

My name's Adam Baker, AKA Max Jordan. I don't really know where it came from. It just popped into my head one day.

Let's see, I love books, especially fiction. I started reading when I was young, and haven't stopped since. I was tested to have a college reading level before I left elementary school. That's grades kindergarten through six. I also love cartoons. I've been watching cartoons since the early eighties, and I still do.

I guess the main thing you should know about me, is that I have a seriously over active imagination. Over the years an entire fantasy world has slowly appeared in my head. Some parts of it came in dreams, some things just popped into my head.

I began writing fanfiction in high school. I started with Sonic the Hedgehog, the Saturday morning cartoons. I later moved onto a cartoon from Fox kids called Secret Files of the Spydogs. Sadly these early works are lost to the ages.

Now I'm going to fast forward a bit. I was watching Cartoon Network, when they debuted a new show about three kids, who all had the same first name. Ed, Edd and Eddy. I watched the first two seasons, and started on the third. At this time I was relatively new to the internet. I searched for Ed, Edd and Eddy one day, and came across a fan site. It's now located at www.edtropolis.com

There I ran across a story called Space Outlaws. It mixed the Ed boys with a table top game I had never heard of called Warhammer 40K. I read it, and liked it. I read the next two Space Outlaw stories, and liked them too. But then I hit on a problem. It seemed like the writer considered the third story to be the last one.

That irked me for some reason. I kept getting the feeling that the story wasn't finished. Mainly because McGranth, McKenzie and Charleston were still on Earth. So I did something I have never done before. I emailed the writer, and asked if there was gonna be another Outlaws story.

She asked me what a fourth Outlaw story would be about. So, I sat down, and thought, and it came together. I pulled an idea out of the fantasy world I mentioned. An idea about an army of mechanoids trying to take over, and a brave band of heroes fighting them. By sheer dumb luck Warhammer 40K had a mechanoid army of it's own, the Necrons. The rest is history. I wrote out the story line, and Cerion edited it into Iron Eds.

As for the characters I created, I'll go one at a time.

Metallix: Metallix started life in my fantasy world, as a thinly veiled copy of X-men's Apocalypse. Actually he was called Apocalypse at first, I later changed it to Armageddon. I don't know why I called him Metallix for this story. Originally the character was a human named Jason

Traveller. He was zapped into the future, where he was remade into a cyborg fighting machine. I always imagined him as a big, tough fighting machine type. He made a good leader for the Necrontyr forces.

Damion: This guy also came from my fantasy world, and even kept his own name. Actually his name was Damion Demento, a mad scientist type bent on world. He was later caught in an explosion, and rebuilt into a cyborg by Metallix. Damion once created a humanoid robot warrior with wings called Razorwing. I crossed Razorwing with Damion's own cyborg body to get his look in Iron Eds.

Tanya: I'm not sure where Tanya came from. I've always liked the idea of women being in charge of male dominated areas, like the military. Plus the thought of people not knowing whether to call her sir or ma'am just cracks me up.

Bastion: I've always loved the name Bastion, ever since the Never Ending Story. I modeled Bastion's personality after another character I created once. An alien young adult. He's the son of ambassador. He was raised at court, and knows all about tact, and etiquette. But, at the same time he isn't shy about getting his hands dirty when he needs too. That suits Bastion to a tea.

Masterson: Masterson was one of those names that stuck in my head, and just wouldn't go away. The character of Masterson is the solid dependable type. Always there to back the hero up.

Alexander Demontfurt: The Demontfurts have a long, and glorious history in my fantasy world. They're an old family, going back centuries. They're the type to found countries, but leave the ruling to others. They live on a massive estate surrounded by expansive fields, and elegant gardens. The Demontfurts don't just subscribe to the old school, they practically invented it. Alexander is a typical Demontfurt male, brash and impulsive. He may have been born to the manor, but he was raised on the battlefield.

Alyssia Demontfurt: Alexander's little sister. The Demontfurt women are a bit of a contradiction in terms. On the surface they're elegant and sophisticated. But deep down they have a warrior spirit, and can be just as adventurous as the men.

Well there you have it. Iron Eds, more than two and a half years in the making. Easily the longest time I've ever spent on a single story. But in the end, it was worth it. So, at long last I end this, by asking the eternal question.

Is there a point to this?

Space Outlaws: Iron Men credits
by Cerion

Wow! What a rush. Nearly three years of work. Over one hundred pages. I know, I've printed all chapters out. In ten point Times New Roman. More than one hundred pages. This is probably the most massive fanfiction I've ever written.

And without Max Jordan's original script for it, it would never have seen the light of day and the Space Outlaws would've ended with series three. Good thing he got the better of me.

As Max explained the origins of his story and why he contacted me, maybe I should give you the dirt on the Origins of Outlaws? Indeed I shall.

It all started in late 1999, just before the new millenium. I was round about 13 years old. I'd just discovered both EEnE and Warhammer 40k. As I was having a hard time in school (I was bullied, enough said about that), these two things became my flight from reality. I started writing Eds fanfiction way back in early 1999, just after I discovered the original EddZone, then on a Tripod server (In time it would swell to incorporate three different accounts before it moved... I remember, Kit!). My first ever fanfic was entitled A Broken ED-ship. It was my first encounter with the wondrously therapeutic effect writing can have on you. The main theme of the story was Edd and Eddy's friendship and how fragile it is, just as fragile as Edd's ankles. A thesis that has been proven right in later series, it would seem.

Later during the year, I found that my brother had drawn a picture of Ed armoured in what can be described as a crude version of Power armour. I later redid the concept with Ed as full fledged Space Marine and Edd as an Eldar Farseer. Both these pictures can be found in the early fanart galleries on www.edtropolis.com (I have sadly since lost my brother's picture, but it can also be viewed there, in the very first gallery!). Byt the end of 1999, an idea was forming in my head. Each time I saw the episode Dawn of the Eds from series 1, the idea of mixing Eds and WH40k appealed more and more to me.

In the end, I drew the picture which would mark the path of the Space Outlaws and their future looks. Most importantly: the obiquitous blue armour and inverted omega sign. In that picture, drawn mere days before the new millenium, I also included the weaponry the Eds would carry on their adventure. In the same vein, I did a picture of Commissar Rolf (who was only later named Yarrick) and Lord Kevlinn (complete with axe and baseball cap).

These pictures carried a story with them. And bit by bit, it fleshed itself out. An entire universe. However, at this early stage, my knowledge of WH40k was paltry, to say the least. As time progressed, I've learned more and tried to patch up the more obvious plot holes in the story, to bring it closer to the WH40k concept, but at the same time trying to conceive something new from it. It is a cross over fanfiction, but there's so much of myself in it now, that I wonder what proportions there really are... but I digress.

The original intention was one series. But as I started writing the final chapter (Home Sweet ED) to what was to become series 1 (with the later title: For the Imperium!), my mind was already plotting out series 2. So I continued writing. And when I was halfway through part 2, part 3 was forming in my head. It was now that I decided to push the brake into the floormat and stall myself. Part 3 was to be the end. A trilogy. Lord Kharn is killed, Yarrick laid to rest, end of story. The Eds even lose their armour in the end. With that, I left the original Outlaws and wrote the spin-off Number of the ED (NotED), which was based on an old board game by Games Workshop, called Battle for Armageddon. It was now late 2001.

Then something happened, that can be seen in my stories: September 11th. In an instant, my outlook on life, which insofar had been quite optimistic, changed to a much more cynic and sarcastic view. This can actually be seen in how I write NotED. It's much more violent and the humor is toned down. I dare say that NotED is much more mature than the original series.

It should be noted, that there was nearly a year in between the completion of series 3 and NotED, time which I used to draw and write Scrambled EDs and Dark Side of EDD. Two stories that also have a very dark theme, but with an element of humour to them. True, NotED has humorous scenes, but the overall tone is very bleak.

NotED was also the first fic in which some of my characters started to "write themselves". And more and more easter eggs from the real world people and places started to show up.

After NotED was complete, I had planned out the rough on Track of the Wolf and Memories, and a completely new scifi project of mine, called N-SGI (Neo-Sovietic Galactic Imperium), a project still on hiatus, mostly because I can't make the politics in it work as believably as I have in the Space Outlaws.

That's when Max Jordan contacted me. He explained to me that he didn't think the Space Outlaw series was complete at all. It felt wrong, he said, that McGranth, McKenzie and Charleston were still on Earth and that we'd never got to see what they really could do in a battle. I told him that fair is fair; if he had a good idea for a fourth series I'd be happy to read a synopsis of it. And he wrote one. And I read it. I suggested a few modifications (he took my criticism quite well, claiming I had final say as the original creator). But the overall theme appealed to me quite a deal. We had some mails to each other about how we should go about it all. He sent me the rough for the first chapter. When I saw it was written in movie-script form (a form I have trouble with reading because it doesn't work for short stories, IMHO) I suggested (rather unsuspecting, I should say) that if he wrote the original script in movie-script form, I could edit it into "real" novel form. Said and done. He wrote a total of nine chapters, which I edited into ten, final, chapters. We kept in contact during the work process and had a, in my opinion, equal relationship. I always saw this as a COLLABORATION project. We did just as much, both of us.

It was in March 2002 that I finished the first chapter of what was to become the Outlaws' greatest adventure ever. More than four years later (with a two year hiatus because of total "writer's block" on my behalf...) it is complete. You've just read it.

The Iron Men (as the series 4 got known) took a lot of time from me, time I wouldn't change for anything. It even took time from my own project Tracks of the Wolf, which I intend to finish now :D

Max and I have managed to agree on most things (small tiff during the final battle, hence the alternate ending solution), our own original characters (mine being McKenzie, McGranth and Charleston and his being Masterson, Tanya and Demontfurt) meshing more or less seamlessly with the original Eds and co.

There have also been some misunderstandings between each other. As noted above, the climatic battle between Tanya and Rolf and Metallix, but also a much more humorous one. When I put together the armament of my characters, I try to keep it "rules orthodox" in terms of WH40K. So, I called the flamer May Kanker was going to use a Brazier of Fire (Sister of Battle relic according to the Codex: Witch Hunters). Max misunderstood this and thought I was going to dress May in a bra shooting flames. Hilarious if she'd actually worn one! Though kind of impractical.

Perhaps I should mention the origins of Necrons? Yes, I will. Usually, I've been pretty reluctant to enter new species into the Outlaw series. Apart from the ever present Imperial heretics, there's Eldar (two kinds), the Hive Mind and the Orks. I've deliberately chosen to not include the newer Necrons

and Tau. The Necrons made a small appearance in NotED, but I never intended them to become a force unto themselves. When Max wrote the Imperium was to be invaded by robots, my will to keep it WH40K-inspired led me to use the (newly released and updated) Necrontyr. More so, their godlike "masters" the C'tan would make perfect antagonists (Damion and Metallix) but also deities for the Outlaw series (The Emperor himself being a "renegade" C'tan). The opportunity to explain Humanity's origin with this link was too tempting to ignore. I wove the Necrons into the weave of the Space Outlaw universe and the rest is history. Although myself being a Darwinian and not religious in any way, I here presented a truly Creationist, if very bleak, explanation to the origins of humans. And I made it believable, I hope. Quite a challenge, I must say.

Oh and each chapter title is actually the title of a heavy metal song. Can you place them all? :P

So, maybe now I should explain where my characters come from, as Max have gone through his.

Grand Commander Edgar "Eddie" McGranth: The stubborn, but noble, commander of the Death Angel's Space Marine Legion. He started out as Eddy's physical counterpart, but his character is a far cry from Eddy's self-serving arrogance. McGranth has his two feet firmly planted on the ground and knows there's 100 cents to a credit. He acts according to the Adeptus Astartes Codex of Honour, and nothing could make him break his sacred vow to the Emperor. He is, however, stubborn. If he sets his sights on a goal, he's not going to let go of it that easily. McGranth calls it to persevere. Whatever it is, it has made him one of the best tacticians in the Imperium. To McGranth, there is no such thing as acceptable losses. This is why he's so loved by his men.

Eisenhower proved a great inspiration for him. With a little bit of Patton.

Lieutenant Commander Edmund "Ed" Charleston: Probably the fiercest warrior the Imperium has. As commander for the 8th Assault company, he carries a dark legacy; the 8th was once commanded by none other than Kevin Poole, also known as Lord Kevlinn; probably the only one to ever match Charleston in fierceness. Charleston was originally much like Ed, but had a brain. Where McGranth is a tactician of armies, Charleston's strengths lie in making quick, apt assessments on the fly in the field of battle and applying pressure where needed. If McGranth has learned to use a sledge like a scalpel, Charleston knows how to use a scalpel as a sledge. In that way they compliment each other very well. McGranth has been known to bow to Charleston's "battle-hunches" on more than one occasion. Charleston is also practically impervious to pain, something he shares with Ed. Charleston is also the biggest Marine to ever have lived with his 2m40 and nearly 180 kilos of muscle and bone.

Can anybody here say Conan the Barbarian? Or Rambo?

Master Lexicanum Edward McKenzie: The most powerful battle psyker in the Imperium since the Emperor himself walked amongst humans. Not really a Space Marine (but a mutant), he doesn't really feel the same bond to his legion as his two friends, but his loyalty to the Throne is beyond question. McKenzie has actually few things in common with Edd, apart from looks. Whereas Edd's morals are unshakeable, McKenzie has a more pragmatic view on ethics. If it can serve the betterment of the Imperium, he'll do it. It's by the Emperor's Grace he's still alive and he tries to repay his debt with every action. This makes McKenzie scarier than his two companions and adds to his mystery. He needs one, as we know what's under HIS hat ;) Still McKenzie is a polite man who seldom loses his temper, a direct consequence of being a psyker as heated emotions attract deamons. Another difference between McKenzie and Edd is that McKenzie wasn't an only child. But that story is to be retold elsewhere.

So, how much more Merlin can you get? Or maybe a bit of Gandalf and Saruman in the same bloke?

Commissar General Rolf Yarrick: The Deamon Slayer. The child of destiny. The wolf child that was to kill Kharn, scourge of the Imperium. A character who reoccurs just as often as the sword he wielded. Rolf Yarrick started out as quite a bit like Rolf, but became a seperate character as time went by, even when he was part of cul-de-sac Rolf. Yarrick was much more serious and less happy-go-lucky. Not at all as naive as cul-de-sac Rolf. And nowhere near as a fiery temperament. A cool, honorable man. However, when Yarrick got angry, it was well-merited. His progression as a character can be seen in Tracks of the Wolf, from pristine and pure razor to finely honed blade. When the Eds first meet him, he's the razor: driven by his one desire of revenge. The next time he appears, he's technically dead and reanimated in cul-de-sac Rolf's body and actually a whole 'nuther person: calmer, less fiery and even more determined. He still has revenge on his mind, but it goes hand in hand with a desire to protect those he holds dear. All the while, Rolf Yarrick was fighting the one thing his Uncle Caspar never told him about: his Inner Wolf, the Yarrick family curse and blessing; the thing that kept him alive and destroyed him at the same time. His inborn savage will to fight and kill.

Yarrick drew heavily upon Siegfried Drachentöter (in the Niebelungen saga) and also King Arthur. The constantly reoccurring Yarrick Sword can be compared with Excalibur.

There you have it. As much dirt I can give you on the Outlaws right now. Can't give you any more. I might spoil coming stories. ::hintint::

Keep an eye out, is all I say. I have overcome my writer's block and I am far from done with the Space Outlaws.

PS Easter Egg list for those who can't bother to look themselves:

1. McKenzie living on Howard Street (head writer Jono Howard on EEnE)
2. Farseer Uryanaar's reply to Masterson's question about Life, the Universe and Everything... 42 (Douglas Adams' Hitchhiker series)
3. May's total freakout in the end; "We're finished!" (Red Dwarf series 8)
4. The Thunderhawk Night Hawk (The call name of Renée Artois in 'Allo 'Allo)
5. Cameos of Commissar Ibram Gaunt and Commissar Delane Oktar (Dan Abnett's Gaunt's Ghosts)
6. The Land Raider Julius (Roman Emperor Julius Caesar)
7. McKenzie's Eldar language (Bastardized Quenya from Tolkien's LotR)
8. The skirmish battle in Hades Hive (From Samurai Jack's debut movie, where he singlehandedly fights an army of beetle drones)