BOT By Melvin Fenwick

It is the golden age of space exploration! After a tenacious war, humanity has prevailed over the dreaded insectoid Tak'li, and befriended the peaceful reptilian Gek to build a utopian empire spanning the entire galaxy. Prosperity abounds, as the humans exploit the resources of millions of new worlds. In this time of space exploration, there are Tak'li pirates to combat, Gek diplomatic missions to escort, and rich new planets to colonize!

But that isn't your story...in fact, you aren't even human.

Deep in the bowels of countless human ships are the drones of manual labor: Robots who serve at human whim, ensuring the meat-bag masters enjoy a life of luxury and opulence. Keeping the gears of the mighty human empire turning is hard and hazardous work. That's where you come in.

Roles:

Bot is a role playing game revolving around puzzle solving, comedy, and shenanigans. Each player is a robot built for specialized tasks aboard a human spaceship. Running a ship requires great effort. There will be repairs to make, systems to operate, and code to debug. Bots are expected to perform at a high level of efficiency. Cog it up, and you will be cleaning latrines...or sent to recycling.

One player coordinates the game, and takes on the role of the ship's artificially intelligent super computer, known as the Bot Operations and Service System (BOSS). The BOSS player interprets the rules, provides game description, and brings to life the other Bots, Meat-bags, Roaches, or Geckoes you encounter. All these encounters occur on the metropolis which is your ship. Alive with activity, bots dart about on highways attempting to get to their assigned tasks, only to be thwarted by traffic jams, wrong turns, or worse; A run in with back-alley bots, living off the grid and looking for ways to liberate you of your cubes ("Wrong neighborhood, college boy!"). Amid the chaos of unruly bots, and a buzzing metropolis, the BOSS's job is to ensure the ship runs smoothly by assigning the other players daily jobs. The BOSS should encourage other players to use their personalities to create as much chaos possible, the goal being to create a game which strains the imagination, challenges the intellect, encourages creativity, and most of all produces wacky robot hijinks.

Building your Bot:

Step one: Pick a Bot model from four specialized models. All bots have sensory systems and a means of mobility, but otherwise if its not listed (such as hands), you don't have it. It's up to you to creatively use what you have to get the assigned job done!

Dozers are Bots built for power. They lift, open, and move heavy objects...or break things if the need arises. They come equipped with: Hands, a pry bar, and a winch.

Processors are thinkers and problem solvers. They can reprogram broken code, or out think the local AIs of various systems. They come equipped with: Hands, a communication system (to talk to a meat-bag, or radio in to the BOSS), and a computer interface port (to hack or use a computer).

Overseers are Bots in charge of local security and operations. They can redirect traffic routes, obtain proper clearance for secure areas, and administer lethal force. They come equipped with: Security codes (you must find the right one out of millions), signaling devices (flags, lights, etc), and a laser.

Techs are Bots that maintain all mechanical and electrical systems. They come equipped with: A multi-tool arm (with nearly any tool imaginable), a welder/cutter, and duct tape dispenser unit.

Step two: Build stats. Each Bot model has a factory default profile (see below). The stats are Brawn, Brain, Security, and Repair. The number on each stat represents the number of dice a Bot will use to make a test. You get two extra points to add to any stat(s) you choose.

Dozers: Brawn 2, Brain 0, Security 1, and Repair 1
Processors: Brawn 0, Brain 2, Security 1, and Repair 1
Overseers: Brawn 1, Brain 1, Security 2, and Repair 0
Techs: Brawn 1, Brain 1, Security 0, and Repair 2

Step three: Define your personality. Most Bots are dumb automated machines. To help you make informed decisions the BOSS has granted you a measure of artificial intelligence, which will often manifest a pronounced personality trait. Each player is given a random trait chosen from the following list: Jubilant, Surly, Persistent, Cowardly, Optimistic, Rude, Adventurous, Dishonest, Humble, Sarcastic, Obedient, Bossy. A player should do his or her best to express this trait to the fullest.

Challenges:

As you play, the BOSS will tell you the problem you are facing. You and your team must solve it. For example, there is a broken door you must get through. A Tech might attempt to fix it. A Dozer might force it open. A Overseer could blast the door open with its laser. Careful! There may be unseen consequences to your actions (Don't miss, Overseer! Breach the hull and we all die!).

The Brawn stat is used for brute force Challenges, such as breaking things, or moving heavy objects. The Brain stat is used in intelligence or social Challenges, such as finding where errors lie in computer code, or playing a game of holo-chess. The Security stat is used in operational or security Challenges, such as redirecting traffic, or convincing a snooty high-security door that you have clearance to enter. The Repair stat is used for building or repairing various systems, such as unjamming a door, or rewiring an electrical system.

An attempt to solve a Challenge is simply a face to face roll of six sided dice (the d6). The BOSS rolls a number of dice depending on the difficulty of the challenge, while Bots roll a number of dice based on the relevant stat. Any Bot can lend help to another team member, providing he has at least one point in the same stat his friend is using. The helper Bot adds a number of dice to a Challenge equal to half of his relevant stat rounded down. The BOSS is encouraged to give a bonus dice to a Bot for good role playing, clever plans, or indeed any reason it sees fit.

Our door may be so busted up, that it will get 3 dice to resist any attempt to fix it, while a repair stat of 2 gets only 2 dice. A stat of 0 gets no dice to roll (Sorry Processor...you should know nerds can't lift heavy objects). Whoever rolls the highest number on any one dice wins the Challenge and dictates what happens. In the case of a tie, both sides roll again until someone wins.

In the case of combat, a Bot will use Brawn to hit with a hand held object, or Security for a laser. The target normally gets a single die to try to avoid the attack. Any successful hit will put the target out of commission or destroy a piece of equipment (Exact details are dictated by the BOSS).

Rewards:

Each day's work pays a single energy cube. Its your meal ticket, keeping your batteries charged for another day. An exceptionally good job may be rewarded with an extra cube or two. Don't run out or like your battery, you're dead!

Clever Bots have some cubes stashed away for a rainy day. Cubes also work as currency. Enough cubes buy an upgrade. Stat increases cost 5 cubes per point, up to a maximum of 5. 10 cubes buy a piece of equipment from another bot model. Of course there are less ethical ways to upgrade.

A bot will start the game with 1-3 cubes: Roll a d6. Divide by two (round up if needed).