



ROBOT WARS

SIGMUND BROUWER

BOOK THREE

AMBUSH



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Ambush

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THIS SERIES IS DEDICATED
IN MEMORY OF MARTYN GODFREY.

*Martyn, you wrote books that reached all of
us kids at heart. You wrote them because you
really cared. We all miss you.*

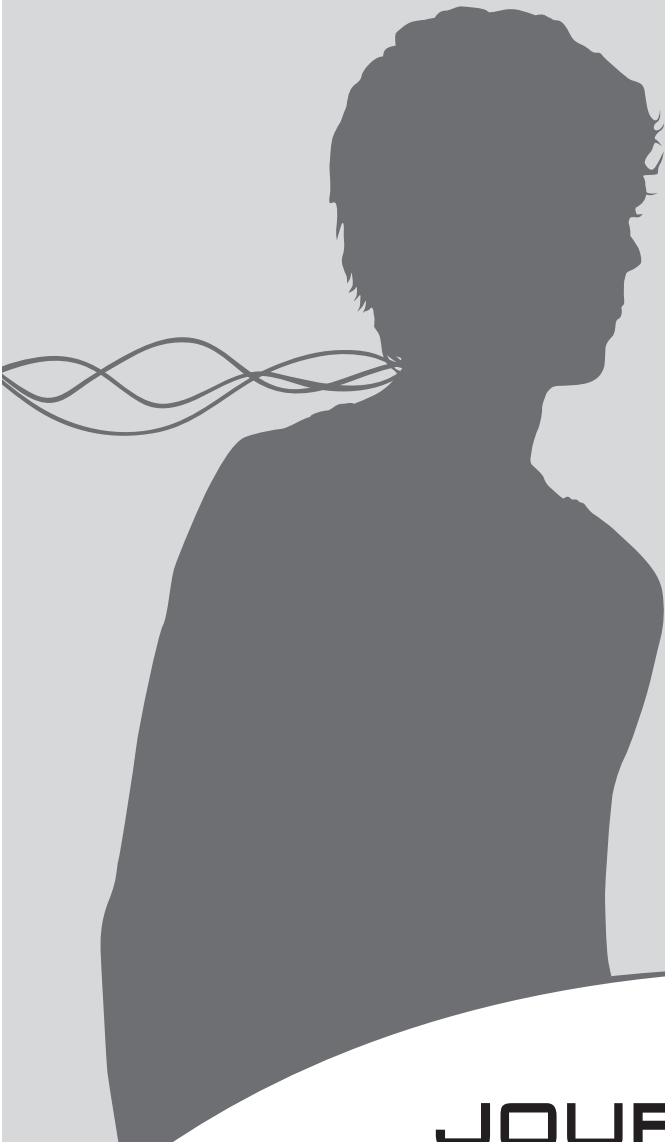
FROM THE AUTHOR

We live in amazing times! When I first began writing these Mars journals, not even 40 years after our technology allowed us to put men on the moon, the concept of robot control was strictly something I daydreamed about when readers first met Tyce. Since then, science fiction has been science fact. Successful experiments have now been performed on monkeys who are able to use their brains to control robots halfway around the world!

Suddenly it's not so far-fetched to believe that these adventures could happen for Tyce. Or for you. Or for your children.

With that in mind, I hope you enjoy stepping into a future that could really happen. . . .

SIGMUND BROUWER



JOURNAL ONE

CHAPTER 1

Cave-in!

The wheels of the robot body under my control hummed as the robot sped across the red, packed sands of the flat valley floor toward the hills about five miles from the dome.

Thin Martian wind whistled around me, picking up the grains of sand that the robot wheels sent flying into the air. The sky was butterscotch colored, the sun a perfect circle of blue. Streaks of light blue clouds hung above the distant mountain peaks.

But I wasn't about to spend any time appreciating the beauty of the Martian landscape.

Not with a cave-in ahead and desperate scientists waiting for whatever rescue attempt was possible. Robot bodies don't sweat with fear. But if they did, my own fear would

have beaded on the shiny surface of the robot's titanium shell. While I was still in the dome, on a laboratory bed using X-ray waves to direct the robot body, all my thoughts were frantic with terror and worry.

Once before I'd been sent on a rescue mission. A real rescue mission, instead of the usual virtual-reality tests for the robot body that I'd spent years learning to handle as if it were my own body. The first rescue mission had been to search for only one person, lost in the cornfields of the science station's greenhouse.

This time was just as real. And far more frightening.

Two hours earlier, four people in space suits had walked into a cave to take rock samples. They were searching for traces of ancient water activity and fossil bacteria. According to standard field procedure, they'd sent back their activities on real-time video transmissions beamed directly to the dome. An hour later—only 60 minutes ago—the images and their voices had stopped abruptly, thrown into blackness and drowned out by a horrible rumbling that could only be caused by the collapse of the cave's ceiling. Now all that remained to give an indication of their location deep inside the rock were the signals thrown by the GPS in each of their space suits, which bounced sound waves off the twin satellites orbiting Mars.

Four signals then beeped steadily, clustered together where the four people had been buried alive.

If the weight of the rock had not crushed them, they had

about three days to live. That was as long as their oxygen and water tubes would last.

Back at the dome, a rescue team was being assembled. At best, they would be ready in another hour. Which meant anything and everything I could do quickly with the robot might make a crucial difference in the survival rate of those four people trapped by the cave-in.

Most terrifying of all, one of the GPS signals came from the space suit of my best friend, Rawling McTigre, director of the Mars Project.

SCIENCE AND GOD

You've probably noticed that the question of God's existence comes up in Robot Wars.

It's no accident, of course. I think this is one of the most important questions that we need to decide for ourselves. If God created the universe and there is more to life than what we can see, hear, taste, smell, or touch, that means we have to think of our own lives as more than just the time we spend on Earth.

On the other hand, if this universe was not created and God does not exist, then that might really change how you view your existence and how you live.

Sometimes science is presented in such a way that it suggests there is no God. To make any decision, it helps to know as much about the situation as possible. As you decide for yourself, I'd like to show in the Robot Wars series that

many, many people—including famous scientists—don't see science this way.

As you might guess, I've spent a lot of time wondering about science and God, and I've spent a lot of time reading about what scientists have learned and concluded. Because of this, I wrote a nonfiction book called *Who Made The Moon?* and you can find information about it at www.whomadethemoon.com. If you ever read it, you'll see why science does not need to keep anyone away from God.

With that in mind, I've added a little bit more to this book—a couple of essays about the science in journals one and two of *Robot Wars*, based on what you can find in *Who Made The Moon?*

Sigmund Brouwer

whomadethemoon.com

JOURNAL ONE

DOES GOD SPEAK TO PEOPLE?

Q: Does God speak to people?

A: I believe yes.

Perhaps not with an actual voice. But through our conscience, through quiet moments when we suddenly understand something that wasn't clear before, through the gentle instruction from other people who know him well.

But what many people struggle with is that the ways God speaks to us often can't be proven. As Tyce learns in this book, having faith in God means you decide to trust him, even when you can't see the outcome. Since scientists are used to seeing results and proof, and since it's scientifically impossible to prove God exists, some of them want to think the only things that exist are the things you can measure.

Why do so many scientists see a conflict between science (data that can be proven by $A + B = C$) and faith (something you feel inside your heart and believe with your mind but can't hear, taste, or touch)? It's true that believing in God means taking a leap of faith. But believing in God isn't totally illogical, as some people believe.

You see, humans are not just made of body and mind. We are capable of love. Of loneliness. Of longing. Things that can't be measured or found during a medical examination. Things that also point to the existence of a soul.

When God speaks to us, I believe he speaks to our souls.

As Tyce realized in this book, we just have to find those quiet moments where we can hear him. We have to learn to listen.

JOURNAL TWO

WILL COMPUTERS SOMEDAY REPLACE MAN?

Q: Are computers smarter than people?

A: Computers already surround us. And in the future, they'll become even more important. Just look at Tyce Sanders's world, where Lance Evenson, the chief computer technician, is the most important person on the Moon Racer! After all, he's the guy who keeps the computers running on this intergalactic 2040 spaceship.

But you know what? This mission shows that all the technology in the world can't match our human ingenuity. When the computer system is useless, Tyce's creativity—using the robots to slow down the Moon Racer—is what saves the spaceship from shooting past Earth into deep, black nothingness. Tyce's dad's quick, instinctive reactions keep the hatch door

from locking them in. And Tyce even has to “rescue” the ant-bot by knotting threads from a regulation jumpsuit to fish the robot out of the air vent. I guess robots aren’t so smart after all!

Q: Why does God want us to make good decisions?

A: Humans created robots and computers, and that’s why they have problems. It’s because we humans aren’t perfect, either. Although we are created by God, in his image, he gives us a choice: Will we follow him and his ways or not?

Some people, like Blaine Steven, count on technology and power to get what they want. But such things can’t save them from possible death. When ex-director Steven thought he might die, all of a sudden he began to ask Tyce questions about faith and God. Tyce was shocked, because Steven seemed like somebody who’d never want to know—or care—about religion.

But appearances can be deceiving. Tyce found that out the hard way. He had accused Lance Evenson, who looked like a tough guy, of being the mastermind behind the plot. When the whole time it was actually weak and drab Luke Daab who fooled them all.

We humans look at appearances, but God looks at the heart. Because God loves us, he encourages us to make right decisions. Why? Because he knows bad decisions can affect us for a lifetime and he hurts when we hurt. He also knows that such a lifestyle drives us away from him.

Q: Can you ever do something so wrong that God will never take you back?

A: Now that my wife, Cindy, and I have two daughters, Olivia and Savannah, I understand even more fully the promises that God made to us as humans. No matter what lifestyle decisions our daughters might ever make down the road, no matter how far away from us they might go, all they would have to do is turn around and reach out for us, and we would take them back with joy.

The same is true with God and his love for us. No matter how far we might stray from him, he is always waiting with love and hope for our return. (Just read the parable of the Prodigal Son for proof!)

When Jesus walked this world, he had an incredible message. You see, the religious leaders of his time taught that in order to approach God and be with him, you had to first make yourself right by paying penalties for what you had done wrong. Jesus said it was the opposite. All you need to do is approach God through his Son, Jesus, admit your wrongs, and ask for forgiveness. Then God will enter your life and transform it, giving you hope, peace, and joy for the future. Then, when life on this Earth is over, you'll find your real home. In heaven. In God's love.

And that's something only humans can experience—not computers.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Sigmund Brouwer and his wife, recording artist Cindy Morgan, and their daughters split living between Red Deer, Alberta, Canada, and Nashville, Tennessee. He has written several series of juvenile fiction and eight novels. Sigmund loves sports and plays golf and hockey. He also enjoys visiting schools to talk about books. He welcomes visitors to his Web site at www.coolreading.com.