amazingly, the shadow Pohatu retreated. "That's called being alive, spirit," Pohatu continued, as relentlessly as a hammer against a stubborn rock. "Something you wouldn't understand. I don't run from my fears - I use them to keep me going, keep me striving to achieve something more."

Pohatu reached out and plunged his hand into the midst of the shadow. "You can't scare me, spirit - you are me."

With a cry, the shadow disappeared inside Pohatu. The other Toa stopped, stared, and halted their retreat.

"We cannot reject these things," Gali whispered. "We must accept that they are part of ourselves."

"Parts we wish did not exist," Kopaka agreed. "But we are strong enough to master them."

"And master them we shall," Tahu said.

With that, the shadow Toa gave a mournful wail and began to break apart. In seconds, their substance had turned to mist, and the mist had vanished inside the bodies of the Toa.

Gali was the first to notice that the atmosphere in the chamber had changed. "It's gone," she said softly. "The evil in this place... is gone."

"You mean we've won?" Tahu asked.

"Makuta chose to fight us with

our own fears," Kopaka said. "A calculated gamble that might well have worked... if not for Pohatu."

"Unfriendly types don't bother me, Kopaka," Pohatu replied, gentle laughter in his tone. "After all, I hang around with you, don't I?"

But the struggle was not over. Now Makuta himself appeared to the Toa in the form of a Matoran villager. When the Toa would not yield to him, he took the form of a viscous, swirling mass of darkness and attacked. Though hard-pressed, the Toa defended themselves with all their raw elemental power and drove Makuta off... but he had merely been delayed, not truly defeated.

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Victory had been won. The shadows driven from the island of Mata Nui, and at last the Matoran could live in peace... or so it seemed.

What the Toa could not know then is that Makuta's threat had not been ended. He had merely retreated into the darkness, there to plot anew and regain his energies. All he needed was time - time he gained with an act so monstrous, even his previous deeds paled in comparison.

Far below the surface of Mata Nui, the Bohrok swarms slept. These insect-like beings had slumbered for ages, waiting for the call that would awaken them. Somehow, Makuta sent the signal that brought them to life... and by so doing, plunged Mata Nui and its people into a nightmare.

To this day, the true purpose of the Bohrok remains a mystery. But their first appearance on Mata Nui is one that no one will forget...

The Toa moved rapidly through the borderlands of Ta-Wahi. Normally, when heading for a confrontation with an unknown foe, Gali and Onua would have been counselling caution. But not today... no, today each Toa knew that there was not a single moment to be wasted.

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It was hard to believe that, only minutes before, they had returned from their battle with the shadow Toa. A great victory had been won, and it seemed the peace would reign at last on Mata Nui. But then a lone Ta-Matoran stumbled into the clearing, exhausted, frightened, and suffering from shock. Only one word did he speak, over and over:

"Bohrok."

Now, as they approached the village of fire, Tahu felt the first stirrings of fear. What could have happened in the short time they were below the surface? Had Makuta feigned defeat and slipped away, only to turn his wrath on Ta-Koro?

The Toa stopped at a high ridge overlooking the lava plains... and saw a scene out of nightmare. Hordes of insect-like beings were swarming all over the fields. Some were freezing the molten lava in its tracks... others using seismic waves to crumble the mountainside.

"What are they?" Gali cried. Seeing the damage being done to the island was like a physical blow to her.

"I do not know," Tahu replied. "But they must be stopped!"

The Toa charged... but their new foes seemed to take no notice of them. It was only when Lewa blocked the path of some of these Bohrok that they responded. Their cold blasts caused ice to build up on the Toa of Air's body, sending him crashing to the ground. Only a hastily conjured heat shield provided by Tahu saved Lewa from being frozen solid.

The struggle did not go well. For every Bohrok the Toa drove away, six more seemed to take its place. Unlike the Rahi, the Bohrok seemed to be intelligent creatures, organised, and focused on a goal. But what the goal might be was unknown – it seemed like all they were accomplishing was the mindless destruction of Mata Nui's landscape.

It took a violent thunderstorm created by Lewa and Gali to make the Bohrok flee... but no one present believed the swarms would be gone for long. In the hours that followed, reports streamed in from all over the island – the Bohrok had appeared everywhere at once, and the land had suffered mightily as a result.

It was Turaga Vakama, leader of Ta-Koro, who gave the Toa their first clue to the nature of the Bohrok...

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Vakama spoke slowly, as if every word he uttered was a knife stabbing into his heart.

"We thought the Bohrok were a myth... a tale to be told around village fires. 'Follow the laws of the village, or the Bohrok will come for you,' he said. 'Now we know they are all too real.'"

"But what are they? More Rahi? Servants of Makuta?" Tahu asked.

"No, my friends. The Bohrok stand apart from the evil of Makuta – they are a force of nature, like the floodtide or the windstorm. They come, they tear down all that nature has built... and then they depart."

"Monsters," muttered Gali, surveying the devastation of the lava plains.

"Do not presume you know them from their actions," Vakama warned. "Do not ever assume you know what they will do next, or where they will strike, or why. The legends say the Bohrok can appear anywhere, at any time, in numbers that dwarf the grains of sand on the beach."

Vakama closed his eyes and began to recite the tales from memory. "Six swarms are the Bohrok, and fear is the gift they bring. They will lay waste to your villages, crumble mountains to dust, and turn rivers to parched earth.

"Beware the swarms of Bohrok. Lehvok, whose claws spray acid that can dissolve our world; Kohrak, whose icy blasts can freeze our fires; Tahnok, whose heat can melt or char our hillsides; Pahrak, whose power over stone can level our mountains; Gahlok, whose watery powers bring the flood; and Nuhvok, who toils beneath our feet to bring all of Mata Nui crashing down."

Onua frowned. "Six swarms... numbering in the hundreds of thousands, no doubt. And only six of us to stand against them."

"But oppose them we must, if Mata Nui is to survive," Tahu said. "Vakama, there must be something more in the legends... some hint of how they can be defeated."

"The Bohrok's greatest strength is also their greatest weakness," the Turaga replied. "Inside of each Bohrok there is a small creature called a krana. This krana confers great power to the Bohrok, and gives it direction. Remove the krana and the Bohrok will wander as if mindless."

"So we have to steal the krana out of a each Bohrok?" Lewa said. "That should only take us... years."

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"Not all," Vakama corrected. "You must gather eight krana from each of the swarms. Those will be the key to the defeat of the Bohrok."

Tahu's eyes locked on those of Turaga. He knows more than he's telling, the Toa of fire thought. Why? Why is he keeping secrets from us?

"And what do we do with the krana once we have them, Turaga?" Tahu said quietly.

"I can say no more," Vakama answered, turning to head back to the village. "You will know the answers when the time has come."

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Now the Toa began a race against time. The Bohrok grew bolder with each day, striking all over the island and disappearing before resistance could be mustered. The Matoran struggled against the invaders, defending their villages as best they could.

Meanwhile, the Toa set out to capture the krana. Knowing that physical force would be useless against the numerically superior swarms, they were forced to rely on their wits to trap the foe...





Lewa, Gali and Pohatu stood at the rim of the Mangai volcano. The heat was intense. More than once, Lewa found himself wishing for the cool breezes in the treetops of Le-Koro. Then he remembered why he was here... and what the Bohrok had done to his village... and he knew he would plunge into the fiery heart of the volcano if that would only make things right.

"You're certain this is going to work?" he asked the Toa of stone.

Pohatu nodded. "If it doesn't, none of us will be here to worry about it. Tahu and Kopaka are in position... and Onua has seen to the evacuation of Ta-Koro in case... something goes wrong."

In the distance, Lewa could see a cloud of dust kicked up by the approaching swarms. Scouts had reported that Pahrak and Lehvak were on their way, ready to launch a second attack on the lava plains.

"It's time," Pohatu said.

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Lewa and Gali took their places on either side of the volcano's mouth. Looking down, they could see the seething cauldron of lava within. Neither said a word, fearful of breaking the other's concentration. A single misstep... a shade too much power here or there... and the Mangai would explode, taking Ta-Koro and much of the rest of the island with it.

Grimly, the Toa of water and the Toa of air focused their powers through their tools and sent it hurling into the volcano. Gali's energy met that of Lewa, and a storm began to grow inside the peak. Winds howled and lightning flashed where there should have been none, and waves of magma crashed against the sides of the volcanic cone. Even as they fed the storm, making it stronger, the two Toa fought to keep it compressed inside the mountain.

"Pohatu... it's too much..." Lewa said.

"Just another moment, Lewa," Pohatu replied. "The Bohrok are almost here."

Pohatu shifted his mask to Kanohi Akaku, so he could take advantage of its vision powers. Yes, the two swarms were close now... any second...

"Now!" Pohatu bellowed.

Far below, Tahu heard the Toa of stone cry out. He swung his mighty fire axe and tore a gash in the side of the Mangai. The pressure inside the volcano at last found release, and lava spewed from the wound, arcing high through the air to strike the approaching swarms head-on.

The lava staggered them, but no more. Their shells were designed to handle far worse punishment. But even the Bohrok could not be prepared for Kopaka's sudden strike, as his sword froze the lava around them. Helplessly pinned by the ice, the Bohrok could do nothing as the Toa of ice removed their krana.

"This won't hold them for long," Kopaka said. "But it has done its job. The krana are ours."

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"Now the true test begins," Tahu said.

Tahu spoke the truth, for the Toa's quest had just begun. But while they were gathering krana, a momentous discovery had been made by a Matoran named Nuparu: the Bohrok were not living creatures, but a form of artificial life, vehicles for the krana.

Using this knowledge, Nuparu took apart fallen Bohrok and used the pieces to build the Boxor, a one-Matoran defence vehicle. The Boxor would prove vital as the Matoran strove to protect their villages.

Meanwhile, the Toa followed the trail of the Bohrok's scouts, the Bohrok Va, back to one of the nests. In a chamber below the nest, they found mysterious slots in the floor in the same shape as the various krana. Fitting the krana into the floor caused six massive doors to be revealed.

Each Toa chose a door. These doors led to long, dark tunnels, and at the end of each tunnel was a mighty suit of armour. The Toa donned this Exo-Toa armour just in time, for Cahdok and Gahdok, the queens of the swarms, had at last arrived! Possessing all the powers of the Bohrok swarms, the Bahrag queens were a formidable foe.

The Toa used the armour's power to drive the two monstrous creatures into the centre of the chamber. But once there, they discovered to their horror that Cahdok and Gahdok had grown stronger... and the battle was far from won.



The crackle of electrical energy filled the chamber as the Toa loosed the full might of their armour on the twin Bahrag. But Cahdok and Gahdok's only response was a terrible shrieking that sounded strangely like... laughter.

"You cannot harm us. You cannot stop us," they said in unison. "Mata Nui will be as it was in the before-time."

"Our power is not even slowing them down!" Gali cried.

"We are one," Cahdok replied. "The closer we are to each other, the greater our power. You will tire... you will weaken... while we grow stronger."

"The armour can't help us now," Tahu said. "And it's inhibiting our natural elemental powers. We have to remove it!"

The Toa hurriedly removed their armour and surrounded their enemies. Each one knew that their individual powers would have no more effect on the Bahrag than the Exo-Toa had... but if the Toa were to fall, they would fall with honour.

"You are obstacles. You will be removed," Gahdok hissed. "Then the Bohrok will be free to complete their mission."

"We cannot let that happen," Tahu said. "Toa... we must strike together."

"But, Tahu... the danger..." Gali said. Never before had the Toa dared to combine their elemental powers into one strike at a foe... and none of them knew what might happen if they made the attempt.



"Tahu is right," Kopaka replied. "Unless we take this risk, we will be defeated. And defeat is... unacceptable."

"Then we do it - now!" Tahu shouted. "We have suffered enough of your laughter, Bahrag... you shall laugh no more!"

Water, ice, fire, air, earth, and stone combined into one. The elemental forces merged, changed, becoming something new - pure energy that pulsed like a thing alive as it spread through the chamber. Before the Bahrag could even comprehend what was happening, they were imprisoned behind bars made of this strange substance.

"Fools!" Cahdok snarled. "In defeating us, you do not know what you have unleashed! You have won nothing! Nothing!" Suddenly, the chamber was rocked by violent tremors. The very floor beneath the feet of the Toa began to give way, and the six heroes found themselves plunging down, down into tubes that seemed to extend for miles.

The Toa plunged into pools of raw energy. They could feel it, like a thousand needles piercing their armour, reaching inside, changing them, making them more than what they were...

When the heroes of Mata Nui emerged back in the chamber, they were no longer Toa. With new armour, new tools, and new masks of Power, they were now - Toa Nuva!

When the Toa Nuva returned from the chamber of Cahdok and Gahdok, fear and uncertainty rippled through the land. Who were these strange, armoured giants? Could they really be the Toa who had fought for and protected the Matoran all this time? Their raw power and frightening visages left much uncertainty...

Worse still, these Toa Nuva were not behaving as the Matoran had come to expect their heroes to act. They were quarrelling, fighting amongst themselves, and finally their unity was shattered. Each Toa Nuva returned to his or her village, convinced they had no further need for each other.

That was far from the only strange occurrence on Mata Nui at this time. In the moment the Toa defeated Cahdok and Gahdok, strange symbols appeared in each village. These were the symbols of the new Toa Nuva, and the Matoran of each village placed one on its shrine. Although some of the Toa Nuva dismissed these icons as merely decorative and nothing more, the Matoran were determined to treat them with respect and guard them against Rahi or other threats.

But such best intentions were for naught. In one dread night, powerful thieves struck in each village. With ease, they rendered the guards helpless and stole the symbols of the Toa Nuva. Little did the Matoran know what the devastating consequences of this would be...

Gali Nuva stood on a rock, looking out over Lake Naho. Her mind was troubled. It had been only a few days since the other Toa Nuva had decided to break up the team. She had pleaded with them to change their minds, reminding them that their destiny was to fight side by side. What would happen to Mata Nui if some new danger arose, and the Toa Nuva were not united against it?

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

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

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

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

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

Or I have grown mute, she thought, her fear growing.

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Gali Nuva's shock was repeated all over the island, as the Toa Nuva discovered that their elemental powers had left them. Returning to their villages, they learned of the thefts, and realised that there must be a connection between the symbols and their powers.

The thieves had done little to cover their tracks. Each Toa Nuva followed the trail from his or her respective village, eventually coming together on a beach. There, for the first time, they confronted their newest foe:



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Lewa Nuva looked around at his friends. All of them seemed shaken to their core, even Tahu. But it was left to the Toa of air to voice what they were all thinking. "So we have a trail to follow... but without our elemental powers, what will we do if we find the thieves?"

"It's not 'if' we find them," Tahu snapped. "We will find them. We will get our powers back."

"Um, Tahu," Pohatu said, pointing toward the ridge. "I think those things up there might have something to say about that."

The others followed his gaze and saw a sight they had thought... hoped... never to see again. Six Bohrok stood assembled, fairly crackling with power... and it took but a moment for the Toa Nuva to see that these were not the Bohrok they had fought before.

The six insect-like beings moved forward, the metallic parts of their bodies gleaming in the sun. On their faceplates were inscribed serpentine designs. If there had been any doubts that these were not members of the original swarms, they were dispelled when one of them began to speak.

"We are the Bohrok-Kal. We search for Cahdok and Gahdok, queens of the swarms." Its voice sounded like a thousand roaches skittering across a cavern floor. "Tell us where you have hidden them, and stand aside. We have no wish to harm helpless foes."

Lewa Nuva was many things – quick, agile, adventurous, and brave. But patience and even-temper were never qualities he possessed in abundance. Seeing his symbol being carried by one of the Bohrok-Kal, he invoked the power of the Mask of Speed and charged forward.

"Helpless? A Toa Nuva is never helpless!" he cried.

Lewa never reached his goal. With a gesture, the Gahlok-Kal sent

out waves of magnetic force that pinned the Toa Nuva's feet to the ground.

The other Toa Nuva moved to the attack, each in their own fashion, and each found themselves countered by the Bohrok-Kal. Finally, Tahu Nuva threw up a force shield around himself and his allies to buy a moment to think.

"Your search is doomed," the Toa of fire said. "The creatures you seek have vanished from Mata Nui."

"You lie!" hissed a Bohrok-Kal. "They are here and we will find them... free them... and awaken the swarms once more!"

Twin beams of gravitic energy lanced from the claws of the Nuhvok-Kal. In less than a heartbeat, Tahu Nuva felt the pull of gravity double, triple, quadruple, until he was slammed into the ground. And when he fell, so too did his shield...

The battle, if it can truly be called such, was short. A combination of sonic force, vacuum power, and raw lightning sent the Toa Nuva down to oblivion on the sands...



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The Toa Nuva had been defeated, for the first time in their history. But they would rise again – believing them to be no threat, the Bohrok-Kal had left them alive.

In the days that followed, the Toa Nuva would try every strategem they could think of to stop or slow the Bohrok-Kal's quest. All failed. Matoran scouts reported that the Bohrok swarms were on the move again, returning en masse to their nests to wait for a new call that would not be long in coming.

With time running out, the Toa Nuva trailed the Bohrok-Kal to a chamber below the one in which they had last seen Cahdok and Gahdok. There they saw a sight to still the bravest heart... the Bahrag were there, still imprisoned by protodermis, with a glowing cube hovering in the air before them. Their cage was guarded by the six suits of Exo-Toa armour, empty yet operating on their own. And confronting the armoured guardians were the Bohrok-Kal.

Again, the struggle was brief. It took mere seconds for the Bohrok-Kal to disable or destroy all six Exo-Toa. Now they had merely to fit the six Toa Nuva symbols into their niches on the cube and the Bahrag would be free once more.

It was in this moment of greatest danger that Tahu Nuva made a desperate choice. Invoking a power none of the other Toa Nuva knew he had, he called forth the legendary Vahi... the Mask of Time.

"The Vahi," Gali whispered. "Oh, Tahu, do you know what you are doing? You have doomed us all!"

"We have no choice," Tahu replied. "I must use this power... master it... or all is lost."

"And if you fail, more than Mata Nui will be lost... this entire reality may fall!"

"Then I will not fail," Tahu answered, summoning every last erg of his might to bend the mask to his ends.

Slowly, the Vahi began to respond, sending out temporal waves toward the Bohrok-Kal. As the chrono-energy struck them, time began to slow... to crawl... virtually to stop around the elite squad of Bohrok. The icons were inches away from their slots, frozen in time and space.

"I cannot... maintain this... much longer..." Tahu breathed. "Go! Get our symbols back!"

"Wait! Look there!" Onua cried. "Their krana are... changing!"

Before the startled eyes of the Toa Nuva, the krana-kal's turned to silver. An instant later, these silver creatures had combined their energies to form a powerful force field around the Bohrok-Kal.

"We should have expected this," Kopaka Nuva said. "In the final moments before they accomplish their task, they are protected from all harm."

"Then... we've lost," Pohatu Nuva said. "Nothing will survive... our villages, our people..."

"Wait a moment," Gali said. "Wait. Our people... Our people identified those symbols with us. Their belief invested our powers into them... so when they were stolen, our powers were stolen as well."

"They are nothing but stone, and metal, and ice..." Kopaka said.

"We don't have time to argue," Gali replied. "Our people believe in us... now we have to believe in them. We have to accept that they



were right – that we are connected to those symbols – and we have to use that connection now!"

In the past, the Toa had shared their physical forms when they merged into kaita... shared countless dangers... and the glory of victory after victory. Now they faced their greatest challenge: pooling their willpower in a last, desperate effort to save their home.

As they focused on their symbols, and the power locked inside of them, the Toa Nuva began to glow like stars. As their concentrated will pierced the Bohrok-Kal's force field, time began to flow normally once again. But it was already too late for the Kal.

The Toa Nuva symbols were glowing now too, and their sheer power feeding into the Bohrok-Kal. "Do you feel it, brothers?" Gahlok-Kal cried out. "The power! Cahdok and Gahdok do not need the swarms – we can do all they can, and more now!"

"Yes!" Nuhvok-Kal said. "We will return Mata Nui to the before-time! We will rule beside the Bahrag! We will... will..." Nuhvok-Kal staggered, reaching in vain to tear the symbol from himself. "No! We have been tricked! The power... too much power... can't control..."

What happened next happened in seconds, but to the Toa Nuva, it seemed to take eternity. The power of the Bohrok-Kal, merged with that of the Toa Nuva, proved too great to master. It ran wild, with devastating effect:

Nuhvok-Kal, master of gravity, felt his own personal gravity increase beyond anything imaginable... until his armoured form collapsed in on itself, forming a micro-black hole in space...

Gahlok-Kal, who so effortlessly controlled magnetism, now found every piece of metallic debris nearby – the Exo-Toa armour, rubble, even rocks in the walls with metallic ores in them – flying toward him at lightning speed. In an instant, he was buried beneath it all...

Kohrak-Kal's sonics were beyond his control, but now turned inward, causing his form to crumble to dust. Only his silver krana remained intact on the floor...

And so it went... Tahnok-Kal short-circuited by electricity run wild, Pahrak-Kal superheating and melting through the surface, and Lehvok-Kal's vacuum power sending him crashing through the ceiling, up, up, and out over the sea...



At last, the danger was ended. The Bahrag remained imprisoned, never to be released. The Bohrok were back in their nests, sleeping for what all hoped would be an eternity. The Toa Nuva, their powers restored, gathered up their icons and returned to the surface.

Much had been won, but not all. True, Mata Nui was safe once more, but the rifts between the Toa Nuva had not yet healed. They had worked together again, but not truly been a team. Only time would tell if they would ever unite again...

They returned to their villages, battle-weary, but confident that the worst was at last over.

And far beneath the great temple in the centre of the island, Makuta stirred... and began to smile.



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