

ZEE JUNIOR HIGH

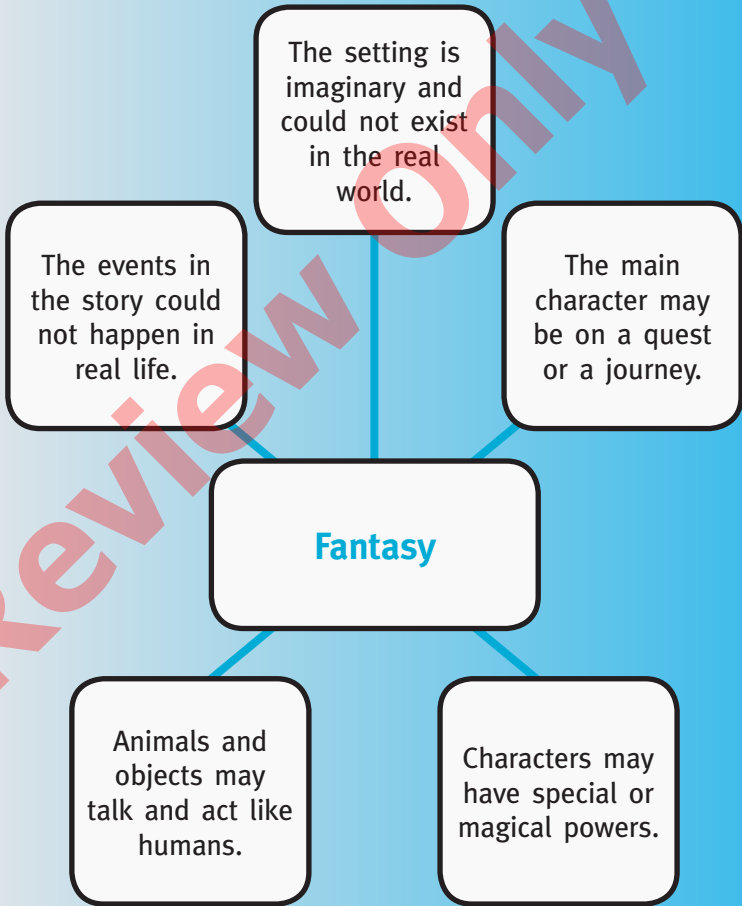
Zapto's Revenge

by Nicholas De Libero • illustrated by Ryan Wheatcroft



Fantasy

Look for the genre features noted below as you read this book. Use the features to help you understand the text.



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Zee Junior High



“Detention, Boom Boy!”

The class clown was at it again. This time, he had used his superpowers to change Little X-Ray’s voice into a high-pitched squawk.

“He started it,” answered Boom Boy. “He made fun of my sister. Besides, he sounded like a parrot even *before* I changed his voice.”

The class erupted with laughter.

“That’s enough!” hollered Professor Zee, the headmaster of the school.

Zee Junior High was a special school for superheroes in training. Students at this school learned how to hone, or perfect, their skills.

Boom Boy could manipulate sound waves. But he too often used his powers to pull pranks.

“Why can’t you behave more like your sister?” asked Professor Zee.

Boom Boy was the troublemaker. His sister, Opti-Gal, was the nice one. She always got good grades but was incredibly shy. She hardly talked to any other students.

Opti-Gal could control light waves and project laser beams from her eyes. However, she was not able to control her powers as well as the other students. She'd blink and a lightbulb would explode. One time she was daydreaming, staring out the window. Before she knew it, she'd **decimated** the entire classroom wall.

Down the hall in the science lab, Opti-Gal was in the middle of giving a presentation. Well, her lips were moving at least.

"You'll need to speak louder," said the teacher, Dr. Ice. "We can't hear you over here."

"Energy ... exists in ... many forms," she whispered. Her voice cracked.



“Come on, Opti-Gal. Let it out,” said Dr. Ice.

The note cards Opti-Gal had prepared dropped from her trembling hands, and then laser beams shot out of her eyes. A computer exploded in the back of the room, and a few chairs **disintegrated**. Clouds of smoke filled the air.

“I’m ... I don’t know how ...” she said, embarrassed. “Sorry?”

Dr. Ice emerged from hiding behind her desk. “I’m very disappointed by this destructive behavior,” she said, taking a long pause. “You just got yourself detention. You’ll have to stay at school this afternoon and miss the class trip.”



The school was quiet that Friday afternoon. Everyone had left for a field trip to the Superhero Cape Museum. Opti-Gal and Boom Boy walked into the library, where detention was held.

“Never thought I’d be sharing detention with you, goody-goody,” joked Boom Boy. “This calls for a family photo!” he said, grabbing his cell phone.

“Voices down,” beeped Jargon, the robot monitor. He had been in charge of detention since the school opened twenty years ago. He was programmed to organize the library bookshelves at rapid speed.

The door screeched open and in walked Elemento, an eleven-year-old whose backpack was almost as big as he was.



“That kid never gets in trouble!” Boom Boy whispered to his sister. “All he does is study. His special power is controlling water waves or something.”

Elemento sat at the far end of the library table and unpacked his book bag. He was almost as shy as Opti-Gal.

“How did you end up here?” asked Opti-Gal.

Elemento turned red and then stared down at his book. “Accidentally,” he whispered. “One second I was behind Bobcat at the water fountain reading my favorite book, *Advances in Water Science*, and the next second water was bursting out everywhere.”

Like Opti-Gal, Elemento had trouble focusing his own powers. He would avoid swimming in gym class and would never go to the nearby lake for fear of causing a small-scale tsunami.

“Let’s just get today over with, huh?” said Elemento. He turned his back to them and started reading.

Opti-Gal glanced up at the clock. Only a half hour of detention had passed. Boom Boy began squirming in his seat. He was drumming on the table. Loud, steady bangs began to vibrate through the air. It sounded like a deep bass and a rattling snare drum.

“I can’t take this anymore!” he said and stood up to stretch his legs. Just then, a **blaring** noise echoed from the school’s loudspeakers.

“ALERT! ALERT! The school’s force field has been hacked!” buzzed Jargon. He projected a **hologram** map of the school’s campus on the wall. The three students could see several red dots circling around one part of the map.

“Someone has broken into the training lab!” Elemento shouted.

The training lab was located on a tiny island in the middle of the school’s lake. It housed the students’ armor, gadgets, antigravity bikes, and secret potions. Who would be trying to break in?

“Well, don’t just sit there,” babbled Jargon. “I see three superkids. Do something super. NOW!”

Elemento began to shake. His palms were sweaty and his lips trembled. “It’s ... It’s ... really up to us?” he stuttered.

“Us?” asked Opti-Gal.

“Us!” said Boom Boy, with a glow in his eyes.

