

# Planet 37 Battle for Earth

A Novel

Scott R. Campbell

**SCOTT R.  
CAMPBELL**

**Planet 37 Battle for Earth**



Cover

Also by Scott R. Campbell

*Alien Secrets and the Path to Ascension*

## ABOUT SCOTT R. CAMPBELL



Scott R. Campbell serves readers as the author of dozens of summary books, audiobooks, hundreds of blogs, and full-length books.

He earned a biology degree, Summa Cum Laude; a physiology degree; and a doctorate from prestigious universities. Tops among his signature skills is his ability to recognize intricate patterns that oversee various fields and this led to a career in fiction writing.

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## COYOTES PROWL THE NIGHT

"It's your lucky day. Five-thousand dollars each, amigos, for a piece of America."

The stinking Coyote said through scarred and split lips.

Mateo's father pulled off his belt that had zippered pockets and with shaking hands gave the Coyote \$20,000.

"Do have any more in there?"

"No, nothing."

"Then you won't mind if I take it."

The Coyote snatched the belt and looked inside. It was empty but he kept it anyway.

"You have a fifteen-mile walk across the desert, so don't carry too much other than food and water. Stand over there with the others and keep your mouths shut. If you have any complaints contact the Better Business Bureau."

He and the other Coyotes laughed.

"Your daughter is pretty, how old is she?"

"Eleven." Mateo's father lied.

"She looks older than that."

Mateo, his mother, and his younger sister followed his father as the sun set and waited for another Coyote to tell them to start walking.

After three days of hiking, in the middle of the night, his family crossed the border in a remote location and climbed into a long white passenger van with darkly tinted windows. Two brawny and well-armed men strolled up and down the aisle.

"Where are we going?" Mateo's father asked.

"Our center, to check you in and get you jobs and a place to live."

"How far is it?"

"It's far, out of town. We keep it secret."

After about an hour's drive, Mateo saw a gate up ahead with a guard tower on either side. Barbed wire enclosed the gate area and surrounding desert. The guards carried rifles. His father frowned amid perspiration dripping from his forehead. The driver stopped at the gate and talked briefly with a guard and drove through. After a few turns, Mateo focused in on a large, very dark, tunnel up ahead leading into mountains. They passed into the tunnel and he could barely make out what was inside. More guards boarded the van, some with pistols drawn, and others with rifles. They began handcuffing the passengers.

"Sorry, amigos, but we have tight security and we must search you for weapons and drugs. Put your hands behind your back. It's for the groups' safety." One man started to stand up to leave, took a rifle butt to his head, and collapsed back into his seat. "Don't be like him! Don't resist!"

When the guards got to Mateo, he looked at his father who nodded but had eyes full of tears. Mateo put his hands behind his back. His wrists hurt already, metal rubbing on bone. He saw his father, mother, and sister cuffed and led out of the van. As soon as they stepped down, the Coyotes shackled their ankles together. All the passengers underwent a humiliating search as the guards took anything of value and placed it in plastic bags. The guard working on his sister, the same one who had asked about her age but came to the center by car, took advantage of the situation to feel her body wherever he wanted, taking his time.

“Hey, what do you think you’re doing, you pervert? Leave her alone! Bastard! She has no weapons or drugs!” Mateo said.

“Shut up or I will shut you up!”

His mother started to cry.

“I think she is much older than eleven, let’s take a better look.” The guard unbuttoned her blouse. The other guards watched and snickered. “Her breasts are big; she is a least thirteen. She can make us good money.”

He started to feel her again. Veronica wanted to at least cuss the man out, to hurt him with words, but thought the better of it, that would reveal that she was older than eleven.

“You son of a bitch! You’ll die for this!” Mateo said.

Mateo broke away from the two guards holding him and rushed towards his sister. He saw his father move forward only to get hit in his face. Mateo hopped towards the guard, planning to bite off his ear. Knocked unconscious at the temple by a rifle butt, Mateo collapsed on the unforgiving concrete floor.

## TRAIN RIDE TO HELL

Mateo awoke on a train in total darkness. His right temple hurt. He found himself still handcuffed, and shackled at the ankles, but now was tethered with a short chain to the train floor. Wall-to-wall people filled the train and his car reeked with the stench of feces and urine. He managed to sit up with his back against the car wall, getting his face away from the soiled floor which could infect his wound.

He could see better from this position. He tried to find someone in his family but couldn't. Mateo had seen other vans in the tunnel and he would guess some of the other would-be immigrants ended up on this train. He hoped his sister was at least surviving, and so were his parents. He heard voices but didn't feel like talking to anyone. Breathing more easily, he called out the names of his family. There was no answer and a deep voice in the darkness said to shut up or the guards would come and beat him and everyone around him.

Mateo traveled for days this way, with no food or water. The train ran in narrow tunnels but occasionally would go through a bigger one. He couldn't see anything else outside the train. He neither saw, nor heard, guards. His estimate ran at three days of travel.

He kept on dreaming of having a face-to-face chat with the Devil who had purple eyes with hour-glass pupils. The Devil's face showed scales. The Devil compressed his temples and read his mind and flipped through his memories one by one until it paused on one. The Devil's pupils dilated, and it drew back, but the dream never completed. He never saw the next image. Mateo woke up, shaking and sweating, gasping for air.

The train stopped.

This nightmare morphed into something worse.

Guards stormed the train cars, released the chains fastened to the car floors, and shoved the passengers into a tunnel seven meters wide and fifteen meters high. The stench in Mateo's train car reeked as horrendous, this tunnel's smell proved to be worse.

Barred cages lined each side of the tunnel so a train could just pass through. The guards pushed Mateo's group into a single large cage, removed the handcuffs and shackles, and locked the sliding door behind them. The enclosure was two meters deep. It ran up against the wall of the tunnel that looked shiny, like a shiny black obsidian. One end of the cage was filled with feces and a horrendous stench.

Mateo could see the same happening with a dozen cars ahead of him and a dozen behind. His eyes adapted to the new level of darkness. The cages extended in both directions as far as the eye could see. He called out the names of his family but a guard immediately came over to him and shocked him with a cattle prod. He held his side, in pain.

An emaciated man approached Mateo.

"A word of advice, my friend. Unless you like pain, don't yell! Don't *do* anything that draws attention."

"I think I got the point."

"How did the capture you?"

"Coyotes put us on that train instead of taking us into San Diego. How did you get here and the others?"

"There are many here like you. Law enforcement doesn't care if you go missing. In fact, some of them may have profited from your crossing. The Coyotes pay them good money so they cross the border easily. Some claim they were abducted by aliens but nobody believes

them. I was homeless and on heroin, and a dealer—not exactly a model citizen. They kidnapped me.”

“I’m Mateo. What’s your name?”

“Skag.”

“Isn’t that slang for heroin? How long have you been here?”

“I’ve been scanned eight times, so two months.”

“Scanned?”

Once a week they scan everyone. They check your ID electronically. I bet you’re thirsty. Hey, Sliver, bring me some water for our new friend, here.”

After four days of no fluids, a few gulps of dirty water from a foul-smelling water bottle hit the spot.

## ABDUCTION

A typical hot and humid night befell Miami. In a high rise on the fourteenth floor, two young boys slept in their bedroom with the sliding doors open to the balcony facing the ocean. Their parents slept in another bedroom.

Sammy woke up to feel a presence in his bedroom. He looked around but saw nothing. He turned over and tried to go back to sleep but couldn't. He thought he saw something out of the corner of his eyes and turned to look. Nothing.

He heard footsteps but saw no one. The door to the bedroom opened slowly.

"Mom, dad?"

He thought he saw something go down the hall towards his parents' room. He turned on the light by the bed, waking his brother.

"What's going on?" Clint asked.

"Our door just opened by itself."

"What?"

"Our door. It just slowly opened by itself."

"Maybe we left it open."

"No, I remember closing it last night. We always close it."

He heard his mom screaming.

"Come on!" Sammy said.

The two boys jumped out of their beds, went through their open door, and rushed down the hallway to their parents' room. Their door was open, too. They went inside. Both their parents lay dead in their bed.

A figure appeared out of nowhere from the darkness. It stood about six feet tall and looked like a lizard, but with a strong humanesque build. Its face was flat. Its piercing purplish eyes scanned the boys.

The boys ran back to their room and closed and locked the door. They pushed a dresser in front of the door. One of them got on the phone to call "911."

"What is your emergency?"

"Our parents have been murdered by a giant lizard!"

"By a what?"

"Never mind, our parents have been murdered!"

"Are you hurt?"

"No."

"We're sending someone right away."

Both boys readied themselves to push against the dresser.

A Grey alien appeared in the room behind them. The boys turned around, saw it, tried to go out on the balcony, but found themselves paralyzed. The bedroom door opened and pushed the dresser out of the way like it was doll furniture. The lizard-creature walked in the bedroom. The two boys became embedded in a beam of light and assumed a horizontal position, one face up, and one face down, and were moved out to the balcony. The boys lost consciousness.

The Grey, the two boys, and the lizard-creature, were all beamed into a waiting spacecraft which disappeared into the night.

The two boys awoke to find themselves naked and shackled to the floor of a stinky, and moving, train car, inside a dark tunnel.



## FIGHTING TO EAT

“Do they feed us?” Mateo asked Skag.

“Kind of. A rationed dinner always comes in the evening. Food here is like a reddish toothpaste. I’m the only one who likes it. Nobody knows what’s in it but it’s just enough to keep you alive. There is no breakfast or lunch. We get occasional bottles of water to share. Some drink urine. Fights always break out at dinner time. Your ration is three tablespoons of red paste that you grab from a tin cup. We line up like beggars. If you don’t push to the front, you don’t eat. The strongest survive—or the best at teamwork. If you want to eat consistently, join our food team. We get our share of food, and there are a lot of us, so we always win a fight. Only Darwin and the Devil live down here, God left long ago.”

“What happens to the people in here?”

“After each scanning, they bring in a train and take a bunch of people away.”

“To where?”

“We don’t know. Guards don’t talk about it under penalty of death. Nobody comes back.”

Mateo noticed people jockeying for position up near the bars. It had to be close to feeding time.

“I’ll show you what to do. Get in between these two fine gentleman and interlock arms at the elbow. They smell, but they don’t bite. We pick a soft spot in the competition, push our way in, and form a semi-circle, with the flat part opening to the bars. We put our strongest on the ends to grab the bars and hold on. The next guys grab those guys and so on. We put our best fighters on the outside. Then we form another semicircle inside of the first. Only our teammates get in or out to get food. The bot will shock you if you try and get food twice. Guys that get food eat it quickly on their way out and then fill back in on the outside. The team shuffles to the side along with the bot.”

“What bot?”

“You’ll see. Don’t forget to grab a cup for yourself. Eat it right away before someone steals it from you.”

“Hey everybody, this is Mateo. He’s on the team!”

“Got it. Good luck, Dude!”

“Welcome! Fight like you have a good reason to live.”

*I’ve got three.* Mateo thought.

“Dinner is served!” Skag said.

Mateo ended up the second man back on the right side, perfect to see the food action, if he looked to his left. The “Food Bot” had multiple arms housed in flexible metallic housing. It rode along the tracks distributing food to both sides. The arms extended themselves into the cages holding a metal cup with food, waited for a taker to scoop up the food with fingers, and then retreated to repeat the process. It was a way to distribute food without risking injury to the guards and without plates, utensils, and waste.

Mateo took a kick to his right hip and looked to his right just in time to duck to avoid a fist to his injured temple. Such an attempt to his aching wound pissed him off. Mateo freed his right arm from his teammate, coiled back his elbow and let it fly, knocking the assailant in his nose and pushing out blood. Mateo took advantage of his opponent’s demise to motion to Skag to come inside the semi-circle and—at the same time—reached back to his left to grab food. He cupped the paste into his mouth and nearly vomited.

*We are fighting over this?* Mateo thought. *I'd rather starve or be shot.*

Skag snatched his food, downed it like it was chocolate pudding, and wiggled past Mateo to take a position where he would let teammates in. Anyone Skag let in, Mateo would let in. Anyone Skag fought, Mateo would fight, most often kicking them with one or both feet, propping himself up on his teammates to get extra range. His team shuffled along in pace with the robot and most everyone had grabbed a cup.

The feed ended.

"Okay, guys, chill out, no more food coming." Skag said to everyone.

As Skag started to high-five his teammates, he took a sucker punch from an adversary he had beaten back. Skag fell to the floor. The attacker kicked Skag in the stomach and was about to kick him in the face so Mateo acted quickly. As the man pulled back his leg, Mateo rushed in to kick the man's leg backward, throwing his balance off and giving Mateo an opportunity to throw a punch that landed on the cheek. One problem: the blow didn't seem to do much damage but at least it knocked him away from Skag.

*Great.* Mateo thought. *That punch would have decked most opponents.*

The man took a swing at Mateo but he ducked in time. Another swing, another duck, another miss. Mateo punched him in the temple and then the ribs, but still didn't slow him down.

Both sides started to jump in but the man's leader motioned his team back, so Skag did the same. They would let the two men finish it off. They formed a ring around them so it would be hard for the guards to see anything clearly, cheering for their teammate.

The man who attacked Skag looked clearly stronger, but Mateo proved himself quicker and with more technique and moves. After about five minutes, Mateo didn't even seem winded and had suffered few punches. The big man could barely breathe. Mateo would be the victor unless his opponent got lucky on one of his wild swings. In desperation, the man pulled out a stone dagger and came at Mateo who moved laterally to get just the right angle. Mateo then grabbed the man's hand that held the dagger with both of his hands and twisted upward as hard as he could. The man winced and dropped the weapon as Mateo pulled him backward to trip him and spun to choke him from behind. Mateo proceeded to strangle him, pulling him to the ground.

"Tap out or die." The man wisely tapped out. "You smell worse than I do. Keep away from me and my team if you want to live another day in paradise."

"You saved me a week of headaches and some teeth" Skag said, shaking Mateo's bloody hand. "Where did you learn how to fight like that?"

"I grew up in the streets of San Salvador and they put me in *juvy* a few times for defending myself or family. You learn to fight, and how to hurt people, or you die."

## SCAN AND TRANSPORT

The scanning cars came through the tunnel and cast red light beams into every cage like they were pricing groceries.

A new type of train pulled up twenty minutes later. No windows, and at first looks, it looked like it had no doors. The entire sides opened upward and rolled over the top of the car. Mateo noticed there were no hooks or fasteners anywhere in the car. The walls, floor, and ceiling looked perfectly smooth, even slippery.

Two dozen guards came to Mateo's cage.

"It's medical examination day, amigos. Don't ask questions. Don't say anything. Take off all your clothes. When we open the doors climb into the train car and sit down or you will be shot and thrown in. Don't be shy. Clothes off. Your stinking clothes will be here when you get back."

Armed guards stood on both sides of the train with rifles ready. They only opened one cage and train car at a time. Attempts at escape were futile, and escape to where—another part of the tunnel?

Mateo and his cage-mates took off their clothes. The guards slid the cage door open and the prisoners moved into the train car. One man started running away and promptly collapsed with two bullets in his back—destined to bleed out without care. Two guards pulled his body back to the car and tossed him into the train.

Mateo sat down as instructed, just one meter from the dying man. The doors rolled down to seal the car into complete darkness. He could hear sounds of cage doors opening and closing, and train doors closing and locking, and occasional shouting and gunshots

He felt a warm liquid on his buttocks and thighs. He smelled urine but it was farther away. It must be blood. Mateo scooted away from the sensation, but it followed him until he decided to stand and walk away.

"Clear!"

"Clear!"

"Go!"

Mateo's car squeaked itself into a slow movement and accelerated gradually, eventually reaching a deafening speed on ancient tracks.

He did his best to ignore the sobs and crying. The noise of the train muffled them into a strange remoteness even though they came from all around him.

The long train made one sharp, slow turn, after thirty minutes, and stopped. The doors opened and guards ordered everyone out and to slide down the steep metal embankment next to the tracks. He heard more gunshots and screams further down along the tracks.

Mateo exited the train and peered over the edge. He saw people in the darkness at the bottom. A guard pushed Mateo from behind with his rifle, sending him tumbling and spinning into the darkness. He landed on top of several people, and quickly made his way away from the slide but immediately ran into a steep wall.

"Follow the crowd and don't talk," a guard said from atop the wall as he pointed his rifle at Mateo and motioned him to move.

Mateo saw many guards on top of the wall. More people slid down from above in front of him and began their death march. Mateo heard screams in the distance. Some people stopped to listen, or to try to turn around, but were ordered to walk or die. Most walked, others took

bullets to their heads. The tunnel became more crowded until Mateo found himself pushed along by the mass of naked people. He heard heavy equipment and a big diesel engine.

“Bulldozer, they’ve got a bulldozer!”

The high-pitched screaming got louder and closer. Mateo managed to wiggle free and jump up to look behind him. He could see a metal plate, three meters high pushing on the crowd from behind. He heard the bulldozer engine behind it. From the pressure from both ends, the bulldozer to the back, and the crowd trying to turn back at the front, a solidified blob of terrified people moved inch by inch towards their fate.

Guards fired into the crowd at anybody who moved in the wrong direction. The dead bodies made it even harder to move.

Mateo looked up at the guards to try and avoid their shootings but discovered a different type of guard perched just behind them and up a few feet in command modules in the darkness.

They weren’t human! With watermelon-sized heads of a greyish color and elongated and slanted eyes, and with no hint of ears, or mouth or nose, for that matter, they sat and ran instrument panels just by touch. Red scans would blanket the crowd everything twenty seconds. Judging by the size of their heads and torso, Mateo estimated they were two meters tall. They were extremely skinny and obviously the ones in charge.

One Grey noticed Mateo and looked at him. Mateo felt its gaze penetrate his brain. It instantly knew everything about him. An image flashed about the Devil. He remembered the dreams about staring the Devil in the eyes. The Grey made some hand gestures and a tall, dark figure with broad shoulders came to the alien’s side. Mateo could make out shiny eyes but not much else, it was too dark. It had to be a meter taller than the Grey. It moved forward slowly into the light to reveal more of its face, an evil-looking hideous creature that projected the image of a reptile rather than a Grey or human. It looked towards Mateo, but he looked away, and ducked down into the crowd. Guards pointed their guns at Mateo but only to follow him with their scopes, not shoot him.

Mateo crouched down to all fours and crawled towards the end of the line rather than away from it, hoping to fool the guards and the two aliens.

He cowered, hidden, at the end of the line where the screaming reached a feverish pitch. People were pushed off the edge and fell, screaming, into a grinding machine, blood spraying in all directions. He followed the outgoing flow of fluids down different clear tubes in the factory. The end products started to take the form of the red food paste and a liquid resembling thickened human blood. He became sick to his stomach.

Moving back away from the food grinder promised a bullet to the frontal or occipital lobe. Escape would be impossible.

Staying put promised a push over the edge into heart of the grinder to suffer a painful death and become food.

Something about his mind had caught the aliens’ attention. He had flashed about looking into the eyes of the tall creature. The Grey had called it over to investigate.

Mateo had no choice but to stand up and gaze directly at the slimy Grey and the terrifying lizard. The guards moved to get him in their scopes but no shots rang out.

Mateo froze as the two aliens penetrated his brain and searched its images as if in a deep trance.

The crowd pushed him closer to the edge. Mateo could not move but he could see. He got even closer and looked over the edge out of the corner of his eye towards the gigantic meat grinder, about three meters below.

He crossed over the edge and tried to scream but could not. He opened his mouth but no sound came out.

Mateo did not fall. He floated instead as a light beam engulfed him from above and flipped him upside down. Paralyzed and moving away from the edge, he gently started to move upward. Although positioned upside down, he saw the lizard creature jump from its position above and open primitive looking wings that had no feathers. The wings spread five meters across. The scaled beast came down with just a few flaps and grabbed Mateo by his ankles.

Mateo's birds eye view of the factory proved even more terrifying because he could see its full scale. There had to be two thousand naked people forced into the horrid execution that would end with the meat grinder. A multitude of clear pipes and tubes led from the grinder area to hundreds of feeding stations for Greys of all sizes. They would sit, plug in, fill their skins and suits with the fresh nutrients within seconds, charge up until they flashed a bright red, and then rotate away back into the dark tunnels from which they had come.

The huge lizard took Mateo to an isolated area on the factory floor where a security team of humans and a Grey awaited him. It plopped him down from about one meter in the air and stood nearby, an imposing figure at three meters high. Mateo avoided its piercing gaze.

## DRACONIAN MIND MELD

The guards latched onto Mateo and shackled him atop a metal table about a meter high. Two guards remained and the Grey joined them. The rest hustled off towards the center of the factory. Mateo looked for other Greys in the darkness, and more gigantic lizards.

Mateo shook and sweat. He heard the meat grinder and the diesel engine of the bulldozer chugging away clearly and the constant screaming. He wondered if the food processor was a better death than being ripped apart by a lizard that looked like a demon.

The Draconian lizard walked over suddenly to position itself directly in front of Mateo, gripped his temples, and brought his eyes close into to Mateo's. The beast stank like rotten trash. The tall Grey stepped in close to assist in the mind meld, his big eyes blinking at Mateo incessantly with its spooky head tilted towards its left side.

Mateo was forced to look into the hour-glass pupils and purple irises and entered a trance state. The mini dragon read his every memory from a baby to the present and its emotional valence, including dreams. Mateo re-experienced the same memories as the beast read them and saw dreams that had lay hidden deep in his psyche.

Dragon-brain fast-forwarded to his recent memories and dreams. The images showed armies of war robots in the tunnels. They showed them killing Greys and Draconians and freeing humans. Then the images showed Mateo interrogated by the Draconian and one of the guards killing the other guard and a Grey and shooting the Draconian in the head.

The Draconian's eyes widened and the beast pulled back. These images had shattered the trance. Mateo heard real explosions nearby and the sound of gunfire. The bulldozer diesel and the meat grinder engine made no sound. The lighting in the tunnel brightened.

One of the guards fired his rifle to quickly kill the other guard and the Grey. The shooter turned his fire on the Draconian's head, drawing blood as it flew away erratically and emitting a most terrifying screech. More shots rang out all around Mateo. He saw other guards tumbling to the floor, wounded or dead.

"Hold still!"

The guard shot the padlock to the shackles between his legs and told Mateo to follow him. They moved away from the firefight until they encountered a group of US soldiers. Mateo's companion raised up his hand, showed his ID, and shared a code word. Mateo received a blanket to wear. They were escorted to stand by empty train tracks and two soldiers remained close by.

"I'm American Special Forces. My name is Frank. All hell is going to break loose today. You must be important for an alien dragon to play patty-cake with your brain."

"It was my memories, my dream, they noticed it when I was about to be ground up."

"That's so bizarre. My orders were to track Draconians undercover and rescue civilians. I saw that one carrying you and made my move. You got relatives in here?"

"I think my parents and maybe my sister."

"If everything goes right, we will get *everyone* out safely. We've already secured the train route into the food processor and should be able to evacuate civilians into a safe zone soon. If your relatives are still alive, they should be included. They are setting up a system to reunite families as they feed everyone and give them medical care."

"Fantastic!" Mateo was near tears.

"Stand back, here comes the train."

A flying Battle Orb, two-and-one-half meters in diameter, led a fifty-five-car train which began to slow to a stop at the end of the line. As the train slowed, three short gun barrels emerged from the Battle Orb in a cluster and fired single particle beam shots towards the ceiling.

Three tall Greys dropped, from the ceiling to the floor, heads mangled, bodies lifeless.

"God damn spies" Frank said. "We failed to detect them, or they just came in the last few minutes. They're like ants, they're everywhere."

The train proved to have a mixture of types of cars but cars most had seats filled with human soldiers. Cars with no regular doors carried crates, boxes and dark silver war robots who immediately deployed themselves in an orderly fashion towards the fighting at the factory center, most of them flying in a horizontal position with one arm extended, one by its side, both arms ready to shoot at the enemy. They flew in perfect formation. Some positioned themselves along the train cars. Two cars without regular doors opened to release six Battle Orbs which zipped off towards the food factory.

"Jesus. That was just like an *Iron Man* movie!" What's that in the front?"

"An Orbellian Battle Orb. We should be glad they are on our side. They are quite powerful and nearly impossible to shoot down. The Battle Orb will stay there to guard the train."

"This must be our youngest hero!" A decorated officer approached.

"It certainly is. His name is Mateo. I'm Frank Rodriguez of Special Services."

"My pleasure, and thanks, Mr. Rodriguez, for a job well done. I'm Lieutenant Colonel Raskins, United States Air Force." The men shook hands and the Colonel shook Mateo's hand.

"I bet you have quite a story to tell, young man."

"Yes, I do."

"You will get your chance in the media, believe me. You will be famous."

"I just want to find my family."

"Understood. We will fill this train with civilians. Start out in car number two for your check-up and hit car three for decent bathroom, portable shower, and clothes. Cars four, five, and six have food. Our data base will help hook you up with your family."

"Thank you so much, Colonel."

"No one else has looked a Draconian in the face that close and lived--most have been eaten alive. We have your encounter on film, I watched it twice already! You scared the Draconian. Nobody scares a Draconian! How did you do that?"

"It read my dream of it getting shot in its head—which came true."

"I will make sure Alma hears about you. You will be processed in Las Vegas. Call the number on this card and I will set you and your family up with lodging and food."

"Thank you, Colonel!" Mateo watched the colonel walk away.

'Who's Alma?'

"She's the most popular media person for Orb Corp." Frank said. 'She's got this show called Orbellian Files that everyone is watching.'"