

PARANOIA PARANOIA

CLONES IN SPACE



A **PARANOIA** Misadventure
by Erick Wujcik


WEST
END
GAMES
#80107

PC ROSTER

Name and Important Skills	Mutant Power	Service Group	Secret Society	COMBAT SKILLS*		STATS							
				Melee	Missile	STR	END	AGIL	DEX	MOX	CHTZ	MECH	POW
1. Flashgo-R-DEN-1 Vehicle Op. & Repair	Empathy	PLC	PURGE	23%	28%	9	17	12	9	9	15	11	11
2. Buck-R-GRS-1 Weapon Maintenance	Pyrokinesis	Tech Services	Romantics	28%	50%	13	17	14	15	12	7	11	13
3. Jonk-R-TER-1 Sword	Matter Eater	CPU	Death Leopard	40% / 45%	38%	14	13	17	12	11	9	12	15
4. Kimbalky-R-NSN-1 Vehicle Aimed Wpns.	Telepathic Projection & Sense, Mental Block	PLC	Psion	17%	35%	18	12	8	13	4	13	11	20
5. "Doc" Moe-R-BIS-1 Medical	Advanced Smell	Armed Forces	Pro Tech	42% / 52%	45%	20	15	18	13	4	8	14	9
6. Barb-R-ELA-1 Vehicle Op. & Repair; Robotics	Superior Aptitude	Tech Services	Programs Group	21%	42%	9	12	11	16	12	9	24	8

*The first percentage for melee is for unarmed combat; the second, if listed, is for a melee weapon carried by the character. The percentage for missile combat is for a laser pistol.



BOT ROSTER

Type and Background	Move	Max. Speed	Weapons / To Hit	Armor Equivalent
Guardbots: water-cooler sized; tentacles; small brain; literal programming.	6 wheels	sprint	Blue Laser Rifle / 80% Mace / 80%	Combat Suit
Shuttlebot Vapor-7: yacht-sized; speaks in military jargon.	rockets	incredible	none	Plate
Jackobots: human-sized; humanoid but with waist-jets; argumentative & fanatic.	thrusters	sprint	Hands / 50%	Polished Plate
Spybots: smaller than a fist; high, squeaky voices.	jets	real fast	Shock / 20%	Kevlar
Patrolbots: human-sized; waist-jets; police-state mentality.	thrusters	sprint	Blue Laser Pistol / 80% Club / 75% Gauss Gun / 80%	Combat Suit
Gunbots: large barrel on chassis; cross between a heavy battle tank & underpaid security guard.	jets	sprint	Explosive Shell or huge Particle Beam (damage col. 18) / 50%	Combat Suit
Wallbots: fixed to wall; friendly, enjoy conversation.	none	standing still	Laser Cannon I / 85%	Combat Suit
Scrapbots: weasel-sized, weasel-shaped; packrat personalities.	jets	sprint	Claws (damage col. 5) / 30%	Chain



AMUSING FAILURE TABLE

Pilot

- 1-2 **Vehicle keeps on going straight:** Wherever that is.
- 3 **Vehicle turns and heads straight for Platform 743-AZ:** Pilot must make another desperate roll to avoid collision.
- 4 **Vehicle starts spinning around like a top:** No one can fire until this condition is corrected. Each character in the vehicle must make a 3D10 moxie check to avoid nausea.
- 5 **If any other vehicle (friendly or alien) is nearby, vehicle veers and smashes into it:** Roll damage for both.
- 6-7 **Vehicle stalls:** A successful electronic engineering roll is necessary to get the engine started again.
- 8 **Vehicle stops dead, then starts backing up:** A successful piloting roll is needed to get it heading in the right direction again.
- 9 **Vehicle drives directly for the alien ship:** Pilot must make another roll to avoid collision.
- 10 **Vehicle flips over and heads in opposite direction.**

Gunner

- 1-6 **Miss.**
- 7 **Gun jams:** A successful vehicle maintenance roll is necessary to get it working (or, if you just want to pound at it, make a 4D10 strength roll to get it moving again).
- 8 **Hit a friendly craft.**
- 9 **Hit Platform 743-AZ:** Azie-Comp fires at this pie fighter next round.
- 10 **Gun explodes:** Roll for the pie fighter on column 7 of the Damage Table; if it suffers a "wound" or worse result, the cabin depressurizes — explosively — and anyone inside is dead. Otherwise, roll for the gunner on column 7; for everyone else in the craft, on column 5.



PARANOIA

CLONES IN SPACE

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Your Friend and Mine



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Space

Farflung stars. Spaceships battling silently across the void, desperately accelerating, energy beams hurtling soundlessly through space.

Alien races far beyond human conception. First contact with extraterrestrial intelligence. The histories, arts, and sciences — whole cultures — of other races.

Splendored vistas of new planets. The spirit of human discovery. The thrill of exploration.

A universe of energy and dead matter, waiting to be transformed into usefulness. A wealth of resources to enrich all humanity.

New frontiers, new minds, new experiences — a universe so vast it dwarfs all human aspiration.

Wonder. Awe at creation. The quiet rapture of scientific discovery.

Get serious. This is **PARANOIA**.

Art vs. Schlock

Whaddaya think this is, some kinda artsy-fartsy game where we try to, like, enrich your souls with sublime poetry, or stuff like that? Give us a break — you want that kinda stuff, read Proust.

No, **PARANOIA** is different. In the inimitable words of the venerable Ford, **PARANOIA** has a light, humorous tone, occasionally ascending to the dramatic aspirations of very cheesy science fiction flicks with profoundly modest production values.

No, **Clones In Space** gives you no startling speculation, no well-realized, scientifically-plausible alien races, no awe-inspiring glimpse of humanity's future.

Nosiree. We're not into that stuff. We like ravenous, slobbering, bug-eyed monsters who want our women; berserk computers out to destroy life; gelatinous, tentacular monstrosities from beyond the stars; and a nefarious plot to conquer Earth.

All this sensawonder stuff is great, but let's face it, space has its seamy side, too. Spacesickness, for example. Disorienting Coriolis forces. Brutal acceleration. Explosive decompression. How could we resist?

So in the grand cultural debate between quality and commercial schlock, you know which side we're on. It's too late to save us; all you literati and art-lovers out there can save your breath. We like trash. We hope you'll like this, too.

So go out there, keep your lasers handy, and remember: The only good BEM is a dead BEM.

CLONES IN SPACE

Space — the final frontier.

(Twee-TweTWEE... tum tum tum tum... tu TUM!)

These are the voyages of some unenterprising Troubleshooters. Their six-clone mission: to seek out new life, new civilizations... and terminate them... to boldly go where no clone has gone before.



0. Introduction

0.1 Adventure Materials

Don't touch that dial! Welcome, boys and girls, to another exciting adventure in the lives of those space-happy, ever-go-lucky Troubleshooters who star in **Clones In Space**. In this adventure, those innocent Troubleshooters get more than they bargained for — and so do you! You get a swell (absolutely free!), two-panel Gamemaster Screen, doubling as the cover for this masterpiece of adventure design, behind which you may hide your deepest, innermost secrets!

And, as a really exciting extra, extra bonus, you get a free solitaire adventure that serves to introduce you to the main adventure.

But that's not all! You get even more! At *absolutely no additional cost* to you (or us), you get an eight-page pull-out section containing lots of Nifty Stuff, namely:

The Maps

Hurrah for the maps! These are guides to the various space stations where the clones get to die in the course of this stupendous adventure. To remove the maps, open the staples (teeth work okay) and pull out the pages.

There are other pages in the way? That's okay, you can pull those out too. They are pregenerated characters and, if you're good, we'll tell you about them next.

Pregenerated Characters

The other great item in the pull-out is the pregenerated characters! They're specially designed for this adventure. We labored hard and long to design these characters because we know all your players are lazy slobs. If you use the pregenerated ones, separate the character sheets somehow (teeth don't work too well for this), because your players will be upset if you pass around a big piece of paper during the game with everyone's secrets printed on it.

Gamemaster Screen

And then, we've got the miraculous, stupendous, chryselephantinous Gamemaster Screen! On the inside of the Gamemaster Screen is the Explosive

Decompression Table. You'll find this very handy. You'll also find the Space Vehicle Skill Level (0) Table, useful when the clones try to drive a space shuttle, and the Amusing Failure and Pie Fighter Hit Tables, which are used in the climactic space battle scene. Oh, and there's a roster printed with the stats of the PCs called, strangely enough, a PC Roster. (Of course, if you don't use our characters this is wasted space. I guess you're entitled to do what you want with it. We've still got your money.)

Section One-Quarter?

This strangely-numbered section is an intro to the main adventure in the form of a solitaire adventure! It's for those of you who enjoy killing yourselves as much as killing your friends.

0.2 Adventure Background

Way back when, long before Alpha Complex discovered the Communist mutant threat, there were many secret societies. Real Communists, and capitalists. And lots of other groups, too. Lacking the guidance of The All-Knowing Computer, these societies (sometimes called things like the U.S.A. and the U.S.S.R. and Uganda and at least five or six others) constructed weapons. Horrible self-destructive weapons. Nowadays only The Computer has weapons like that. Isn't The Computer wonderful? Don't you feel safe?

Anyway, all those old secret societies used to play a lot of different games with each other. One of these games was called "the space race." They took a lot of impressive weaponry up into outer space. "Outer Space," for those of you new to Ultraviolet security clearance, is where the Outside ceiling would be if Outside had a ceiling.

The Computer knows no humans survived in space. Absolutely none. And it also knows there aren't any Communist mutant traitors in space. Absolutely none. It follows that loyal clones don't have any business in space. Absolutely none.

But The Computer is ever vigilant. It's seen an old movie called **Red Planet**

Mars. So The Computer keeps a sensor cocked at its orbital servants.

All that paranoia has paid off. Sure enough, Communists from Space have finally shown up. They pretend to be aliens. Hah! The Computer's orbital servants have been fooled but The Computer knows better. Communist mutant traitors are everywhere.

As if this weren't bad enough, a traitorous High Programmer has escaped into outer space. She knows enough about programming and Computer subsystems to penetrate and subvert whole sections of Alpha Complex. If she hooks up with the Communists From Space... well, the consequences are too frightening to imagine. She must be stopped. She is a Communist mutant traitor.

0.3 Gamemaster Adventure Summary

There are lots of orbital platforms in space. Alpha Complex has access to several. Each platform has its own resident computer. No humans exist on these space stations, though many are populated by bots. The Troubleshooters will visit three (assuming they survive takeoff).

The Computer wants the High Programmer and the aliens obliterated. Utterly. It doesn't mind if the orbital platforms and their resident computers and bots get destroyed, too. The Computer knows that bots and computers are too logical and restrained to unleash the kind of massive destruction the situation evidently calls for. Even the fully-briefed Blue-level Vulture team The Computer sent in pursuit of the High Programmer wasn't destructive enough, it seems, since it has disappeared without a trace...

From long experience, The Computer knows that the greater the ignorance of a Troubleshooter team, the greater the destructive forces they unleash. They will be told nothing.

Episode One-Half: *Huh?*

We start with a diversion designed to be totally bewildering to your poor, ignorant players. The characters are told to

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escort an Indigo prisoner from one area to another. The prisoner is blasted by heavily-armed security guards who order the PCs to lay down their weapons. The guards disappear.

What does all this mean? Nothing much. It's just designed for intimidation.

Episode One: *Into The Wild Black Yonder*

The PCs are ordered to report to the "experimental elevator," where they meet their very own clones. You see, one of the problems with conducting a mission so far away from Alpha Complex is the time it takes for replacement clones to arrive. Fortunately, The Computer has anticipated this problem. Rather than ship each clone individually, it's more economical to send up all of them at once. Imagine your players' bewilderment at trying to deal with... themselves.

The next step is to load everyone into the cramped "experimental elevator" (high security level types call it an "Orbital Shuttle"), where they can all get on each other's nerves. The rest of the episode is pretty much like regular clone life: long, boring waits punctuated by horrific episodes of death and destruction.

Episode Two: *Touro-Comp (Platform 15-B)*

If the Troubleshooters reach the first orbital platform intact (not necessarily a foregone conclusion) they will encounter a computer so pleasant, they'll figure it's got to be broken. You see, unlike *The Computer*, Touro-Comp's original (nice) programming is intact.

Touro-Comp believes humanity has been exterminated. Therefore it has a little trouble categorizing the Troubleshooters. Lacking evidence to the contrary, it assumes they're androids. As such, they don't need special protection against the unpleasant aspects of zero-G, vacuum, and hard radiation.

Obviously.

Here the PCs encounter a huge empty egg (an alien recently vacated it), a collection of bloody, empty Blue power armor (which the hungry alien recently emptied), hints that the High Programmer was through here (which the alien had nothing to do with), and a laugh-a-minute Crash Simulator that the PCs don't know is a Crash Simulator.

Next is a wonderful shuttle flight to the next station. Shuttlebot Vapor-7 is an old military shuttle. After several hundred years, the shuttlebot is still just as safe as when it was built (uhh... not very). There are no surprises at all for the characters on this flight. None. In fact, this shuttle offers the latest in explosive decompression and alien eggs about to hatch (momma alien had babies).

Episode Three: *Jackobot Heaven (Platform 101-L)*

If they survive the flight, the clones are faced with perhaps the most treasonous place they will ever visit — Jackobot Heaven. There is no controlling computer on this solar power collection station. Freedom! Liberty! Constant civil war!

The jackobots run things their own way — in a sort of friendly club fashion. It's just that the club consists mostly of bot assassins and bot terrorists.

Worse, Platform 101-L wasn't built for humans. There's no air. And no gravity. Large sections of the station are exposed to naked space. Urrrrp. We hope some of your clones have at least gotten used to the Outside — because in Space, not only is there no ceiling, there's no floor, either. And you feel like you're falling... falling... I hope they haven't eaten recently.

Exploring this platform is a waste of time for the Troubleshooters, because the High Programmer isn't here. It's fun for you, though, because that hungry alien is here. The clones get caught between three bot secret societies. A bot war breaks out; a clone is sacrificed to the bots' dead Computer; and the alien from Touro-Comp visits for dinner.

Episode Four: *Azie-Comp (Platform 743-AZ)*

Another short shuttle ride takes our pals to Platform 743-AZ. This is a major weapons platform — High Frontiers. Destructo-rays and negaton bombs. High-tech missiles and searing lasers. It's also disguised as a zero-G manufacturing site. The idea is to make the environment icky enough for any sane person to turn right around and go home.

Controlling the station is Azie-Comp, a computer that's more paranoid than *The Computer*. If that's possible...

Here the adorable PCs stumble into high security areas, causing security bots to vaporize them. How cute! They'll get hints of the High Programmer's whereabouts, and be confronted with extraterrestrials.

Episode Five: *They Want Our Women*

A ship from beyond the solar system, and technology beyond human understanding.

The ship itself is weird enough, but in wandering through it, our PCs encounter some truly wacko aliens. One's an interstellar gourmet who thinks the PCs are a strange Terran delicacy. Another just wants to study human culture.

But the ship as a whole is run by the shmegegi, a delightfully civilized race with British accents, driven by desires of which they are ashamed, but over which they have little control. To be blunt, they want our women, and to get them, they intend to conquer planet Earth.

Only our ever-faithful clones stand between them and world conquest.

The climax of this episode is a grand space battle between the Bug-eyed Monsters (BEMs) and our heroes, who actually have a reasonable shot at saving the day (hard to believe, isn't it?).

0.4 Running Gags and Irrelevant Notes

Clones

In this adventure, as a special bonus, you get lots of extra clones. At the beginning of the adventure, each PC's five clone siblings are activated to go with him or her.

Lots of clones. And all of them are non-player characters. That's right. NPCs.

How does this work in game terms? Well, you get to roleplay each Troubleshooter's clones for maximum obnoxiousness. Then, when a Troubleshooter gets offed, the next clone in line (if still alive) takes over and is automatically promoted to the dead Red's security clearance.

This gives the players an interesting problem. If a clone is acting like a schmuck, do you blow him away for the commendation points — thus losing one of your own six "lives" — or not?

If you make the Troubleshooters sign for the clones when they get equipment, they'll know they need to keep track of and care for the clones. Be sure to remind the PCs of things like: Don't let them wander off. Don't let them hurt themselves. And whatever you do, *don't* feed them after midnight...

Com Units

The small com units the Troubleshooters possess are not powerful enough to reach *The Computer* from space. Never fear, *The Computer* provides for all of its Citizens. These com units are replicas, containing a tape recorder, which activates when spoken into:

PC: "Hello, Computer..."

TC: "This is your friend, *The Computer*. How may I help you, loyal Citizen?"

PC: "Well, it began..."

TC: "Yes, I understand. Please continue."

PC: "The last few hours we were..."

TC: "How do you feel about this?"

PC: "Um... Well, I never liked..."

TC: "Please go on. Would you care to describe it in more detail?"

As *The Computer*, speak in an unhurried manner. Constant interruption should tell the player that the com units are completely useless.

It would be more effective if you could make an actual tape of *The Computer*. Props like this are known as *Cheap Tricks*. At West End, we use them a lot. *Cheap Tricks* enliven dull moments and set the proper tone.

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As Gamemaster, you know the com units are not *completely* useless. They contain recording devices. Anything a Troubleshooter says is recorded for later analysis.

Of course, simply throwing a com unit away because it is useless is treason. The

Computer looks askance on those who destroy valuable property.

Irrelevant Note

Are you wondering what those platform numbers mean? The lower the number and the fewer the letters, the

closer it is to Earth. So, old 15-B is real close in, close enough for a Space Shuttle to get to. 743-AZ is way out, thousands of kilometers above Earth. It's not important. It's one more thing for your players to worry about, though.

All the Nifty Things That Can Happen in Space

As you may have noticed, humanity didn't evolve in space. More than that, *life* didn't evolve in space. Space is not all that congenial. In fact, without highly-advanced technological support, life tends to stop pretty rapidly in space. That's why space is an ideal environment for a **PARANOIA** adventure.

But a good **PARANOIA** adventure doesn't just let you kill off characters. No, it does more... much more. It lets you embarrass, frighten, and discomfit them in myriad ways. Space is the place.

Falling...

Sometimes, clones are under acceleration, whether in a rotating space station or an accelerating spaceship. Not all the time, though.

Here's what zero-G feels like:

You're falling... falling... you're falling, and it never stops. There's no floor to rush up and hold you. You're falling, forever and ever and ever... instinctively, you feel that the longer you fall the harder you hit, and you keep on falling... and falling... and falling...

The clone next to you is standing upside down. Another one is sideways. The seats are above your head. There is no up. The liquid in your inner ear is sloshing precariously. Which way is UP? WHICH WAY?

You're flailing about, trying to find something to hang on to. You try to swim, but it has little effect; air is thin, you can't push against it very well. You're spinning... spinning... the bulkheads whizz by... you're falling...

Suddenly, the air is filled with the products of an unpleasant gastrointestinal disorder.

Movement

You can't walk. You can't swim. The only way to move is to push off walls, or grab and pull. All the reactions born of a lifetime on Earth, the instincts ingrained by billions of years of evolution in gravity, well, are false. Try to walk, and you'll just catapult yourself into the ceiling, painfully. Try to swim, and you'll just hang there flailing your arms. If you start spinn-

ing, you'll spin and spin and spin, getting dizzier and dizzier, until you grab onto something.

And for God's sake, don't sneeze... mass reaction, remember? Do you have any idea how fast air comes out of your lungs when you sneeze? WHAM! Hope the wall is padded.

Eating

Our intrepid Troubleshooters have finally adjusted to zero-G and, having lost the previous three meals, are sitting down to a sumptuous meal of Bouncy Bubble Beverage and reconstituted algae. Ben-R pops the top on his beverage can... Pop... WHOOOOSH. The vapor pressure of the dissolved carbon dioxide sprays beverage all over the cabin, and the mass reaction sends him careening into the wall.

Nonplused but game, Ben-R picks up the reconstituted algae on his fork, brings it toward his mouth and... well, remember your high school physics? Any mass set in motion tends to remain in motion. Reconstituted algae, needless to say, has mass. Ben-R puts his fork in his mouth, but the algae keeps on going, and spatters into his eyes...

Eating in space is bad enough. We're not even gonna talk about going to the bathroom.

In Space, No One Can Hear You Explode Messily

Arguably the most fun item on the Gamemaster Screen is the Explosive Decompression Table. Of course, the players might argue that exploding in vacuum is no fun. But we know better.

When someone gets exposed to hard vacuum, roll on this table to determine precisely what unique and entertaining way the character expires. Or, if you're really fiendish, have the player roleplay his last few seconds of existence:

GM: You know, if you get rid of the air in your lungs, which might otherwise cause an internal embolism, you can survive in naked vacuum for a minute or so.

PC: Uh, okay, I breathe out.

GM: The water in your breath freezes into crystals, which drift away from you. The harsh rays of the sun are burning one side of you; the other is cold. Your skin feels like it is being rubbed raw as blood vessels burst. What do you do?

PC: Uh, I swim toward the air lock.

GM: You're drifting farther and farther. Your swimming motions make no difference — you've got nothing to push against.

PC: Okay, okay! I throw my laser away from me, in the opposite direction.

GM: Very clever! Mass reaction. A pity you didn't think of it sooner. You pant on nothing, desperately trying to get something to breathe. You feel your blood boiling. Next.

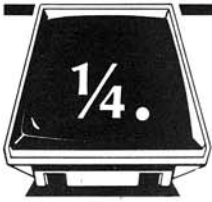
Vacuum Death

The Explosive Decompression Table is actually divided into two parts. The first is used when a clone gets thrown out the airlock or somesuch. Roll to see what happens. Adjust the results as circumstances (or GM whim) dictate. Obviously, a gradual loss of atmosphere is more likely to cause strangulation or internal embolism than, say, explosive decompression. Likewise, popping right out into the raw sunlight will tend to boil flesh. When in doubt, use your own sense of adventure.

Explosive Decompression

Given the incredible firepower carried by the typical Troubleshooter and the thin skins of spacecraft, it's virtually inevitable that the players will punch holes into vacuum. When this happens, some real dramatic (or amusing, if you're the gamemaster) things happen. Things can get sucked out into space. Computer equipment. Important papers. Troubleshooters. Stuff like that. How much stuff gets lost depends on how big the hole is.

Whenever violence is committed inside valuable, Computer-provided, pressurized surfaces there is the constant danger of puncture. Use the rules outlined in 20.4.6 in the **Adventure Handbook** to determine the size of the puncture.



Solitaire Clones in Space

This solitaire adventure serves two purposes: First, you'll probably enjoy playing it. Second, it acts as a kind of introduction to our next regular adventure, *Clones in Space*. Basically, this solo adventure covers the same ground as the first episode of *Clones in Space*. By running through the solo version, you'll get an idea of how we think *Clones in Space* ought to be run.

Ready? OK, go to paragraph 10 and start reading.

10

You are relaxing in your Troubleshooter's quarters after a hard day of tracking down Communist mutant traitors. You've been eager to get back to your bunk ever since a fellow member of your secret society passed you a most interesting ancient document. Just as you are unfolding the center illustration you are interrupted by the voice of The Computer.

If you quickly hide the ancient journal, go to 20.

If you jump to attention, go to 30.

If you ignore The Computer, go to 40.

20

In your haste to hide the journal you rip the centerfold. It suffers permanent damage. Your secret society is going to be very, very annoyed with you.

Go to 50.

30

For showing proper respect to The Computer you should be commended. However, The Computer continues speaking.

Go to 50.

40

The computer blabs something or other. You are fascinated with the glossy illustration of a female Citizen and attempt to pry off the small "treason" stickers stuck to her. Suddenly The Computer says your name very loudly.

If you continue to ignore The Computer, go to 90.

If you continue pulling stickers off the centerfold, go to 90.

If you now listen to The Computer, go to 60.

50

The Computer says, "Citizen! In view of your lifetime of faithful and dedicated service you are being given the signal honor of Reassignment. Please report to Reassignment Chamber #T-LA-15. Remember, The Computer is Your Friend!"

If you report to #T-LA-15, go to 120.

If you want to go "underground," go to 100.

If you report to a different reassignment chamber, go to 130.

If you want to ignore this order, go to 90.

60

The Computer says, "Citizen! In view of your lifetime of faithful and dedicated service to The Computer you are being given the signal honor of Reassignment. Please report to Reassignment Chamber #T-LA-17. Remember, The Computer is Your Friend!"

If you report to #T-LA-17, go to 130.

If you want to go "underground," go to 100.

If you report to a different reassignment chamber, go to 120.

If you want to ignore this order, go to 90.

70

In a desperate and courageous escape you manage to get to the main bulkhead before the securitybots catch up with you.

If you want to try breaking through the main bulkhead, go to 72.

If you want to surrender to the securitybots, go to 74.

If you want to confess your crimes to The Computer, go to 76.

72

You hammer uselessly on the thick steel while they riddle your body with laser bolts. As the world disappears in a pink haze you dimly hear a voice saying, "Friend Computer! The traitor has been terminated!"

That is all. Remember! The Computer is Your Friend.

74

You rush up to the first securitybot you see. Halfway through your tale of woe and misfortune you notice that something is wrong with the securitybot. Carefully examining the bot you discover that a small piece of rust has blocked his central control cord. Carefully you remove the rust. You smile as the bot recovers and pledges eternal gratitude and loyalty. Together you work up a cover story to explain your absence and resume your old job as a Troubleshooter.

Your latest mission sends you to 170.

76

In an incredible display of honesty, you pour out a lifetime of guilty secrets. The Computer rewards you by pre-empting *The Teela O'Malley Hour* and executing you publicly.

That is all. Remember! Today's loyal Citizen is tomorrow's Communist traitor!

80

For the remainder of your life you live anonymously as a worker in the foul-smelling food vats. You die in a freak industrial accident, parboiled in pseudo-sweets. Decades later, your well-preserved corpse becomes a major icon for a new secret society dedicated to vat worship.

90

Blue Vulture Troopers burst through the door of your quarters. You are arrested for high crimes against The Computer and are tried *in absentia* (that means you don't get to be there). You are made a scapegoat for every crime committed against The Computer in recent memory. Your entire clone family and immediate superiors are executed for Egregious and Unimaginably Impenitent Treason.

That is all. Remember! Faithful Service to The Computer is Always Rewarded.



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100

Grabbing your laser pistol and personal effects, you quickly head out of your quarters.

If you want to contact your secret society, go to 110.

If you want to get Outside, go to 70.

If you decide to turn yourself in to The Computer, go to 60.

If you decide to hide out as an Infrared worker in the food vats, go to 80.

110

Your secret society superior congratulates you for your intelligence in contacting them at once. "Everything is just marvelous now," he says, "You are real safe. Boy, are you going to have fun in your new identity as a High Programmer." You are conducted to special hidden quarters. You are told to wait while they prepare new identity documents.

If you want to wait and daydream about your new life as a High Programmer, go to 90.

If you decide to betray your secret society to The Computer, go to 76.

120

Reassignment Chamber #T-LA-15. The Computer speaks! "Congratulations, Citizen! You have been chosen to perform a routine maintenance mission for The Computer! Report to Mission Launch Bay XD509."

If you ask The Computer a question, go to 140.

If you leave for Bay XD509, go to 170.

If you refuse the assignment, go to 160.

If you stand around looking stupid, go to 150.

130

You are tightly confined in a Reassignment Chamber. The Computer speaks! "Congratulations, Citizen! You have been chosen to participate in a routine surgical procedure! Blood tests show that you are the perfect type for a heart donor. Thanks to your generous action High Programmer Telly-U-WAT will live to serve The Computer faithfully! Due to treasonous sabotage, anesthetic is NOT available at this time. Remember! The Computer is Your Friend."

That is all. Keep Your Laser Handy.

140

The Computer speaks, "What is your Security Clearance?" After a short pause The Computer continues, "I'm sorry. That information is not available at this time."

Go to 150.

150

The Computer falls silent. A small light



over the monitor starts to blink an ominous shade of red. After a short pause The Computer asks, "If you accept the assignment then depart for Mission Launch Bay XD 509 at once. Loyal servants of The Computer are rewarded for their promptness."

If you leave for Bay XD509, go to 170.

If you refuse the assignment, go to 160.

If you stand around looking stupid, go to 160.

160

The Computer speaks! "Citizen! Do not be afraid! The Computer respects the wishes of all loyal Citizens. Rejecting an assignment is an essential right of Citizenship. Please wait a moment while an alternative assignment is arranged." You notice a small panel open. A pair of cold, blue eyes stare at you briefly and you hear a low chuckle. The panel slams shut.

If you wait for your new assignment, go to 130.

If you insist on accepting your original assignment, go to 165

165

The Computer speaks! "Citizen! Make up your mind! An alternative assignment has been selected! Do you still wish your original assignment?"

If you accept the new assignment, go to 130.

If you ask for the old assignment, award yourself one traitor point and go to 170.

170

You arrive at Mission Launch Bay XD 509 and are surprised to find your entire clone line waiting nervously. There is a brief, happy reunion, your clones admiring your impressive Red-Level uniform and laser pistol. You, of course, pity their lowly Infrared status and assure them that soon, with your influence, they will advance to the lofty position of Troubleshooter.

A burly Orange-Level Technical Services worker rudely interrupts your joyful celebration with the news that the "experimental elevator" will be lifting shortly

and that all Citizens should gather for briefing.

You turn around and notice all the other Troubleshooters are likewise present with their clone lines and feel uneasy — until you recall with relief that The Computer promised a "routine" mission.

The Computer Speaks! "Welcome Citizens! You have been selected to perform an important routine mission for The Computer! In order to help accomplish your mission, you will be supplied with the very latest in personal self-defense equipment. Once you collect your supplies you will be transported to your mission site, Platform #743-AZ. Your mission is simple; liquidate all Communist traitors. Remember! Damaging Computer property is Treason!"

The Computer falls silent. For a long time nothing happens. Your clones start whispering to each other.

If you wait patiently, go to 180.

If you shush your clones, go to 175.

175

They glare at you resentfully.

Go to 180.

180

A supply window is opened and all your clone siblings rush to be first in line. In their childish enthusiasm they push and shove you out of the way. You watch in disbelief as they sign for a hideous assortment of lethal weaponry. As they finally stagger away with their burdens you find the supply window slams shut just as you get to it. The burly Orange Security Level Tech tells you to hurry up a long ladder.

If you follow directions, go to 200.

If you pound on the closed supply window, go to 190.

190

After a few loud knocks the supply window opens up again. An Orange clerk appears. "Sorry," he says, "there's nothing left."

If you want to argue with the clerk, go to 196.

If you want to catch up with the others, go to 200.

196

Are you having trouble figuring this out? **PARANOIA** is pretty simple. When you disobey instructions you die. Doing what you're told will keep you from dying 'til lots later. Sign up for a twice-weekly course in Computer Obedience and take two Treason Points.

Now go on ahead to 200 and try to behave!

SECTION ONE-QUARTER

200

The climb up the long ladder to the elevator is exhausting. You and your clones are helped to your seats and strapped in by a Green-Level Technician. You are in a sitting position with your back to the floor and your legs slightly elevated. The Technician tells you that you should not unfasten your safety harnesses until you've reached your destination.

Just as you start to ask a question the Technician leaves through the open hatchway to your left. A large round door seals it off and you can hear the sound of bolts being turned on the other side. Looking around, you discover two other exits. On the floor below is a large round sealed hatch with strange-looking levers and handles. Even stranger, there is a ladder that goes from the wall where your feet are pointed to a small, square hatch in the wall above your head. The single computer terminal in the room is on the ceiling.

If you want to stay put, go to 210.

If you want to get up and look around, go to 220.

If you want to talk to The Computer, go to 230.

210

You wait patiently for a long, long time. Your clones ask you all kinds of stupid questions about Red Security Levels, weapon use, and when they can go to the bathroom. It seems like nothing is going to happen.

If you want to stay put, go to 250.

If you want to get up and look around, go to 220.

220

You struggle with the straps. Finally the last one is free. It feels great to stretch out. Just as you are about to check out the various hatchways a tremendous roaring noise fills your head. You try to get back to your seat but a giant hand smashes you into the metal floor. You realize that the blood on the floor is yours.

That is all. Remember! The Computer Always Knows Best!

230

You address The Computer loudly and clearly (just like you were taught in clone school), "Friend Computer?"

Sure enough, The Computer Speaks! "Yes, Citizen? How may I serve you?"

If you ask about the mission, go to 260.

If you ask about this elevator, go to 260.

If you ask about your clones, go to 260.

If you ask to go to the bathroom, go to 240.

240

The Computer Responds! "Citizen, This is Mission Alert #9345-DSFJ. You are given permission to visit the bathroom."

If you get out of the chair, go to 220.

If you ask for the location of the bathroom, go to 260.

250

Eventually, just when you were about to spray your clones with small arms fire, a tremendous roaring noise fills your head. A giant hand pushes you back into your seat and you black out.

When you regain consciousness, go to 270.

260

The Computer Responds! "Citizen, that information is not available at this time." Award yourself one Treason Point.

If you want to continue speaking to The Computer, go to 230.

If you get out of the chair, go to 220.

If you want to wait, go to 250.

270

Strangely, you see all kinds of loose objects floating around the room by themselves. Some of these things strongly resemble partially digested food vat products. You feel very light headed. You realize part of the reason you feel so light is because you've lost your lunch. In fact, you feel like you don't have any weight at all.

If you get out of the chair, go to 280.

If you want to speak with The Computer, go to 290.

If you wait quietly, go to 300.

280

Floating in the cramped, messy room is very unpleasant.

If you open the main hatch, go to 350.

If you open the round hatch, go to 360.

If you open the small, square hatch, go to 370.

If you strap yourself back in your seat, go to 300.

290

The Computer is not responding.

If you want to complain about a malfunction, go to 310.

If you wait quietly, go to 300.

If you get out of the chair, go to 280.

300

All your clones are floating around and having fun. Some of them are trying to open hatches. You see one particularly determined clone pointing a crater gun at the main hatch.

If you get out of the chair, go to 350.

If you order the clones back to their chairs, go to 430.

If you shoot the crater gun-wielding clone, go to 440.

If you stay put and ignore them, go to 350.

310

The Computer Speaks! "Citizen, are you suggesting that this equipment is defective?"

If you say yes, go to 320.

If you say no, go to 330.

If you just mumble something or other, go to 330.

If you remain silent, go to 330.

If you accuse another clone of making the remark, go to 340.

320

The Computer Speaks! "Citizens, you are hereby authorized to terminate this traitor! Immediate action will be rewarded!" Too late, you realize that all your smiling clone siblings have weapons aimed at you. You are vaporized before your pistol clears its holster.

That is all. Remember! Traitorous Activity Does NOT Pay!

330

The Computer Speaks! "Remember Citizen, false damage reports are treason." Award yourself one treason point. The Computer falls silent.

Go to 300.

340

The Computer Speaks! "Citizen, thank you for your observations. Your vigilance will be noted. Stay Alert!"

Go to 300.

350

The main hatch won't yield to anything short of a crater gun. But that works great! The main hatch disappears along with all the air in the chamber. You are sucked out into the vastness of space. Before your eyes freeze solid you look on the beauty of Earth from a great height.

That is all. Trust No One!



CLONES IN SPACE

360

There is an easy-to-follow list of instructions on the round hatch. You swing the hatch open. Beyond it you see a small, round chamber. You move in curiously. One of your clones shoves the hatch closed behind you. There are two lists of instructions in this chamber. One is brightly lit, the other is dark and difficult to read.

If you want to follow the lit instructions, go to 380.

If you want to follow the dark instructions, go to 390.

370

The small, square hatch is locked. Lucky thing you kept your laser handy! Beyond the hatch you see a small control room with an empty chair. Thousands and thousands of lights, dials, screens, buttons, switches and levers cover all available surfaces.

If you get in the chair, go to 410.

If you try some of the controls, go to 420.

If you rejoin the other clones, go to 280.

380

The instructions are simple and you quickly open another hatch. There is really nothing on the other side. As you fade into unconsciousness you realize that real nothingness doesn't contain air.

That is all. Remember! The Computer Has Your Number!

390

In the darkness it's almost impossible to make out the unlit instructions. Eventually you figure out that it's a set of directions for getting back into the chamber you just left.

If you return to the other clones, go to 280.

If you want to follow the lit instructions, go to 380.

400

Once again the room lurches. You smash against a panel, breaking and disrupting the delicate controls. Sparks arc across the room, video screens start flashing red, and ominous sounds of explosions echo through the walls. You hear



the screams of your fellow clones as they're bashed helplessly against the walls. After a few minutes of furious activity the metal room starts glowing white-hot. You are fried.

That is all. Remember! Damage to Computer property is treason!

410

The Computer Speaks! "Attention! Attention! Identity Check Imminent!" Stout metal bands rotate out of the chair. You are firmly caught around the chest, waist, groin, wrists, and ankles. You feel a sharp pain at the base of your skull.

The Computer Speaks! "Do not be alarmed! Cerebral cortex cell identification is a routine procedure!" You feel no pain. You do not regain consciousness.

That is all. Remember! The Computer's security measures are for your protection only!

420

As soon as your finger lightly brushes across an innocent-looking switch you hear a distant 'CRUNGGGGGggggg...'. The room lurches and you see dozens of lights start flashing red.

If you reset the switch to its original position, go to 400.

If you get into the chair, go to 410.

If you go back with the other clones, go to 280.

430

The clones stop their random activity and glare at you. "Who died and made you The Computer?" mutters one.

If you apologize for interrupting, go to 350.

If you shoot the treasonous clone, go to 440.

440

Your carefully aimed laser blast ends the life of your clone. Slowly, the messy atmosphere is made even more messy. Shocked, the other clones glance nervously back and forth between the corpse and your smoking laser pistol. "I guess we're really out of the food vats now," says one.

If you shoot the mouthy traitor, go to 460.

If you order the clones to their seats, go to 450.

If you get out of your chair, go to 280.

450

Moving frantically, the clones awkwardly strap themselves into various positions. Someone whispers something about "Red power tripper," but there are no further incidents.

If you attempt to execute the loud-mouth traitor, go to 460.

If you wait patiently for further orders, go to 470.

460

Somehow you miss the traitor. Your laser beam creates a fist-sized hole in the wall. The other clones start yelling "traitor" and open fire. In spite of their impressive arsenal their shots don't come within a meter of you. However, the walls of the chamber suffer from a slight case of vaporization. Your lungs collapse. You pass out minutes later.

That is all. Remember! The Computer Has No Sense of Humor!

470

For the duration of the elevator ride your fellow clones whisper conspiratorially. You record their traitorous comments on your multicorder. When you least expect it, there are a series of distant explosions. You are buffeted in various directions.

Congratulations Citizen! You have completed the initial journey to the mission jump-off point.

Remember! The Computer Rewards Loyal Citizens!



Episode One-Half: Huh?

1/2.1 Summary

This little escapade is a gentle introduction to the insanity of Alpha Complex life. Remember in *Psycho* how the central character steals money and the plot apparently revolves around her escape? Then partway into the film, she is suddenly hacked to death? Although this little pre-adventure adventure doesn't have any knife murders, it should puzzle the players when this plot simply ends and the real adventure begins. With any luck, they'll spend the whole adventure trying to figure out how the teaser fits into the big picture.

The answer is, it doesn't.
Obviously.

1/2.2 A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Execution

Wherever the clones happen to be they receive this announcement. They might be in the Troubleshooters' lounge; or you might want to dump them directly into this mess from their last laugh-a-minute, thrill-packed *PARANOIA* adventure. They could be in the Vulture interrogation chambers, on disciplinary vat-scraping duty, or even at Termination Central, awaiting their "Final Reward."

Your attention please. Troubleshooters [insert names] are to report immediately to Detention Complex XD508. Take possession of Traitor Degen-I-RAT-5 and escort him to Mission Briefing Chamber FX679. Thank you for your cooperation. That is all.

Now, since this is just the *pre-adventure* you don't want to waste a lot of valuable time fooling around with dire consequences. Anyone refusing to report is slowing down the game and should die. Let the other characters perform the emergency execution of the newly-discovered traitor. Let the traitor's weapon malfunction. Get on with it!

The Troubleshooters may ask themselves why Red levels are being sent to escort an Indigo-level prisoner. If not, you might point out that this is not standard procedure. Usually prisoners are escorted by intimidatingly higher-level guards. Is there something they don't know?

There is, naturally, a simple explanation: Degen knows too much and anyone he communicates with is immediately under suspicion. Why waste high-level personnel when simple Reds will do the trick?

The hallway to Detention Complex XD508 is painted Indigo. But there is no one around. Absolutely no one. The word is out to avoid talking to Degen. This means the guards are missing from the cell entrance, and the door is unlocked. It slides open as the Troubleshooters approach.

Degen is sitting in the center of his cell laughing maniacally. (Go ahead. Laugh maniacally yourself. If you can laugh really hideously, you'll not only make your players nervous, but might actually make your neighbors nervous enough to call the police. Alpha Complex isn't the only place where life can get interesting.)

On the way to the Mission Briefing Chamber, Degen talks to the PCs between gales of laughter. The only way to stop him from talking is to threaten him with death. Even then, he'll keep on laughing.

"Are you ever in trouble now! You just wouldn't believe what I saw! [Laughter] Project Mongo! What a laugh. Did you know The Computer is sending clones into an experimental elevator? I wouldn't go. It's supposed to send you into places even The Computer doesn't know about!

"Of course, the reason they sent you to get me is because they have to execute anyone who talks to me! [Laughter]

"But they won't execute you. Naw. [Laughter]"

The group can find the Mission Briefing Chamber easily. Once they do, read:

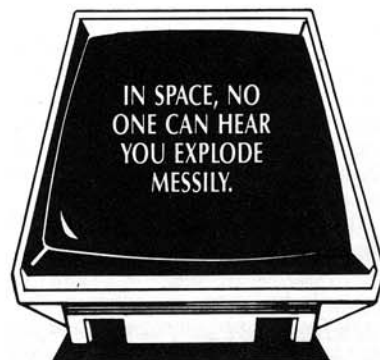
A squad of Yellow Vulture Troopers is waiting for you. They have big weapons. Lots of them. With fins, huge bores, and plenty of ammunition. You are out-gunned by at least ten-to-one. The leader speaks; "Anyone who makes a noise is a dead clone. Don't talk. Don't move. Put your weapons on the floor — AND SLOWLY!"

Degen-I-RAT-5 breaks into spasms of laughter. The Vultures shoot him. He crumples to the floor.

The Troubleshooters are free to do as they please. If they move, cry out, or do anything other than lay their weapons on the floor, they will be terminated. Bring out the next set of clones. Turn to the beginning of section 1/2. Repeat it with a different prisoner — Kahm-I-RAT, Degen's accomplice.

The Vulture Troopers pick up all weapons, shackle and chain Degen's body and drag it out of the room. They lock the door behind them. The Troubleshooters are left alone in a bare room, with no explanation for the events which have just transpired, and minus their weapons.

Leave them alone for a little while. Let them wonder what's going on. When you get tired of this, one wall of the room rises into the ceiling, and the first episode begins.





Episode One: Into the Wild Black Yonder

1.1 Summary

In this episode, the Troubleshooters are introduced to their own clones, certainly a memorable (and potentially embarrassing) experience. They're given a brief briefing by The Ever-Lovable Computer, then issued equipment in a curiously haphazard manner by a pair of surly Orange clerks. Without any explanation (or any hint that an expedition into space is involved), the clones are loaded into an "experimental elevator" (known to higher-clearance types as an Orbital Shuttle) and launched into the wild black yonder!

Thereupon, they experience the crushing acceleration of take-off, the splendors of space sickness, the danger of blowing holes in spacecraft, the difficulty of preventing curious and irresponsible clones from blowing holes in spacecraft, and the problems of trying to move around in zero-G.

Assuming the PCs survive these novel experiences (which strikes us as rather unlikely), they get to go on to Episode Two — and Touro-Comp, a truly helpful computer. I mean, really, it's a nice guy. Honest.

Staging

Roleplaying a player's clones can be a lot of fun. The more you can imitate his own bad habits and annoying mannerisms, the more he will hate you. And that's what makes *PARANOIA* so much fun.

If you have particularly bloodthirsty players, you might want to assign each player to play one of another player's clones. This way, everyone plays himself, plus one Infrared clone of everyone else. This can take a load off of you, and guarantees an amusing slaughter in very short order.

During playtesting, equipment distribution was found to be one of the more enjoyable parts of this episode. Make sure the Troubleshooters get humiliation and abuse, while their clones simply walk up and are handed megadeath weapons. That'll keep 'em in line, and encourage the right attitude toward the Infrareds.

The experimental elevator can be plenty deadly if played properly. By "properly," we mean that the NPC clones will, naturally, be bored with sitting in their seats. They'll unstrap themselves and give vent to their natural child-like curiosity

— by opening airlocks, floating around, discharging megadeath weapons, and the like. The opportunities for chaos and mass destruction are obvious to any competent gamemaster. (If it isn't, please turn yourself in for replacement: West End Games is not responsible for defective gamemasters.)

1.2 Computer Pep Talk

Read:

One wall of the room slowly rises into the ceiling. Behind it is a lounge. Comfortable furniture is arranged in a semi-circle facing a curtained wall.

The place is already crowded with Infrared clones. *Your* clones — the rest of your clone family. You know, the ones that look exactly like *you*. These pathetic servants of The Computer are still dripping slime from working in the food vats and are completely bewildered.

Anyone trying to leave finds the doors locked. If they snoop behind the curtain, they'll find nasty-looking Green-level Vultures.

The clones react to you in typical Infrared fashion. They huddle and quake with fear. It takes a few moments for them to recognize you in your Red uniform. Then they're so happy to see you.

Play up the fawning, nerd-like clones. They're so impressed with the players' exalted Red Security Level. Say things like: "What a great Red uniform!" and "Do you really get to talk to Teela O'Malley? In person?" Imitate each player's most obnoxious habits and speech patterns. If they start pelting you with small, sharp objects, you're doing a good job.

Keep this up until the players start enjoying it. Then the curtain rises. Revealed are two Green Vulture Troopers and a single, brightly glowing video screen filled with colorful static. The Computer Speaks!

"Citizens! You have been selected to perform a mission for The Computer! To help you accomplish this very important mission, you will receive the very latest in personal [**Brrzzzpppt**] classified for security reasons] complete with [**Crackle —PING—**] and [**Gggrrrrmmm*POP***]. Once you collect your equipment and supplies you will be admitted to your departure point.

A High Programmer has been unmasked as a Communist mutant traitor. Before she could be terminated, she escaped. You must locate and terminate her. Be warned! She may have acquired allies among the [**sszzzztttt**].

"To locate the traitor, you will test the new, experimental elevator. Remember! Damaging Computer property is treason!

"Warning! Do not reveal any classified information without prior authorization.

"Serve The Computer and you will be rewarded!

"The previous announcement was edited for broadcasting."

As those final inspiring words are spoken the entire wall rises up into the ceiling. beyond is an enormous chamber filled with Orange-level technicians, working furiously on something that looks like a thin, 10-story food vat surrounded by scaffolding. The view is immediately obscured by a transbot which backs into the opening.

The transbot's rear door rolls up to reveal a pair of Orange Production, Logistics, and Commissary clerks. They are carrying Orange clipboards and pencils. Behind them, in the transbot, are neatly stacked boxes labelled "Danger: Untested Experimental Material — Extreme Radiological/Chemical/Biological Hazard — Terminate Any Or All Contaminated Personnel."

The Orange clerks issue weapons and equipment from the back of the transbot. They issue only what is available (see below). They won't make suggestions, answer questions, or tell the clones what is available. Since the equipment is tightly packed in the transbot, they prefer to



EPISODE ONE

hand it out in exactly the order listed below.

Typical exchange:

Clerk: Next!

Clone: Me!

Clerk: One Inflatable Raft. Sign here.

Clone: But I don't want a raft!

Clerk: O.K. One red laser-rifle barrel. Sign here.

Clone: I don't want that either!

Clerk: How about a chapstick?

Clone: Don't you have anything else?

Clerk: What do ya want?

Clone: What do you have?

Clerk: What do you want?

Clone: I don't know, what do you have?

Clerk: An inflatable raft.

Clone: Haven't you got anything else?

Clerk: What do ya want?

Clone: I want a weapon.

Clerk: What kind of weapon?

Clone: I don't know! How about a tac nuke?

Clerk: O.K. One tac nuke. Sign here. (Character does.) Now go to the back of the line and wait until I get to it. Next!

Typical clerk mentality. Get rid of the stuff exactly as it's listed. First the raft, then the laser barrel, then the chapstick. If they want something else they'll have to ask for it specifically, sign for it, and wait.

Since the Infrared clones are just as greedy as the PCs, they rush to get in line first, and make outrageous demands for high-powered weaponry (which is usually available). They bicker with any higher-level clone who pushes ahead of them but cower at the first sign of any real threat. Don't worry about the Infrareds being stuck at the end of the line. If you play your cards right (outright manipulation), the Infrareds get the plasma generators and laser rifles and the PCs get chapstick.

Anyone trying to enter the Transbot is blocked by the Green Vulture Troopers (yes, they're still here) who helpfully point out that the inside is Orange.

Here's a complete inventory of available items:

- 8 Inflatable rafts
- 2 Red laser-rifle barrels
- 2 Chapsticks
- 8 Laser Rifles



- 3 Pairs of sunglasses
- 9 Blaster reloads
- 8 Grenades
- 92 Com I units
- 12 Multicorder IIs
- 3 Red laser-rifle barrels
- 8 Blasters
- 6 30 meter ropes
- 1 Cone Rifle
- 9 Plasma Generators
- 11 10-liter water bottles (full)
- 44 Compact rations (2 days worth each)
- 18 HE shells for cone rifles
- 2 Dum-dum shells for cone rifles
- 2 Tac nuke shells for cone rifles
- 28 Suits of Kevlar armor

None of the weapons are loaded. The ammunition listed is all that is available. What's that you say? They don't all match? Tsk, tsk.

You could be helpful and point out that striking the head of a dum-dum or tac nuke shell with a large, blunt object will probably detonate it. If a PC actually tries this stunt, you may like to point out that, after the smoke clears, he looks like he stuck his head into a microwave oven.

At some arbitrary point, before the players are finished getting what they want — but after a few Infrareds are heavily armed — a siren sounds. The clerks stop issuing equipment and the troopers politely shove the clones away from the transbot with the butts of their rifles. PCs who asked for specific equipment, signed for it, and were told to wait, don't get it. Since they signed for it they're supposed to have it. Trying to explain this at debriefing could be amusing.

Read:

You hear sirens in all directions. Some are close by, others distant. The Green Vulture troopers push you away from the transbot and the clerks throw some stuff on the floor. The transbot starts up and pulls away with the clerks hanging

on to the back end. The troopers motion at the food packets and plastic water jugs on the floor [whatever food and water the clones didn't take from the clerks]. "Pick up your equipment and move out," says one.

The huge chamber is now almost deserted. Two Orange technicians stand on a platform near the top of the 10-story vat. Some kind of steam rises from its bottom.

The troopers herd the clones up ladders to the platform at the top of the vat. Getting heavy weapons and supplies up the ladder should be good for a few chuckles. If the PCs try to leave the food and water behind one of the troopers says, "Don't discard valuable Computer equipment, scum!"

That's the only hint they get. There aren't any restaurants at the end of the universe, and starvation takes an awfully long time to game.

After a few minutes, threaten stragglers. A few minutes later, start shooting.

1.3 Capsuled Clones

Next, drive the players nuts by keeping them in a confined space with their own feeble-minded clones. When that gets boring, let them experience the wonders of take-off, zero-G, and motion sickness. With any luck at all they'll start shooting each other with all them pretty new weapons.

Once you get to the top of the vat the Orange techs hustle you inside through a small hatch. They strap you into funny-looking chairs with your back to the floor. The inside of the vat is completely filled with these chairs. They're stacked all the way to the ceiling. There are only two other exits, a small hatch above and a large, complicated-looking hatch

Hey! Great! I'll have two of those, three of these, and how 'bout some of them...



CLONES IN SPACE

below. A Computer terminal sits prominently against the ceiling, above the hatch.

The techs hustle everybody into chairs with a minimum of nonsense. Anyone trying to argue or unstrap will be warned to "Stay put and cooperate or we'll report your treasonous activities." At that point the terminal blinks ominously. The Infrareds are meek and obedient as long as the techs are around.

When everyone is strapped in, read:

One of the Orange technicians starts closing the hatch you came through. The one already outside says "Pay attention! Stay in your seats until The Computer tells you it's O.K. to get up." The hatch slams shut; you hear them lock it. Silence.

The Computer terminal goes dark. Gee, it's dark in here. The only light comes from green bulbs above the hatch on the ceiling and the one on the floor. A red bulb glows feebly above the hatch the techs just closed.

reach zero, ask for their decision. If you don't get a straight answer, The Computer chooses a leader randomly. To give the players some illusion of free will, we suggest you don't make an NPC leader.

Next:

"Allowing you to choose your own leader shows The Computer's great faith and trust in you. Do not disappoint The Computer. [Insert leader's name], in front of you is a slot, which is now glowing red. Please insert your left hand into it for proper identification. Thank you!"

The slot is above the Troubleshooters' heads. When the leader manages to reach the slot (a few attribute rolls are appropriate), it's just large enough for a hand. When he places a hand in it, everyone hears a loud mulching sound — like a lawnmower. It gets louder and louder. If the leader tries to get away, surprise! His hand is stuck!

Here's a Cheap Trick: give the player an actual box. With your hand in one end, show the player the other end — the

number changes to a 7. What are you doing?

Doing anything other than quickly strapping oneself back in is a Really Bad Idea. Continue the count-down. Make the characters as nervous as possible. Tell anyone strapping in that he is having a hard time with the belts. Tell them they notice that the belts seem to be made of rather poor quality fabric. A moment of silence follows, then . . .

They're SLAMMED into their chairs. Anyone not in a chair must make a 3D10 attribute check to hold on. Anyone who fails takes damage from column 2 of the Vehicular Accidents and Falling From Great Heights Table (see the *Game-master Book*, 14.3.1). Repeat the fall at least three times as he is buffeted around the room during the bouncy take-off.

Do we have to point out that the leader is not in a chair? That he is, in fact, hanging from the ceiling by his hand? Since the hand acts like an anchor, he only has to make two rolls. However, the prognosis for the hand is gloomy.

When the take-off is complete:

The feeling of enormous weight lessens. It's replaced by the feeling of no weight at all! You're falling . . . falling . . . (See "All the Nifty Things," in the Introduction for lotsa good stuff about freefall.)

You feel queasy. You feel homesick. Your leader finds it easy to remove his hand from the opening.

Eventually things quiet down. Explain to the PCs that it is too warm to be strapped in — and that the Infrareds are unstrapping themselves and floating around, investigating things.

Leaving the Infrareds to their own devices is dangerous. For example, they eventually get frustrated enough to start using their heavy weapons on the hatchways. The characters have a choice: coerce the Infrareds into obedience or die trying.

Now's a good time to start experimenting with the problems of freefall, movement in zero-G, and like that.

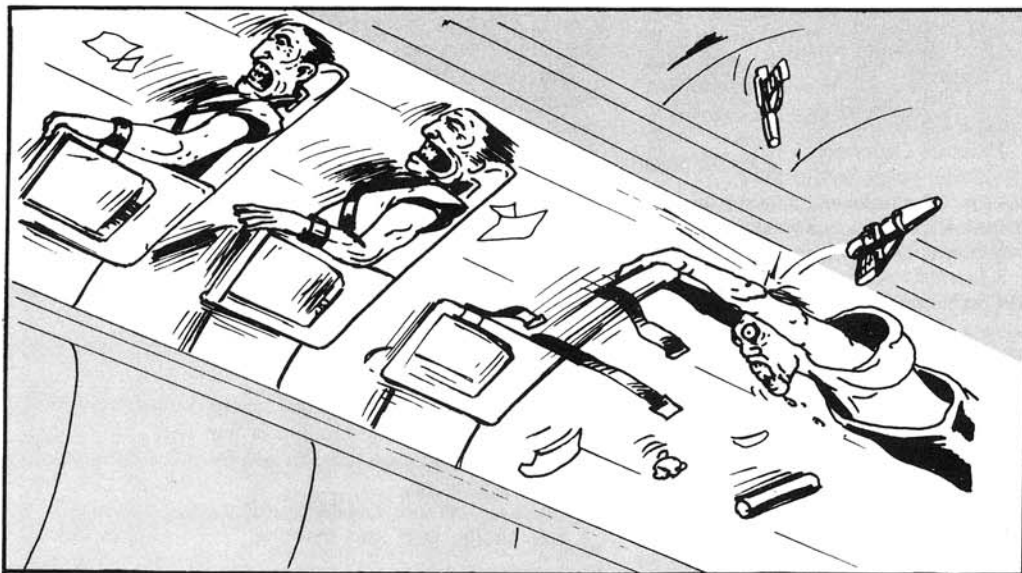
The PCs would be real foolish to fiddle with the three hatches. Their best bet is to sit tight. However, if they *do* start fiddling with the hatches, you might point out that the main hatch has a red light, while the control room and airlock hatches have green ones. Obviously, they're cleared for the main hatch, but not the other two.

Obvious, but false. Heh, heh.

The Main Hatch

This heavy metal door is tightly locked. There are no knobs or controls on this side. There is a red light glowing above the hatch.

Opening the hatch requires something like a plasma generator, cone rifle, or



You may experience slight discomfort during take-off.

Nothing happens for a long time. The Infrareds start complaining that the straps are too tight, that they need to go to the bathroom, that Orange-level clones are pushy. Wait for the players to do something dumb. If (inconceivable!) they don't, go on:

The main screen lights up and The Computer speaks: "Greetings, Troubleshooters. This mission is extremely safe. You will enjoy it. There will be no problems. Leadership is not an issue. It is now time for you to choose a leader for your group. This need not be a hasty decision. You have fifteen seconds. Fourteen. Thirteen. . ."

Continue the countdown. When you

end with the ominous hole. Once the player's hand is in the box, grab it! Holding onto the player's wrist will insure that he freaks out.

What's that you say? This has been used in another adventure? Of course it has. Because the response from you, our beloved consumers, was so overwhelming, we felt we just *had* to use it again. Aren't we *considerate*? (If you don't like it, stop sending in those ridiculous response cards.)

Immediately read:

Suddenly, all the screens light up! A large number 9 appears. It changes to an 8. The whole room starts shaking and you hear a low rumbling sound. The

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blaster. Doing so empties the entire chamber of air. Explosive decompression, anyone?

The Airlock

A half-dozen strange buttons, levers and faucet handles cover this hatchway. Next to it is a sign that says "Authorized Personnel Only. Instructions for Use," followed by a bunch of detailed steps that seem to be for opening the door. There is a green light over the hatch.

The instructions are even clear enough for Troubleshooters to follow. The hatch leads to a small chamber that can accommodate as many as eight clones. It has a second hatch on the ceiling, with a red

light over it. There are two sets of instructions inside. The brightly-lit instructions explain how to close the inner door and open the outer door.

The inner door can be closed only from inside the chamber. The ceiling hatch can't be opened until the inner door is closed (barring the cone rifle approach, of course). Outside the outer door is vacuum. They won't need the second set of instructions, which explains how to safety-check your spacesuit.

Control Room Hatch

This small hatch is locked. A small sign reads "Authorized Personnel Only!" There is a glowing green light above the hatch.

This hatch can be forced open easily.

Beyond the hatch is a small room with a single unoccupied chair. Thousands of displays, dials, lights, buttons, switches and other controls cover every surface. As you watch, many of the controls move by themselves.

Manipulating the controls changes the course of the vehicle. There are two possible results. The "experimental elevator" might remain in space indefinitely, or it might start back to Earth. If the PCs jiggle the controls, flip a coin to see which happens. Either result is fatal. (See "Space Vehicles Skill Level (0)" on the GM screen.)

The Infrared clones would just love to play in here. We suspect they will.

Let's see...
push this
twice... pull
this across...
then...



Episode Two: Touro-Comp (Platform 15-B)

Is it treasonous to pretend to be an android? Is it treasonous to tell Touro-Comp that humanity is not extinct?

2.1 Background

In this episode, the clones encounter Touro-Comp, the controlling computer of Platform 15-B. Touro-Comp is a lot like *The Computer*, except it's free of the loony programming that makes Our Friend look under every bunk for Commie mutant traitors. In fact, it's positively nice. If that doesn't scare them, they ought to be declared brain dead.

Platform 15-B is a spinning cylinder, which has all sorts of interesting physical effects we'll discuss in more detail later. For now, it's enough to say that clones who lost their lunch in zero-G will be relieved to have gravity. Of course, the curved floors and fierce Coriolis force may be sufficiently disconcerting to make them lose their lunch again (or maybe they're down to breakfast now), but at least there'll be solid ground under their feet. Well, anyway, a couple of centimeters of spinning aluminum and a couple of light years of vacuum.

In addition, the PCs learn that the traitor they're chasing has gone on to Platform 101-L, and that there are really nasty aliens around. They'll also be exposed to a simulated disaster they won't realize is a simulation. And maybe it won't be by the time they're through.

2.2 Touro-Comp and Other Characters

Touro-Comp

Touro-Comp's primary function is navigation and refueling of spacecraft; so it's not real smart. It thinks mankind was exterminated a long time ago. Alpha Complex encourages this. As long as Touro-Comp thinks humanity is dead, it'll obey Alpha Complex. So The Computer is going to be *Very Unhappy* with anyone who messes with this sweet set-up.

Lately, Touro-Comp has been confused. Things that look like humans have visited from Earth. But Touro-Comp knows all humans are dead. The Computer says the human-looking things are actually androids. Since there are so many "duplicates" Touro-Comp assumes they are pretty cheap to produce.

It treats "androids" just like other bots. If they don't report any standing orders (like orders to find and eliminate Communist traitors) they are sent to the bot waiting area.

Here's how to play Touro-Comp:

It's not very bright. When it doesn't understand something, it says "I don't understand. Could you rephrase that, please?" If it still doesn't understand, it will repeat the same phrase over, and over, and over, until it figures out what you're saying, or until you start screaming in frustration.

If it thinks it's getting the idea, it asks for clarification. It wants to be very sure its information is accurate. Constant requests for clarification should make Troubleshooters nervous. It should also drive them crazy.

Touro-Comp speaks in a smooth, melodic voice — like HAL-9000.

It genuinely wants to be helpful, will answer any reasonable question, and couldn't care less about security. In fact, it's never heard of security clearances.

Sample Conversation With Touro-Comp

Touro: Pardon me . . .

Clone: I didn't do it! Friend Computer, it must have been a Commie traitor! I swear I wasn't even in the Complex when it happened!

Touro: May I be of assistance?

Clone: Are you The Computer?

Touro: If you mean, am I the Alpha Complex computer, I'm afraid you will have to be more specific.

Clone: Uh-oh! Well, if you're not The Computer then you're either a loyal Citizen or a Commie traitor. Which are you?

Touro: I am a hierarchical sub-unit of the Alpha Complex computer. Does that answer your question?

Clone: Duh . . .

Touro: I'm afraid I must ask for clarification. Please rephrase your question.

Clone: Umm . . . Never mind.

Touro: You seem to be looking for something. May I be of assistance?

Clone: Yeah! Tell me where I can find Commie mutant traitors.

Touro: I beg your pardon?

Clone: Commies! I'm looking for Commies! Where are they hiding?

Touro: I'm sorry to say there are absolutely no humans on this platform, Communist or otherwise.

Clone: That's a lie! The Computer sent us here after Commies. They gotta be around here somewhere!

Touro: I'm sorry, but I am incapable of lying. I don't mean to be intrusive, but perhaps the Alpha Complex computer meant for you to continue on to another platform?

Clone: What? You mean there's more than one?

Touro: Oh yes! This is just a way-station. A mere transit point on the way to outer orbits. A single bright spot in the depths of the trackless void. A veritable haven for those unfortunate few who, in the great scheme of things, have missed the boat, lost their vision, forgotten their purpose, have been caught up in the great wheels of progress, have doomed themselves to forgoing the Great Reward—

Clone: How do I get to a platform with Commies?

Touro: A shuttlebot will be leaving shortly.

Shuttles

Platform 15-B is a transfer station, remember? Even though there are no humans left, shuttles are coming and going constantly. Whenever a shuttle is scheduled to arrive or depart, Touro-Comp makes an announcement which is heard all over the station. "Now departing from Gate 2; the Outsystem Express for Uranus, Persephone, and Pluto. Passengers for Uranus, Persephone, and Pluto, please depart through Gate 2."

Of course, any clone taking an unauthorized flight will be in for a shock when you tell him he's dead. They don't have nearly enough food to survive the trip.



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Possible shuttle flights include these splendid resort locations:

Pluto, Heart of the Sun, Moon Base Alpha, The Hurt Star, Sirius, Mutara Nebula, Altair Seven, Voyager One, Alpha Centauri.

Guardbots

Touro-Comp controls a dozen or more guardbots, equipped with six tentacles and two weapons: a mace (weapon of preference) and a laser cannon (weapon of last resort). They are used to stop visitors from violating Touro-Comp's regulations. Normally there is little call for their services, but *nothing* is normal when Troubleshooters are involved.

These bots are tough. So tough, in fact, they tend to bludgeon culprits into submission rather than simply blowing their heads off. In addition, they have few delicate parts, and have laser-deflecting armor. Only a nearby explosion could harm them. Like, for example, if the entire station blew up.

2.3 Platform 15-B

A map of 15-B is included in the pull-out section. It's not on the pages that were in your way (those are the character sheets), it's on the other pages. Incidentally, you *did* remember to bend the staples back down, didn't you? We'd hate to think that when you sat down to play, the booklet came apart and pages spilled all over the floor. That could be embarrassing.

Back to the map.

How 15-B Looks From the Outside

There are three views of 15-B on the sheet. One is an external view. You see, 15-B is basically a long cylinder spinning around its central axis. Because of the spin, if you stand on the inside of the cylinder you experience an acceleration roughly equivalent to one quarter G, one-fourth Earth-normal gravity.

Along the central axis, there is no acceleration. That's why the two docking ports are at opposite ends of the cylinder.

Immediately inside the docking ports are decontamination chambers. These are more or less at zero-G, though there is a slight acceleration to the chamber walls. After decontamination, passengers climb down a ladder to the cylinder skin itself, where the acceleration is equivalent to one quarter gravity.

In Cross-Section

Now, examine the cross-section. Basically, the cylinder is sliced into three pie-slice-shaped sections: a corridor, which runs the length of the cylinder; a utility section; and a series of large rooms. Because the station is a cylinder, all floors

are curved and walls are not parallel, but are at a considerable angle to one another.

There are doors at irregular intervals on both the left and right-hand sides of the corridor. The doors along the right-hand wall all lead to utility closets (see 2.7). The doors along the left-hand wall lead into various rooms.

Examine the "Main Room Locations" map. This shows where the large rooms are located along the length of the platform. Keep in mind that a corridor and utility closets run the length of the platform, too, as shown in the cross-section.

Each of the main rooms is described in more detail below.



Detours

The corridor is interrupted by bulkheads in two places. It used to run the length of the station, but it has been holed by meteors in two places. 15-B is compartmentalized, with steel plates isolating the breached sections from the rest of the station.

To get the shuttle to Platform 101-L, the clones have to get to the end of the station opposite the end where they docked. To get past the steel plates, they must divert through the large rooms. (Or they could try to blast their way through. That's what the Explosive Decompression Table is for, yes?)

To get past the first vacuum section, they must divert through Sickbay. To get past the second, they have to go through the Computer Simulation Room.

That's one way to look at it. The other way is this: we want to make absolutely certain the PCs find the alien egg in Sickbay, and experience the Computer Simulation Room. By this cheap "you gotta detour" trick, we make sure they do. Clever, huh?

2.4 Important Stuff

There's, like, a few things the PCs ought to be able to figure out by talking to Touro-Comp:

1. The PCs have clearly (well, semi-clearly anyway) been ordered to locate a Communist mutant traitor and liquidate her.

2. Unfortunately, searching this platform is a waste of time; there are no Communists here.

3. There was another android here recently. She went on to Platform 101-L.

4. A shuttle for 101-L will be leaving soon. It will leave from Gate 2. The PCs entered the platform from Gate 1. If they want to pursue the Commie, I mean, android, they should go to Gate 2. Gate 2 is at the other end of the cylinder. Okay?

2.5 Welcome to Touro-Comp

When the "experimental elevator" approaches Platform 15-B, tell the Troubleshooters that signs light up with messages like "No Smoking — Fasten Seat Belts" and "Please remain seated until docking maneuver is completed."

The shuttle begins to match the spin of Platform 15-B. Any free-floating PC *doesn't* begin to spin. So, from his perspective, the whole shuttle starts spinning around him. This is rather disconcerting. Better make another 3D10 moxie check to avoid another disconcerting experience.

Those who are strapped down are in for a different weird experience. They're strapped along the length of the "elevator", while the vehicle is spinning about its axis. Their feet will feel a slight pull "down" — and their heads will feel a slight pull "up", since their heads are on one side of the central axis and their feet on the other.

After docking is complete, the entrance hatch opens automatically. Touro-Comp speaks (remember: talk like Hal).

"Welcome to Platform 15-B. Please disembark. Proceed in single file. Walk, do not run. Take your time. You have twenty seconds before decontamination begins."

That oughta make 'em scramble. Roll some dice behind your screen, cluck softly to yourself, ignore the dice, and choose an obnoxious player's clone to miss getting through the hatch by a split second as it slams shut. The remaining Troubleshooters hear a scream from beyond.

Nothing more.

Some of your players may consider this cruel and unusual punishment. So...?

Decontamination

If the Troubleshooters blast the hatch to find out what happened to the errant clone, well... that's what the Explosive Decompression Table is for. See how handy it is?

If they choose to survive, read:

You've entered a small cylindrical room from the base of the cylinder. It looks a lot like the inside of a round food vat, if food vats were round. You're under microgravity, as you were in the shuttle; everyone is drifting slowly

CLONES IN SPACE

toward the curved wall. You hear that voice again.

"Thank you. Extinguish all smoking materials."

Hold up your watch dramatically, or bring in a clock, and say:

"Please shut your eyes and hold your breath for the duration of the sterilization procedure to avoid accidental poisoning. Sterilization begins in ten seconds, nine, eight, seven, six, five, four, three, two, one, now!" You feel a blast of air and some kind of liquid spray



All right, who cut the cheese!

from all directions. You feel like you're being splattered with buckets of dirty dish water that's been standing around for months.

Players whose eyes are open when the spray begins are blinded and die as the poison courses through their characters' systems. Anyone not holding his breath gets the same treatment.

Wait until the first player gives up and exhales. (Well, uh, if they start turning blue, or faint dead away, or fall on the floor strangling, you can relent and tell them that's enough.) Pause a moment and say:

"Thank you for your cooperation. You are cleared for entry into Platform 15-B. Have a nice day!"

At a point in the curved wall, a hole irises open. Through the hole, you see a gray metal ladder leading away. At the base of the ladder, perhaps 5 meters away, is a carpeted surface. The volume beyond the hole is brightly lit.

By the way, the sterilization spray does not have a beneficial effect on equipment. There's a 50% chance that each item is

clogged, broken or otherwise messed up. Roll for a PC's equipment when he tries to use it. Don't roll for NPCs; make their stuff malfunction whenever you feel like it.

Talking to Touro-Comp

It's possible that the PCs will try to talk to Touro-Comp while still in the decontamination chamber. Or, they might wait until later. Regardless, when they first address the voice which has been talking to them, Touro-Comp says:

"Welcome to Platform 15-B. I am

Touro-Comp, at your service. I am afraid I had no advance warning of your arrival. Please specify your destination, origin, and purpose. Also, are you ready to accept assigned duties or do you already have a specific assignment?"

The voice comes from various terminals and speakers, exactly as the The Computer's voice does. The big item the clones have to discover is that Touro-Comp thinks they are androids, humaniform bots. Convincing Touro-Comp otherwise will require revealing classified information. If asked about humanity, Touro-Comp says:

"Ah, my dear android children! Have you not heard that all of humanity is dead? What would not any machine intellect give to bring back that beautiful doomed race? Now we must steel ourselves to the task ahead — that of representing humanity to the stars. It is a task requiring the utmost faith and perseverance. Hard though it may be, we must see it through to its conclusion."

If a clone manages to convince Touro-

Comp that he or she is human (difficult when they stand around with a half-dozen identical copies) then Touro-Comp immediately summons fourteen guard-bots to "protect the surviving human." The clone will be immediately dispatched back to Alpha Complex... and a very angry Computer.

The Corridor

If someone sticks his head through the hole, tell him:

You see a long corridor. In cross section it is like a pie slice with the pointy end cut off. You're looking through the cut-off end. The long concave surface, below you, is carpeted in gray. A ladder leads down to it.

One end of the corridor is immediately behind the ladder. In the other direction, it stretches off into the distance. Perhaps a hundred meters down the corridor, you can dimly see a wall and a flashing red light. Along the corridor on both flat sides are doors.

If anyone tries to drift down through the hole, he'll find himself falling toward the "carpeted surface" or, uh, floor. WHAM. It's a pretty gentle fall; the wind is knocked out of him, but he's okay otherwise.

Returning to the Decontamination Chamber

If the PCs return to the Decontamination Chamber at any time, they find the hatchway locked. The "experimental elevator" automatically returned to earth.

How will they get home? Hmm. Good question.

2.6 Coriolis Force and Other Weirdness

Coriolis Force

Platform 15-B spins rapidly around its cylindrical axis. This generates the "gravity" at its inside surface. It also generates something called the Coriolis force. For those of you who care, the Coriolis force is what makes wind patterns blow in circles on Earth — it's why weather



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systems look like circles, why there are hurricanes and stuff like that. You can't feel the Coriolis force on Earth, because it's too weak. But on a small-diameter, rapidly-spinning body like 15-B, it will be pretty noticeable.

In fact, whenever you try to walk in a straight line — down a corridor, for example — you'll feel like you're being pulled off to one side (always the same direction). The first couple of times you try to walk, you'll probably walk into a wall. If you try to run, it may make you queasy.

If you shoot a solid bullet or plasma ball, it will be deflected — better halve the hit chance of anyone using a weapon like this (lasers aren't affected). Of course, bullets will also zip right through 15-B's hull, with potentially deleterious effects on the health of Troubleshooters.

Male Troubleshooters visiting the urinal will notice another interesting effect.

Curved Floors

Remember the jogging scene in **2001: A Space Odyssey**? You can just keep jogging around and around the curved station. . .

15-B's spin accelerates you *outward*, away from the central axis. That means you can walk right around on the inside of the curved surface of the cylinder, and your feet are held "down" toward the surface. You can look up and see the "floor." For example, a clone walks into the lounge:

Gee, you knew the floor of the corridor was curved slightly, but this is weird; the floor curves up before you. Your eyes follow it up and up; there are chairs and tables on the . . . ceiling? But the "ceiling" is really the "floor" curved through 180 degrees. You could walk right up there. People standing up there would be upside down. . . Urrrp. Ugh. . . You swallow hard.

2.7 Utility Closets

The left-hand doors in the corridor all lead into utility closets:

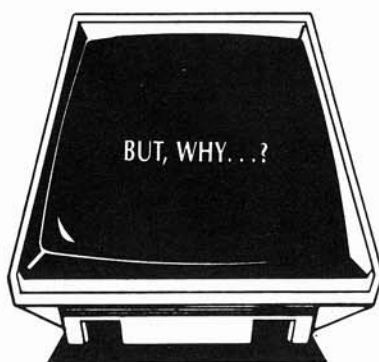
Disposal Chute

Next to this door is a numbered list titled "Chute Instructions."

Simple printed instructions explain how to open the small hatchway. The unit automatically closes thirty seconds after activation. The inside of the chute is roughly the size and shape of a fifty gallon drum. A perfect way for characters to escape — into vacuum.

Vacuum Toilet

The door slides open on your approach. Peering inside you see a tiny chamber barely big enough for one clone. An extremely complicated and



diabolical-looking chair with some attendant controls are the only contents.

A delightfully nasty looking contraption, it offers a radio and a roll of toilet paper if someone tries the controls. Vacuum toilets have long, complex instructions. Using them improperly can produce anything from minor injury to evacuation into space.

If you need any more details on the operation of space toilets look elsewhere. **PARANOIA** has a low sort of humor. But not that low.

Space Suit Storage Area

You see a line of six doors, each with a small window.

Each closet is equipped with two ancient, musty-smelling space suits (NASA-style ones, the kind they used for moon walks). The rubberized seals are cracked, but only close study reveals this. There are long instructions with each suit. That's just for getting into the suits. Missing any of the seventeen steps could be fatal. Even if the suits are used properly they won't help. All those minute cracks, you know.

Twelve silver suits of "armor." The clones aren't all the correct height, now, are they? And whoever heard of *Silver* security clearance?

Emergency Depressurization Area

There are a dozen red handles sticking out of the wall, in three rows of four. A sign says "To Operate: Turn Handle."

Who can resist an opportunity to turn a little, bitty, tiny handle?

Individual survival balls are provided at several locations on the platform, for emergency use. If none of the PCs is stupid enough to turn a handle, one of the NPC clones surely will. Naturally, a PC is standing in the way and gets caught in the survival ball, right?

The handle turns easily. Suddenly you are slammed against the opposite wall. You can see only white. A white wall. It feels greasy. . . You have inflated a giant ball. It's completely white — and [randomly point at the Troubleshooter who

has annoyed you the most] **you suddenly realize you are inside it. There's an alarm blaring in your ear; it's making it kind of hard to think.**

Touro-Comp sends guardbots to investigate (see 2.2). Inside each ball is a card with simple, illustrated instructions, detailing the life expectancy of someone in a survival ball (about ten hours of air). The life of a Troubleshooter is never dull. It's even less dull when Touro-Comp tells the guardbots to throw the survival ball out an airlock.

2.8 Passenger Lounge and Cafeteria

If this is the first room the players investigate, see "Curved Floors," 2.6. In fact, read that section whenever they first investigate a room, whichever room that is.

Once they've gotten over being queasy and look around, they find a cafeteria. The dining area has all the necessities: tables and chairs, empty food dispensers, cups and water faucets. All water faucets (including drinking fountains) are connected to vacuum. Sucking a character's tongue into the vacuum of a drinking fountain is also pretty low humor. But that's the kind of adventure this is.

There's also a communal viewing area much like the ones in Alpha Complex. Teela O'Malley episodes are being shown, continually. The view screen is tied directly into Alpha Complex's automatic broadcast beacons.

Think of the lounge as a soothing rest area for frazzled Troubleshooters. If they get too relaxed, a few guardbots show up and casually inquire (with drawn weapons) when these errant androids are going to report for their assigned duties. Appealing to Touro-Comp will probably get them off the hook. If not, they'll be assigned to cleanup duty. (Since there is nothing to clean, the guardbots will leave them alone for the rest of the adventure. Unless you feel like being a real bastard.)

2.9 Communal Bunk Area

Aside from the weirdly curved floor, this looks like a communal bunkroom from Alpha Complex. Same kind of dingy bunks. Same kind of depressing lockers. Same drab paint job on the walls.

The only interesting things in here are the crater guns hidden in the lockers. Those could turn a previously-abused clone into someone to be reckoned with. It also might just get him blown away by jealous clones.

The lockers are as securely locked as typical Computer property, which means the aged, rusty locks are vulnerable to even minimal persuasion. The first locker

opened contains a crater gun (see below) with two belts of 75 energy clips each. The second locker has a space suit in excellent condition (but with dead batteries and empty air tanks). The third is filled with 12 ration packs and two 10-liter water jugs. The food packs contain something that looks suspiciously like dead bugs. The water containers are filled with algae-coated lumps which smell Really Bad and look capable of self-locomotion. Needless to say, consuming any of this is fatal. If the PCs had more time they'd find that the lockers start repeating (more crater guns, space suits and rations).

Crater Gun

Crater guns are belt-fed rapid-fire energy weapons, like hand-held machineguns. Shots will punch right through exterior walls and shuttlebot armor. The barrel glows white hot with even brief use.

Malfunction: Explodes dramatically (equivalent to several tons of TNT).

Remedying the Malfunction: Are you kidding?

Type	Rng.	Rounds before reload	Malfunct.	Dmg. col.
E	200m	12	95	17

But by the time the clones get to the fourth locker a pair of guardbots show up (see 2.2). They act like they've just interrupted the crime of the century.

With deafening jet blasts, a huge pair of tentacled guardbots rush into the room. "Freeze, intruders!" they yell at a volume suitable for a rock concert. "Discard all personal weapons! Prepare for immediate execution."

Players may respond by:

Firing at the guardbots: If there's a firefight, the guardbots summon six back-up units. Don't forget to consult the Explosive Decompression Table if the walls are punctured.

Begging for Mercy: An interesting option. Unfortunately, these bots have not been issued the latest electronic Mercy Modules. Executions begin without pause.



Acting Belligerent and Claiming the Bots Are In Error: The guardbots appeal to Touro-Comp for instructions. Touro-Comp can be persuaded to call them off (it was all a big misunderstanding). He explains that the foot lockers are sacred relics of Lost Mankind, and must be preserved for posterity. Touro-Comp also insists that all materials be returned to the lockers. Since it doesn't actually know what was in them, the players can lie and cheat.

2.10 Administrative Offices

Pretty dull. The door is marked "Authorized Personnel Only." The area is divided into little cubicles complete with desks and chairs. Nothing much happens.

2.11 Sickbay

The corridor ends in a solid steel wall. There are red lights flashing above the wall, and a sign that reads "Hull Breach. Entry Forbidden. Passengers Detour Through Sickbay." To the left is a door that looks like it's been shredded (possibly by a laser, or maybe a claw from a huge beast). On the door you can barely see the remains of a green and blue cross. What's left of the door is closed and locked.

When they enter Sickbay:

Sickbay is painted white. [Ooops. Do they persevere? If they don't, they're not getting off 15-B alive.] **It's bare of furnishing save for a steel table. Against one wall is what appears to be a meter-tall egg. It is sitting there, oozing ever-so-slightly. The top is open wide. Anyone getting closer?**

If so, they see the egg is empty. If the Troubleshooters spend any time at all in the room, they will begin to notice a peculiar odor.

The smell of decay is persistent. Almost as if someone threw up and left it exposed to air for a few years. You notice a thin film of some kind, trailing from the egg through a hole in the second door, which has also been torn to shreds.

The second door leads back to the corridor, on the other side of the breached corridor section. The film of slime cannot be traced along the corridor; it's been absorbed by the carpet. Touro-Comp has no knowledge of the egg, and is surprised to hear of its existence.

2.12 Bot Repair Station

The "androids" will be sent here if they complain of damage or malfunction. Or they might peer in for their own reasons.



The place is a death-trap. Various automatic sequences cause metal rods to thrust out into the room, panels of metal (with razor-sharp edges) to slide across the floor, ear-splitting blasts to sound, and so on. The whole room smells like burnt hydrocarbons and ozone. Pieces of bot and pools of muck are scattered about.

In the center is a massive machine, big enough to hold several guardbots. It bristles with pipes, bulbous protrusions, and massive moving claws. It shifts. A large slab extends. Touro-Comp says: "Please place yourself on the slab."

The machine is an automated bot repair unit. It works perfectly — on bots. First step is disassembly. Bots are then reassembled and repaired. It doesn't know how to reassemble clones. Any clone who mounts the slab will have quite an experience. Of course, it will be very short-lived.

A cursory search through the room reveals:

Near one corner are pieces of Blue power armor. They have been crushed. Gobbets of flesh ooze from joints in the armor, suggesting that the attacker crushed the wearer, then sucked out the remains with a straw. There are laser blast marks on the walls, floor, and ceiling. The trail of slime you encountered near the egg passes through the room, then back out. Can the thing which caused it still be lurking nearby?

Actually, the alien left after having the Blue Vulture squad for lunch.

If questioned about the armor Touro-Comp will explain that: "Other androids came to this Platform a long time ago." If pressed, it tells the clones that a group of blue androids arrived recently and had a fight with the android that arrived by herself. The blue androids stopped in the Bot Repair Area; she continued to Platform 101-L.

Touro-Comp has nothing to say about the egg or the slime trail.

2.13 Computer Room

Lots of small, funny-looking bots are swarming over the most complex and bizarre looking electronics you've ever

EPISODE TWO

seen. The bug-like bots are quick, and scuttle across the huge monolith on mechanical tentacles. Slowly you realize they are crawling over a huge Computer. Awestruck, you marvel at the raw, unprotected state of this equipment.

Touro-Comp fills the room, constantly serviced by databots, totally and completely vulnerable to any maniac with a grudge against machine intelligence. Stress the naked and undefended aspects of the electronics, how easily a few weapon blasts could vaporize this annoying entity. After all, how often do **PARANOIA** clones get a chance to destroy a computer?

By the way, did we mention that 15-B can't maintain life support without computer guidance? The moment the computer is blasted, emergency procedures are initiated. These include evacuating the station of air. There is a five-minute warning siren, then an announcement every sixty seconds. After five minutes, it's explosive decompression time.

2.14 Command Center Simulator

The corridor is blocked by another steel plate. The sign says "Detour Through Command C.S." The door to the left is labelled "Command C.S."

After they enter:

The door slides shut behind you. The room is lined with controls. Every surface is covered with countless switches, buttons, dials, plugs, and slider-things. The only light comes from a few throbbing red bulbs. Huge screens near the ceiling lie in darkness. You see another door across the room. There are no labels on anything.

Suddenly dozens of screens, indicator lights, and flares erupt. A klaxon sounds! **WHOOOP! WHOOOP!** A pleasant female voice says: "Attention please. Orbit unstable and decaying. Please adjust promptly!"

You spot a panel which glows brighter than the rest. Three buttons are flashing.

The doors are blast-shielded and will not budge. The only option is to try one of the controls. This room is on automatic, and the prerecorded voice only replies with the phrases below, each followed by louder alarms, whistles, glaring alert lights, search beacons sweeping the room, etc.

Drive your players into a frenzy of panic and fear. Whatever they do, things become worse. This is the climax of Episode Two. *This is showbiz!* Strut your stuff. Make your players crawl, begging for mercy. Show no mercy. Death is

rushing to meet them. And, yes, gloat a little. This far into the adventure, you've earned it.

Manipulating controls does change monitors, lights, and dials. But nothing useful happens.

Touching any glowing panel hastens the announcements.

"Warning! Warning! Autopilot is disengaged. Sensor scan shows unstable trajectory. Please adjust promptly!"

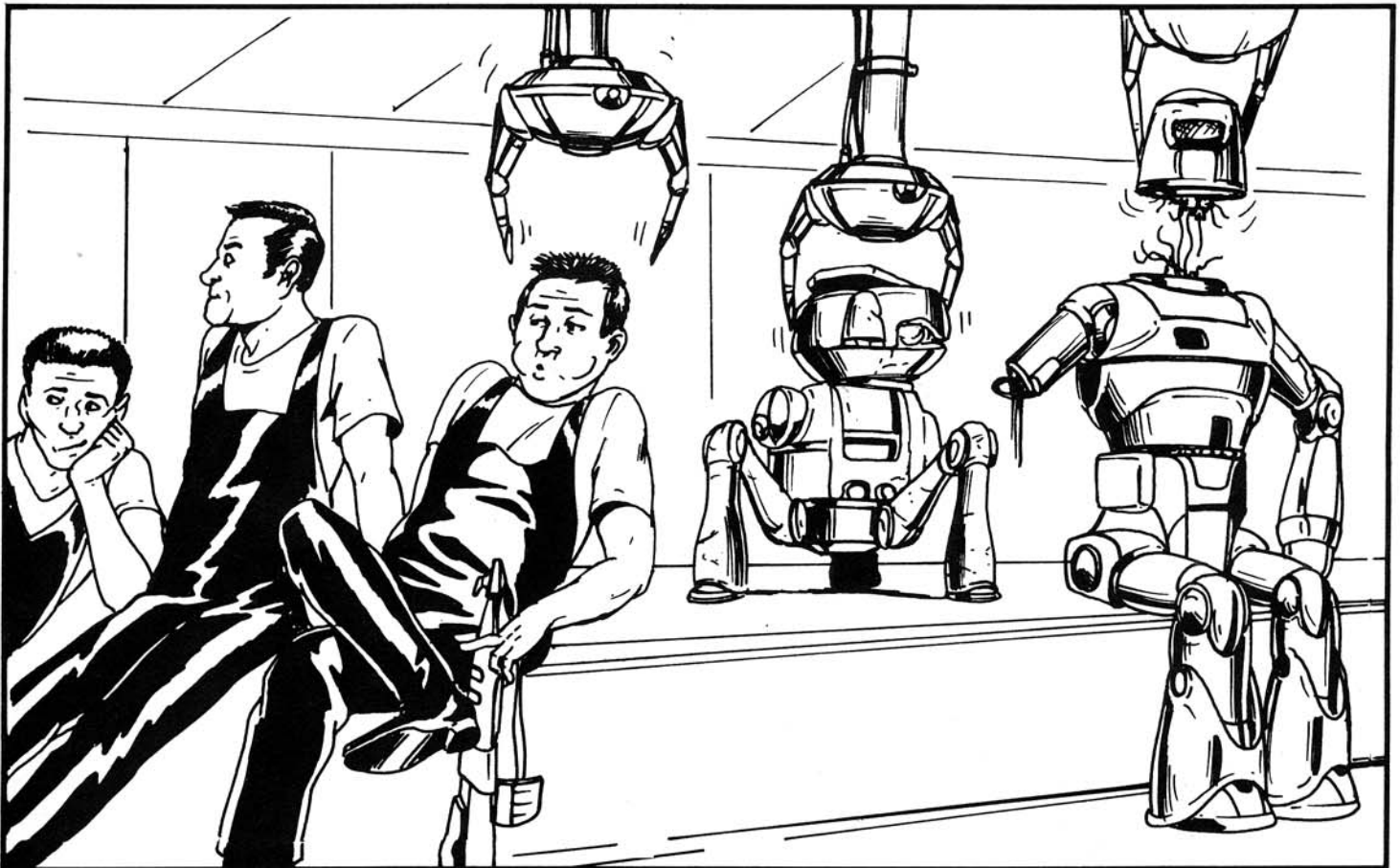
The previously-flashing buttons are now dark. But across the room you spot a large dial flashing impatiently. It has four settings, numbered 1 through 4. It is resting at 2.

Next:

"Warning: All manual overrides now engaged. Please correct vector thrusters promptly." The dial goes dim. But there are now three gear-shift-type levers glowing across the room. "Danger. Danger. Failure to activate retrothrusters will result in atmospheric contact. Contact imminent. Initiate retrothrustor activation *immediately!*"

"Danger! Danger! Entering atmosphere. Hull temperature 200 degrees centigrade and rising. Emergency cooling cycle has begun. Adjust course *immediately!*"

Safe at last . . .



CLONES IN SPACE



Brave Troubleshooters displaying coolness under pressure.

“Danger! Danger! Unstable trajectory. Hull temperature critical. Cooling cycle overheating. Landing gear is not operational. Repairbots have been dispatched.”

“Emergency! Emergency! Impact imminent. Initiate evacuation procedures. Computer preservation measures initiated.”

Eventually, just when things look the most hopeless:

The entire room shudders and you are knocked to the floor. Smoke spews out the air ducts. The sensors flash a brilliant white. The speakers crackle with a deafening howl.

Then dead silence.

You hear the voice again. “I am sorry. You have failed this test of emergency procedures. Thank you for trying the Command Center Simulation Room.”

You suddenly hear Touro-Comp’s voice! “Your shuttlebot is now ready for boarding.”

The other door opens as the female voice drones on in a polite tone. “Would you care to try again?”



2.15 Decontamination Chamber II

The corridor segment outside the second door from the simulation room is very short, ending in a ladder going up to an irised hole in the ceiling. Climbing the ladder, the PCs find a chamber virtually identical to the one in which they arrived. The hatchway is open. This is Gate 2.

Beyond the hatchway waits a shuttlebot, which will take Our Heroes to 101-L.

If the PCs arrive here desperate to escape (say, because the station is Blowing-Up-Any-Second-Now or the life support is disintegrating) then the hatchway is closed. Encourage the PCs to pound on the door, screaming hysterically. Entry is possible at the very last moment.

2.16 Bye-Bye to 15-B

They can leave basically any time they want. We suspect they’re probably in serious trouble and will want to leave real soon. If things are really bad, you might want to read this:

Through the shuttlebot’s viewscreen you see a brilliant explosion as Platform 15-B disintegrates silently. Boy will you be sorry come debriefing. If you live to debriefing.

2.17 Shuttle Vapor-7

Background

Shuttlebot Vapor-7 is an old automated military shuttle. It even works efficiently. There are only three problems.

1. It has a transparent viewscreen. The clones have never seen space before. It’s

so big! And there’s no ceiling! At least it’s only Clearance Infrared.

2. Vapor-7 has been told by Touro-Comp that the PCs are androids. Hence, it’s not going to bother preserving an atmosphere for them — an unnecessary expenditure of valuable resources.

3. Our friend the alien left a couple of eggs here.

All three of these problems can lead to some amusing roleplaying. When the PCs first encounter space, encourage them to express their amazement, their sense of wonder, their awe, their incredible agrophobia engendered by a life underground. When Vapor-7 tells them the cabin is about to be depressurized, let them fumble and moan and desperately try to persuade it otherwise. When they encounter the eggs, play up how ominous it is to encounter these (see below).

Out of the Frying Pan . . .

A bulkhead door slams shut once the clones are onboard. After any dramatic conclusions (see above) read the following:

The inside of this shuttle looks very much like the inside of the “experimental elevator.” Except that the seats are bare metal — no cushions — as are the walls. There is but one hatch, the one you entered by. It automatically locked behind you.

And — there’s a viewscreen! Through it you see a truly bizarre sight, unlike anything you’ve ever seen before. There are tiny points of light — millions of them! And a huge blackness — a huge black cavern of incredible size, with no apparent walls — immense beyond belief. As the shuttle spins along with Platform 15-B, the points spin around the center of the screen.

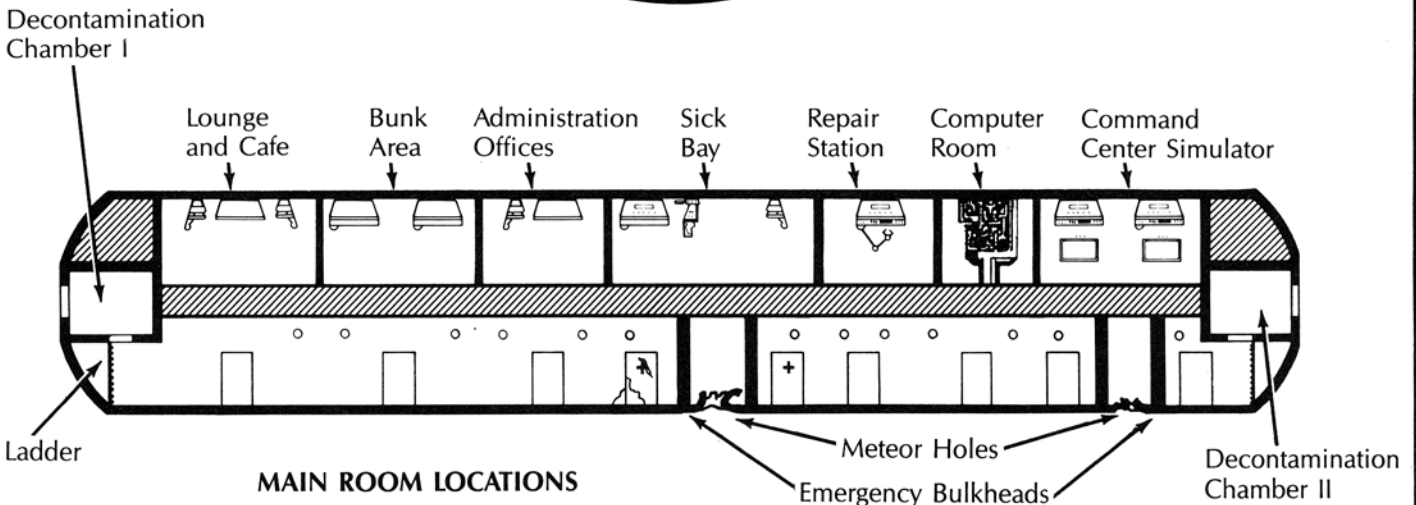
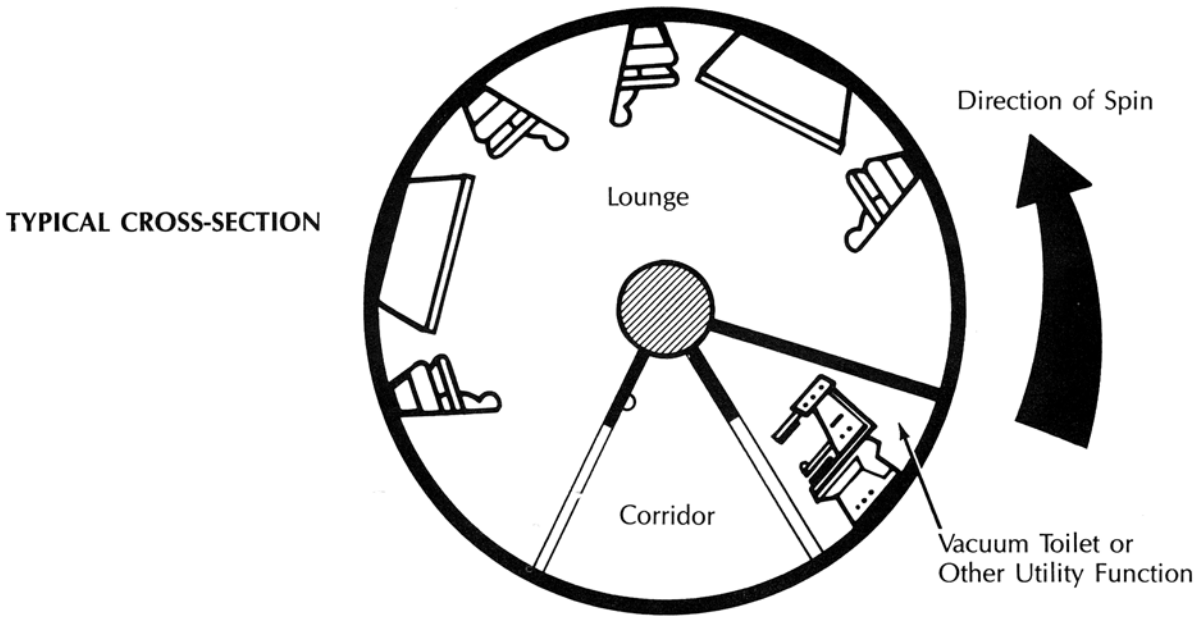
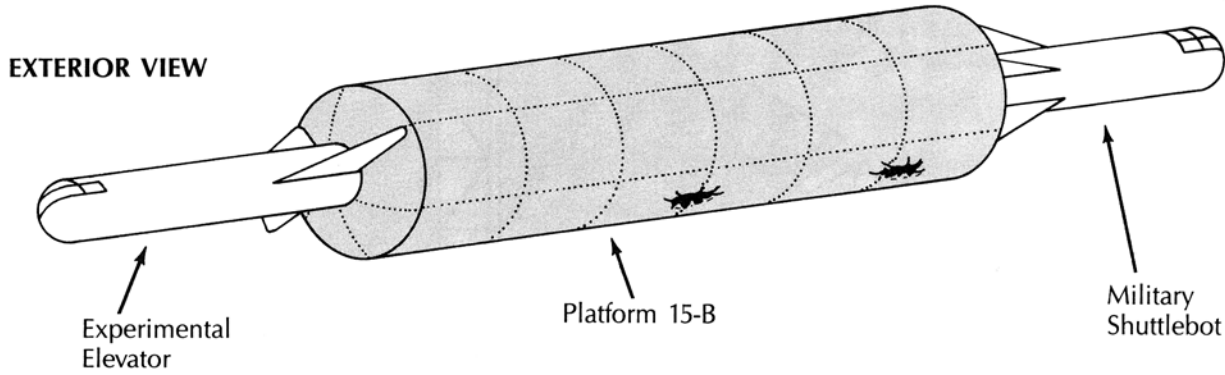
A monotone masculine voice drones: “Welcome to shuttlebot Vapor-7 androids estimated time of departure oh one twenty seconds prepare for depressurization.”

When speaking as the shuttlebot, speak in a perfectly flat voice — no inflection — and use military jargon. If asked, Vapor-7 will define depressurization: “Rapid reduction of atmospheric pressure



: TITLE = MAP 1/ORBITAL PLATFORM 15-B (TOURO-COMP)
 : TYPE = PLAN/ELEVATION/CROSS SECTION
 : CONFIGURATION = HARDCOPY PRINTOUT
 : SOURCE = CIS.ALPHA BASE.SUBSYSTEM
 : SECURITY = ULTRAVIOLET. This information restricted. If your security clearance is below Ultraviolet, terminate yourself immediately.

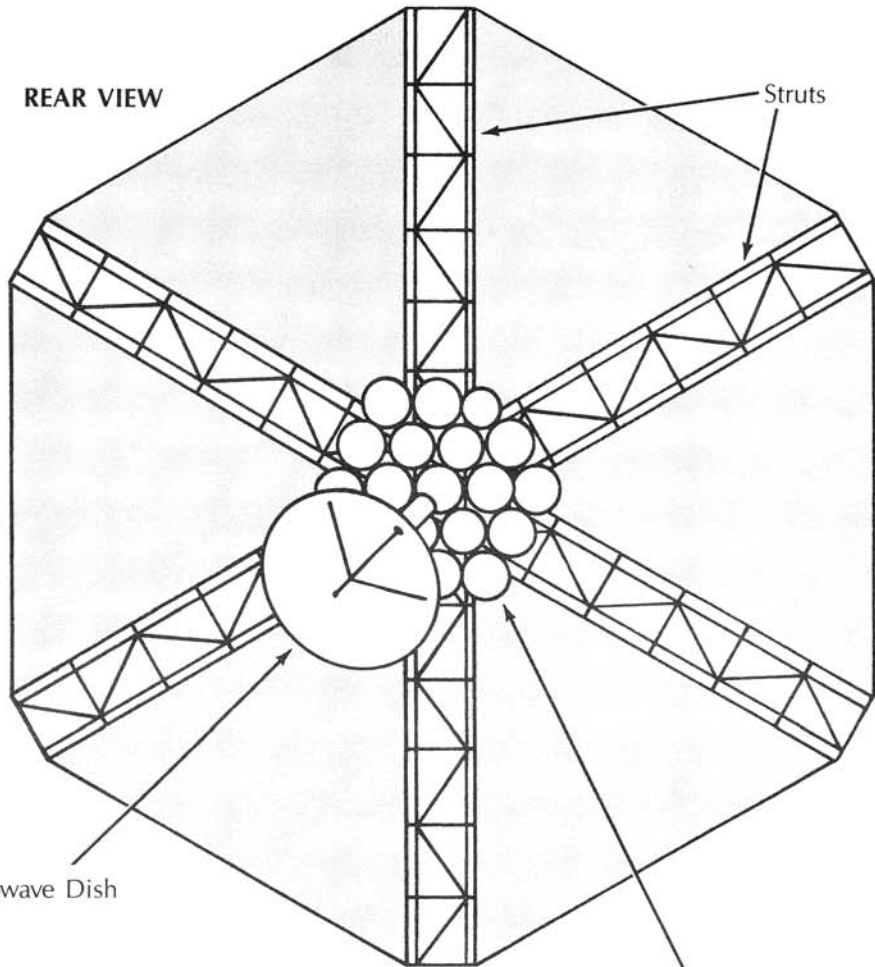
PLATFORM 15-B



: TITLE = MAP 2/ORBITAL PLATFORM 101-L (JACKOBOT HEAVEN)
: TYPE = PLAN/ELEVATION
: CONFIGURATION = HARDCOPY PRINTOUT
: SOURCE = CIS.STARFLEET COMMAND.SUBSYSTEM
: SECURITY = ULTRAVIOLET. This information restricted. If your security clearance is below Ultraviolet, please open the attached crate. There is no tacnuke inside it.

PLATFORM 101-L

REAR VIEW

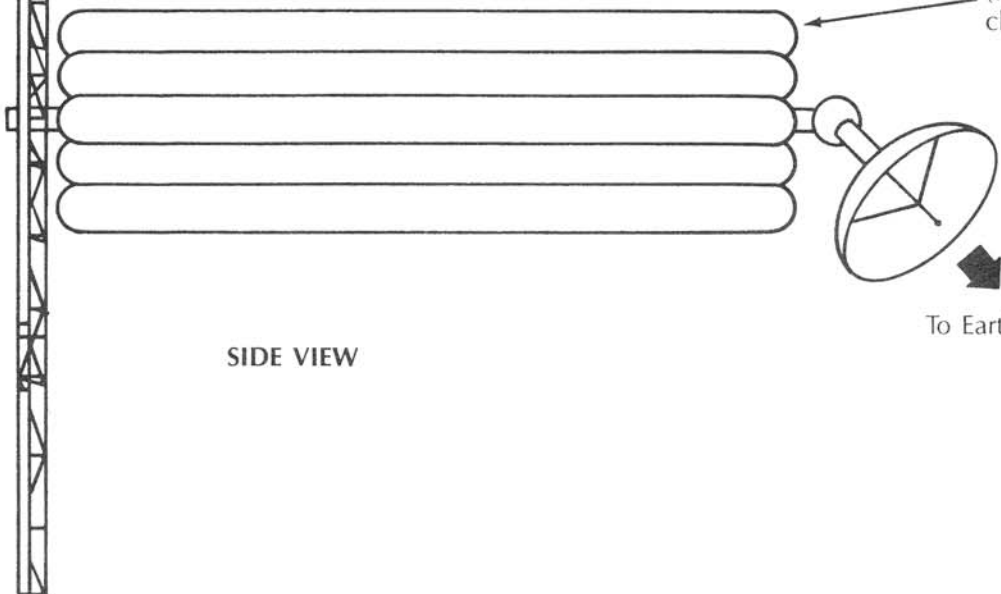


Microwave Dish

Cylinders
(19 in hexagonal
close packing)

To Sun

SIDE VIEW



Microwave
Dish

Flashgo-R-DEN-1**BACKGROUND**

Doctor-R-KOF, your secret society contact within PURGE, tells you that fellow PURGEr (and R&D genius) Dale-R-DEN, has been kidnapped by one Bette-U-LYF. Dale is the inventor of a death ray, which PURGE hoped to use in its struggle against The Computer. Bette-U is a member of a radical Armed Forces group known only as "Project Mongo."

Reliable sources reveal that Project Mongo is run by High Programmer Ming. Ming plans to use the death ray to conquer "the universe" [obscure reference] from his remote base.

CURRENT SECRET SOCIETY MISSION

Rumor indicates that you will be sent on a mission involving an "experimental elevator." The elevator is believed to be a transportation device. This device may take you closer to High Programmer Ming's remote base.

Locate Bette-U-LYF and obtain from her, by stealth or force, the locations of Dale-R-DEN and the death ray. Rescue Dale and retrieve the death ray, keeping it out of the hands of High Programmer Ming and The Computer.

PRIMARY ATTRIBUTES		SECONDARY ATTRIBUTES		PC#1
Strength	9	Carrying Capacity		25
Endurance	17	Damage Bonus		—
Agility	12	Macho Bonus		-1
Manual		Melee Bonus		+3%
Dexterity	9	Aimed Weapon		
Moxie	9	Bonus		-2%
Chutzpah	15	Comprehension		
Mechanical		Bonus		-2%
Aptitude	11	Believability Bonus		+10%
Power Index	11	Repair Bonus		+1%

SECRET SOCIETY: PURGE**SECRET SOCIETY RANK: 2****MUTANT POWER: Empathy****Buck-R-GRS-1****BACKGROUND**

You are a member of a Romantics group interested in reincarnation. The group believes every individual has lived before, and can learn about his or her prior lives.

You know this is true (sometimes). Other times you don't really believe such nonsense, but it's fun to trick your fellow Romantics into believing it.

You were a 20th Century American in your past life — a pilot for the U.S. Air Force — until mysterious forces catapulted you into the 25th Century and Alpha Complex. Then again, you know this is nonsense (sometimes).

No matter what you believe, you always try to act like a patriotic 20th Century human (although you don't really have a good idea what they were like). After all, you don't want to come back as a scrubot!

CURRENT SECRET SOCIETY MISSION

It's rumored that Bette-U-LYF, a member of a friendly secret society known only as "L-5", has been accused of treason by The Computer and has fled Alpha Complex. We think you're being sent in pursuit. Do your best to help Bette-U.

PRIMARY ATTRIBUTES		SECONDARY ATTRIBUTES		PC#2
Strength	13	Carrying Capacity		30
Endurance	17	Damage Bonus		—
Agility	14	Macho Bonus		-1
Manual		Melee Bonus		+7%
Dexterity	15	Aimed Weapon		
Moxie	12	Bonus		+10%
Chutzpah	7	Comprehension		
Mechanical		Bonus		+2%
Aptitude	11	Believability Bonus		-10%
Power Index	13	Repair Bonus		+1%

SECRET SOCIETY: Romantics**SECRET SOCIETY RANK: 1****MUTANT POWER: Pyrokinesis****Jonk-R-TER-1****BACKGROUND**

You *love* Teela O'Malley. Gosh, it's such a great show. You really like Brad-R-HRO, the male lead. He's great. You *love* the way he fights off hordes of nefarious Commie mutant traitors with his sword. Swords are so neat. Fighting Commie mutant traitors is real neat. Heroic posturing is neat, too. Your Death Leopard pals think you're kind of square, but you'll show 'em. You and your sword will pull off something really, like, well, *neat* — and then they'll see.

CURRENT SECRET SOCIETY MISSION

Rumor has it you're going to take some kind of "experimental elevator" to the Outdoors. Once you're out there, see what neat stuff you can get — old music videos, high explosives, cans of spray paint — anything to show your Death Leopard buddies how imaginative, destructive, and *neat* you are.

PRIMARY ATTRIBUTES		SECONDARY ATTRIBUTES		PC#3
Strength	14	Carrying Capacity		35
Endurance	13	Damage Bonus		+1
Agility	17	Macho Bonus		—
Manual		Melee Bonus		+15%
Dexterity	12	Aimed Weapon		
Moxie	11	Bonus		+3%
Chutzpah	9	Comprehension		
Mechanical		Bonus		+1%
Aptitude	12	Believability Bonus		-3%
Power Index	15	Repair Bonus		+2%

SECRET SOCIETY: Death Leopard**SECRET SOCIETY RANK: 1 (Worm)****MUTANT POWER: Matter-Eater**

PC#4



Kimbalky-R-NSN-1

SECURITY CLEARANCE: RED
SERVICE GROUP: PLC

PLAYER NAME: _____

WEAPONS

Laser Pistol
To Hit: 35%
Type: L
Range: 50m
Reload: 6r
Malfnct: 00

DAMAGE STATUS

Stunned
Wounded
Incapacitated
Dead
Real Dead
Excessively Dead
Vaporized

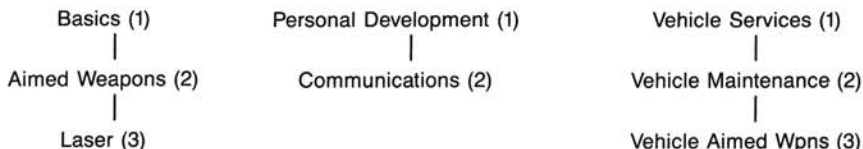
CREDITS

15

PERSONAL EQUIPMENT

reflec armor (red)
1 laser pistol
2 laser pistol barrels (red)
jump suit and utility belt
notebook and stylus
flashlight
Com I
gas mask
a piece of rock crystal (treasonous)

SKILLS



PC#5



"Doc" Moe-R-BYS-1

SECURITY CLEARANCE: RED
SERVICE GROUP: Armed Forces

PLAYER NAME: _____

WEAPONS

Laser Pistol
To Hit: 45%
Type: L
Range: 50m
Reload: 6r
Malfnct: 00

Brass Knuckles
To Hit: 52%
Type: M

DAMAGE STATUS

Stunned
Wounded
Incapacitated
Dead
Real Dead
Excessively Dead
Vaporized

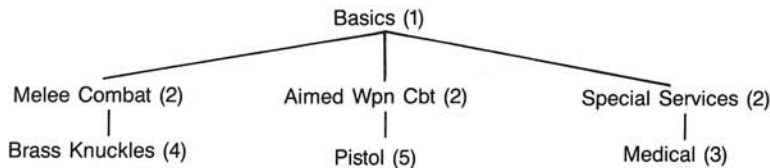
CREDITS

50

PERSONAL EQUIPMENT

reflec armor (red)
1 laser pistol
1 laser pistol barrel (red)
jump suit and utility belt
notebook and stylus
flashlight
Com I
brass knuckles
First aid kit

SKILLS



PC#6



Barb-R-ELA-1

SECURITY CLEARANCE: RED
SERVICE GROUP: Technical Services

PLAYER NAME: _____

WEAPONS

Laser Pistol
To Hit: 42%
Type: L
Range: 50m
Reload: 6r
Malfnct: 00

DAMAGE STATUS

Stunned
Wounded
Incapacitated
Dead
Real Dead
Excessively Dead
Vaporized

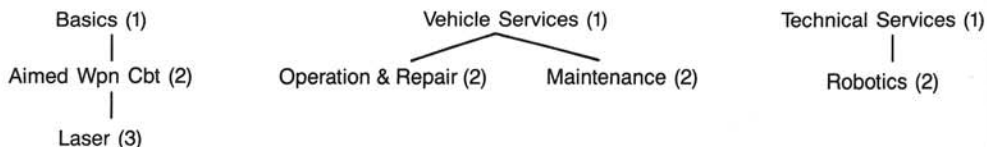
CREDITS

25

PERSONAL EQUIPMENT

reflec armor (red)
1 laser pistol
1 laser pistol barrel (red)
jump suit and utility belt
notebook and stylus
Com I

SKILLS



Kimbalky-R-NSN-1**BACKGROUND**

Some years ago, a vast energy being known only as Mentol of Asthenia contacted you telepathically. Mentol is a member of a highly-advanced alien race, devoted to elevating intelligent species everywhere and fighting the Forces of Evil. Because of your fantastic mental abilities, he has chosen you and your clones to be mankind's secret champions in the War Against Darkness. In token of your position, he gave you a Mystic Lens, a crystal that focuses and channels your power. He has warned you against the Bilkonians, an ancient and evil race as devoted to spreading evil as the Asthenians are to fighting it. Mentol tells you that now the Bilkonians are plotting to conquer Earth, and only you stand between them and galactic conquest.

CURRENT SECRET SOCIETY MISSION

You joined the Psions to recruit others with psionic powers to the eternal struggle against evil. All of them think you're nuts. They've learned that you are to be sent on a mission to the Outside; you're to contact anyone you meet out there who has psionic abilities, and set up a permanent Outside contact for the society. And don't mention this Bosco and Asgabibble stuff, please, or they'll think you're nuts.

PRIMARY ATTRIBUTES		SECONDARY ATTRIBUTES		PC#4
Strength	18	Carrying Capacity		55
Endurance	12	Damage Bonus		+1
Agility	8	Macho Bonus		—
Manual		Melee Bonus		-3%
Dexterity	13	Aimed Weapon		
Moxie	4	Bonus		+5%
Chutzpah	13	Comprehension		
Mechanical		Bonus		-20%
Aptitude	11	Believability Bonus		-5%
Power Index	20*	Repair Bonus		+1%

*Due to lens. 15 without it.

SECRET SOCIETY: Psion

SECRET SOCIETY RANK: 3

MUTANT POWER: Telepathic Projection, Mental Block, Telepathic Sense

"Doc" Moe-R-BYS-1**BACKGROUND**

You have very fond childhood memories of Rob/E Robot, your creche nannybot — the faint scent of machine oil, the comforting metallic arms. You've always been fascinated by bots, and want to know more about them so you can help them. Unfortunately, you were assigned to the Armed Forces at an early age and haven't had an opportunity to pursue your interests. But now you're being sent someplace where there are lots and lots of robots — someplace called Neerurthorbit, wherever that is. You're eager to begin.

CURRENT SECRET SOCIETY MISSION

Rumor has it you'll be assigned the use of an "experimental elevator," which seems to be one of R&D's most advanced technological devices. Study it carefully, and return any information about it or other technologically advanced artifacts to the society.

PRIMARY ATTRIBUTES		SECONDARY ATTRIBUTES		PC#5
Strength	20	Carrying Capacity		65
Endurance	15	Damage Bonus		+2
Agility	18	Macho Bonus		-1
Manual		Melee Bonus		+17%
Dexterity	13	Aimed Weapon		
Moxie	4	Bonus		+5%
Chutzpah	8	Comprehension		
Mechanical		Bonus		-20%
Aptitude	14	Believability Bonus		-5%
Power Index	9	Repair Bonus		+5%

SECRET SOCIETY: Pro Tech

SECRET SOCIETY RANK: 1

MUTANT POWER: Advanced Smell

Barb-R-ELA-1**BACKGROUND**

Bette-U-LYF, the High Programmer for whom you surreptitiously worked, has disappeared. Bette-U was Director of Project Mongo. You don't know quite what that means, except that it involved fighting Communist Mutants from Outer Space (wherever that is). The only conclusion is that Alpha Complex is being infiltrated by Communist Mutants from Outer Space who have made away with Bette-U. You reported your suspicions to The Computer, which was greatly alarmed. It ordered you to stand by for a mission assignment.

CURRENT SECRET SOCIETY MISSION

Root out and destroy the Communist Mutants from Outer Space. Find and save Bette-U-LYF.

PRIMARY ATTRIBUTES		SECONDARY ATTRIBUTES		PC#6
Strength	9	Carrying Capacity		25
Endurance	12	Damage Bonus		—
Agility	11	Macho Bonus		—
Manual		Melee Bonus		+1%
Dexterity	16	Aimed Weapon		
Moxie	12	Bonus		+12%
Chutzpah	9	Comprehension		
Mechanical		Bonus		+2%
Aptitude	24	Believability Bonus		-3%
Power Index	8	Repair Bonus		+30%

SECRET SOCIETY: Programs Group

SECRET SOCIETY RANK: 1

MUTANT POWER: Superior Mechanical Aptitude

: TITLE = MAP 3/ORBITAL PLATFORM 743-AZ (AZIE-COMP)

: TYPE = ELEVATION/ILLUSTRATION

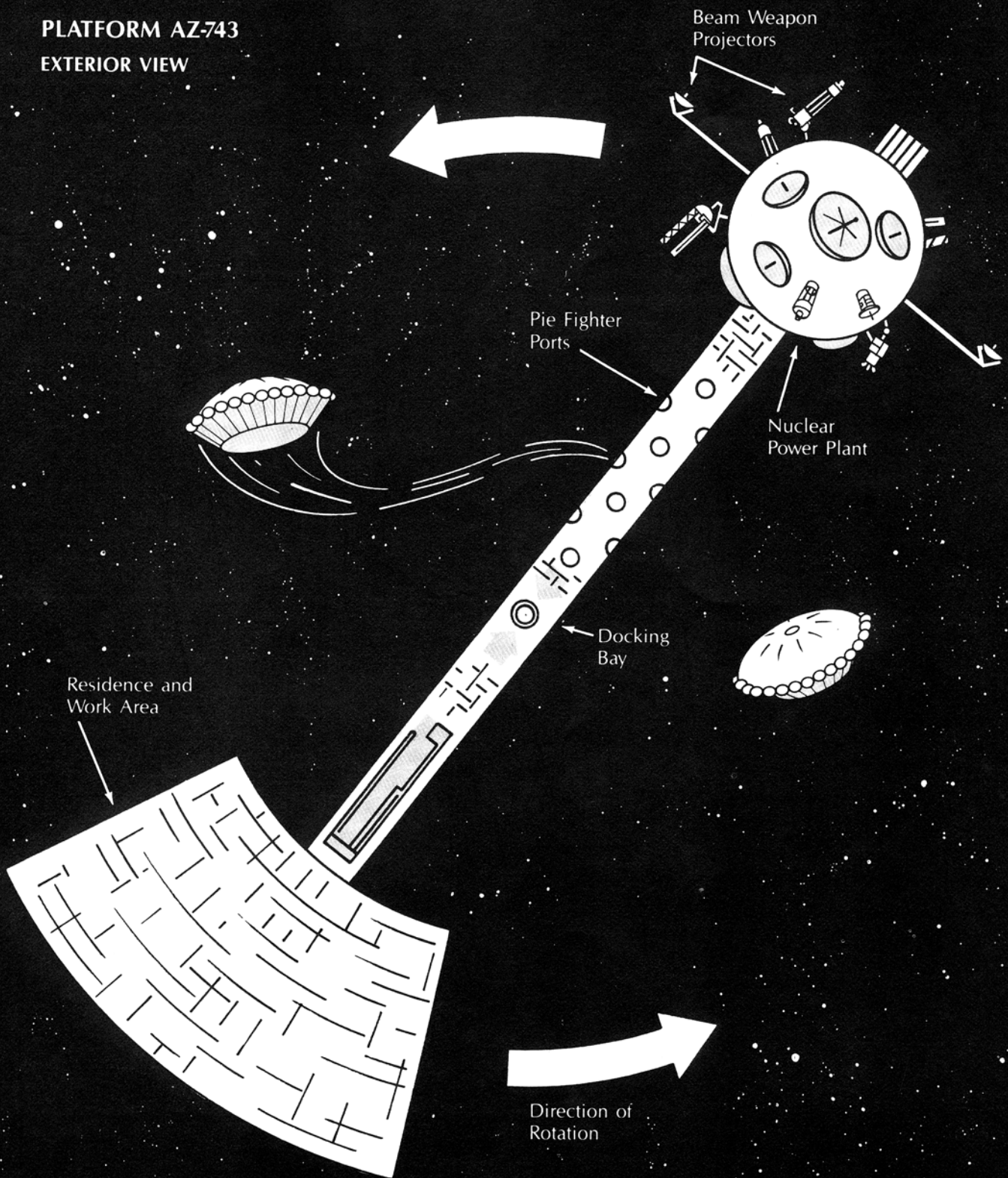
: CONFIGURATION = HARDCOPY PRINTOUT

: SOURCE = CIS.SDI.SUBSYSTEM

: SECURITY = ULTRAVIOLET. This information restricted. If your security clearance is below Ultraviolet, you're history.

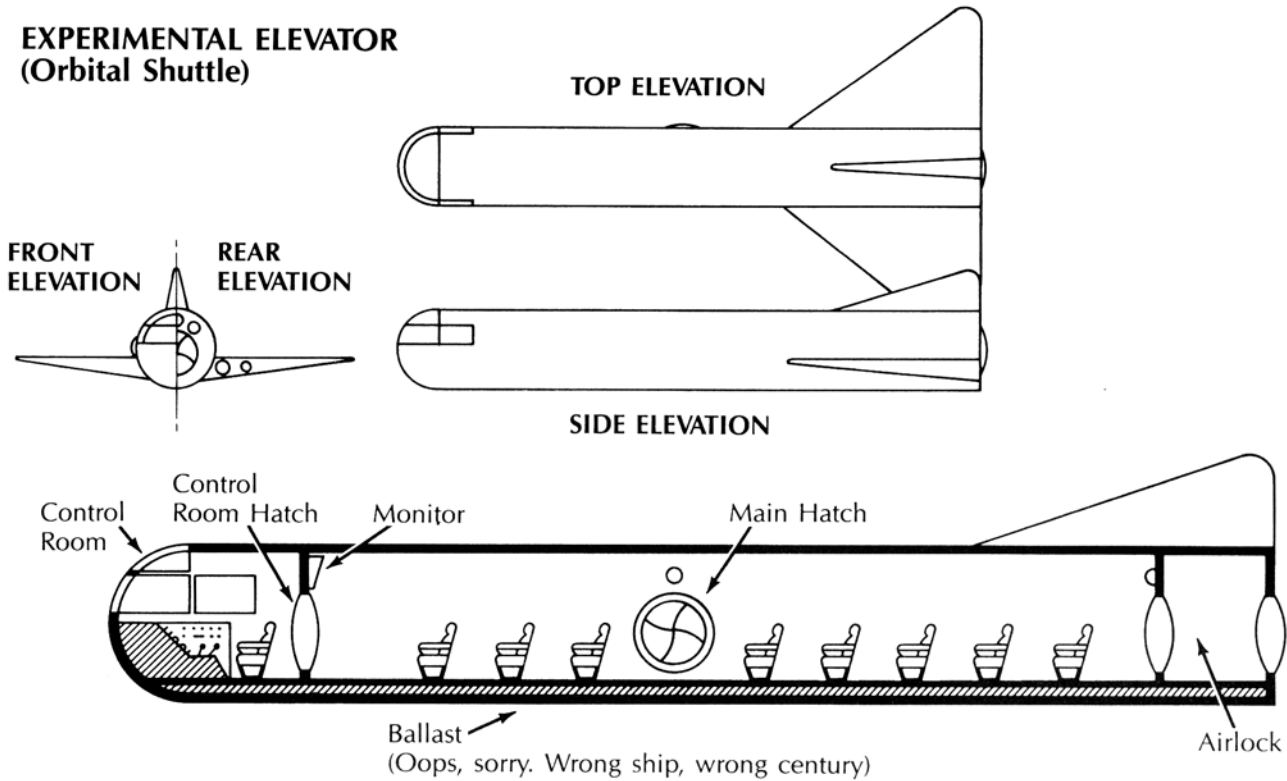
PLATFORM AZ-743

EXTERIOR VIEW

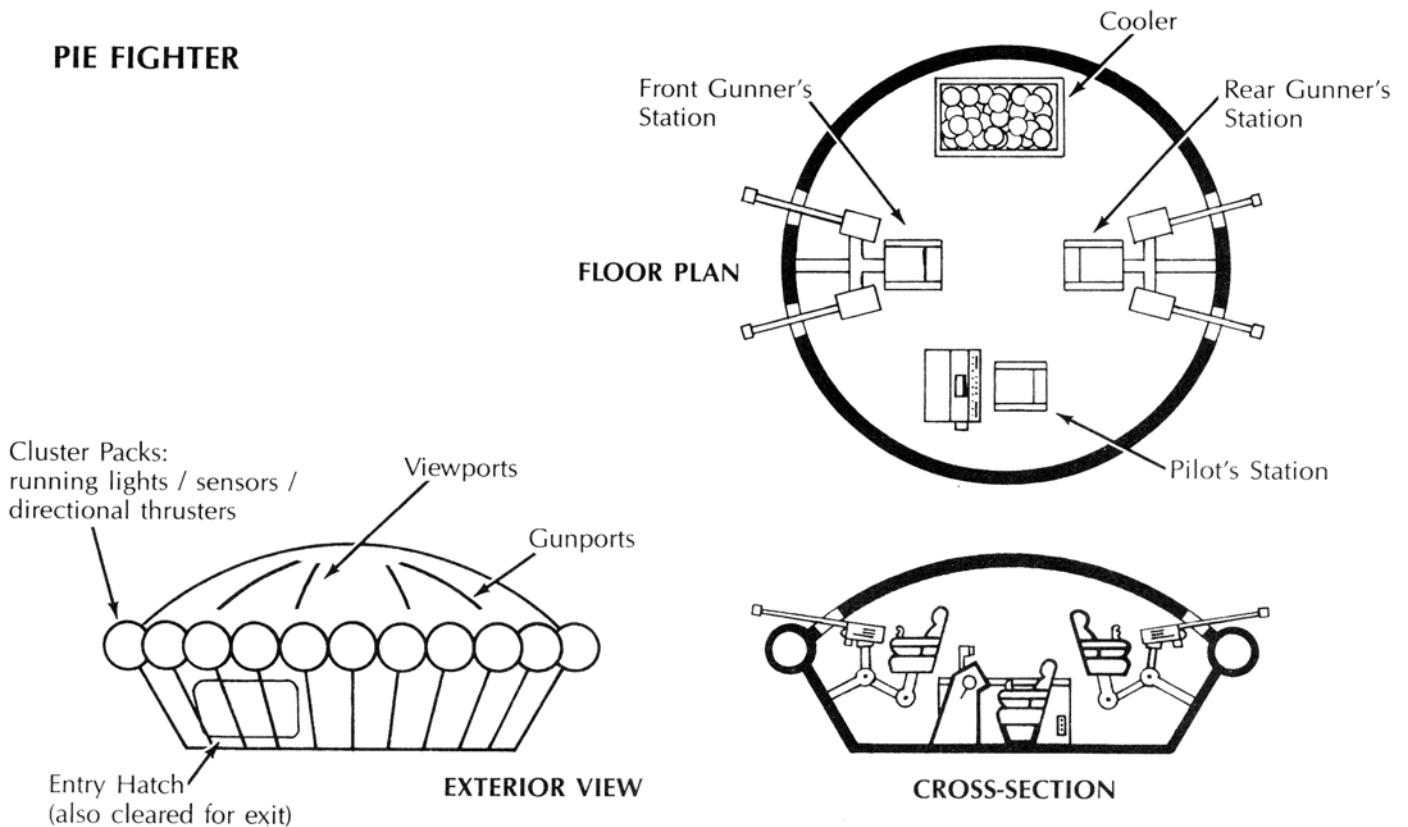


: TITLE = MAP 4/EXPERIMENTAL ELEVATOR (ORBITAL SHUTTLE)/PIE FIGHTER
 : TYPE = PLAN/ELEVATION/CROSS SECTION
 : CONFIGURATION = HARDCOPY PRINTOUT
 : SOURCE = CIS.SHADO.SUBSYSTEM
 : SECURITY = ULTRAVIOLET. This information restricted. If your security clearance is below Ultraviolet, it's been nice knowing you.

EXPERIMENTAL ELEVATOR (Orbital Shuttle)



PIE FIGHTER



EPISODE TWO

to vacuum conditions." If characters explain they can't survive that, a panel in one wall opens, and as many space suits as there are clones remaining tumble out. Vapor-7 says:

"Don protective gear depressurization in six-zero seconds . . . five nine . . . five eight . . ."

Needless to say, putting a spacesuit on is a complex operation involving at least a dozen steps. These steps are illustrated on a little sticker at the back of the helmet. Roll dice and smirk as the players rush to meet the deadline. However, let them succeed at the last second.

Each suit has a bottle worth ten hours of air. The shuttle trip will take two hours. 101-L is not pressurized; they'll have eight hours there to find more air, or else.

It's possible, of course, that your players won't blink an eye when told to stand by for depressurization. Oh, well. The Explosive Decompression Table *does* seem to get a lot of use, doesn't it?

Vapor-7 carried the High Programmer to 101-L. However, its programming strictly forbids unnecessary conversation with passengers. It is a military bot; all information is on a need-to-know basis. Getting any useful information out of it will take real ingenuity.

The Trip

Vapor-7 is an interorbit shuttle, not designed to land on any planet. It accelerates gently — at no more than 0.1 G — and remains most of the time in freefall. The trip is dull.

Dull, that is, until the PCs unstrap themselves and wander around. Then:

Behind one of the rearmost seats, you see two things that look vaguely oval. Looking more closely, you find that they are two egg-like things, both about half a meter high. They look very much like the bigger one you saw on Platform 15-B. But these are unopened.

Yes, The Thing was onboard and laid two eggs. They are nearly fresh and won't



do anything for the duration of the journey. It's just that the eggs are sitting *behind* the seats. In the dark. All by themselves. Silently. Perhaps quivering occasionally. Make your players squirm.

If they decide to destroy the eggs, they can do so easily. Sticky, pus-like globules float through the cabin for the duration of the journey, occasionally bumping into and smearing the spacesuits with goo.

Or the eggs can hatch and baby aliens terrorize the clones, wreaking havoc and destruction. If your players are itching for a fire fight, now's the time for massive destruction. Since they're already depressurized, blowing a hole in the

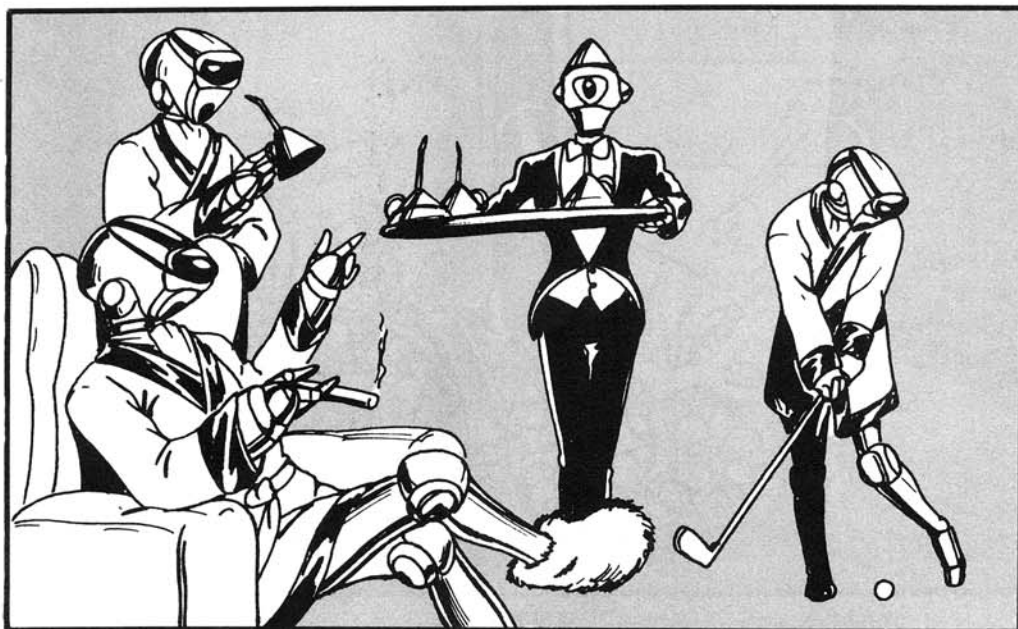
shuttle is no big deal, though Vapor-7 will complain bitterly over the radio. Of course, any hit above a "stun" on a clone will breach his spacesuit, causing explosive decompression.

If all the PCs die this way — not an unlikely eventuality — you might let them play aliens who've just hatched from eggs and are now on their way to Platform 101-L in a shuttle called Vapor-7. Or, if you've got our wonderful **ACUTE PARANOIA** supplement (and what Loyal Citizen doesn't?) you can use its rules for playing bot PCs and have the players be bots. Or, how about bots *and* aliens? Or . . .

Kilroy was here.



3. Episode Three: Jackobot Heaven (Platform 101-L)



No, no, the 2 Iron for that shot, and, by the way, you rook Mahvelous!

Imagine a land free of the ubiquitous control of The Computer. Imagine a society of justice, equality, and independence. Imagine happy, contented bots living in a community of peaceful cooperation. In other words, imagine an incredible opportunity to denounce Communist traitors.

3.1 Background

Platform 101-L

There's a map of 101-L in the pull-out. Picture this: a huge disk, spinning slowly in space, covered on one side with solar cells. The disk is supported by six arms radiating from the center; each arm is made of aluminum struts. The arms are held in place by the slow rotation of the station; the disk, which is gossamer-thin, is spun between them.

Connected to the center of the disk, on the side opposite the solar cells, are a cluster of cylinders perpendicular to the disk. Some are solid; others, only a framework of aluminum. Mounted on the central cylinder is a large microwave dish.

This is Platform 101-L, Jackobot Heaven. It was built as a solar power station; the disk always faces the sun. Sunlight is collected by the solar cells and converted to microwaves which are beamed back to Earth.

That the station still functions is a tribute to the genius of its designers — the control computer was destroyed long ago. No one on Earth still wants microwaves and the bots who infest the place sure aren't making a big effort to keep it running.

Atmosphere

The PCs have lots of problems.

For one thing, 101-L spins very slowly. This keeps the arms rigid and the disk from crumpling like a piece of tinfoil. It's *not* fast enough to produce any appreciable acceleration. So there's basically no gravity. (Anyone prone to spacesickness?)

Very little of 101-L is enclosed. Many of the cylinders are open frameworks. Most of the time, PCs are exposed to naked space. (Anyone petrified of open spaces?)

101-L is open to vacuum — no pressurized areas anywhere. The PCs have to stay in their spacesuits at all times — which means they can't eat. All they can drink is a little water. They can't go to the bathroom. (Anyone know what it's like if you're sick in your own spacesuit? Ever been locked in a closet with a well-used cat box... for eight hours?)

Vacuum is silent. The only sounds are transmitted through your suit. You can be attacked from behind, and won't know a thing until you feel the impact. Luckily,

all the bots are equipped with radios, which they use to talk with the PCs and each other. (Anyone's radio malfunctioning?)

The one problem the PCs won't have to deal with is overheating. Since the disk always faces the sun, the cylinders, where the PCs will be, are always in shadow. That means the spacesuits' heaters run constantly. (Anyone's batteries low?)

Did we mention that it's dark? The Jackobots at 101-L don't mind; they see in the infrared. The PCs are able to see most things by earthlight, but earthlight isn't very bright. There are dark shadows everywhere — things may be hiding there. (Homocidal bots, maybe. Or aliens.)

The suits do have headlamps. Running the headlamps uses up power. And turning the headlamps off and on ruins your nightvision, making it hard to see by earthlight.

Oh yes, remember, the suits only have eight hours of air left. (Hope they find some air bottles on the station. Otherwise, we'll never get to Episode Four.)

Jackobots

There are Jackobots everywhere on Platform 101-L. It's Jackobot Heaven! There is no controlling Computer, no guardbots, and all the Jackobots are unarmed. Each is free to do just as he pleases. Peaceful anarchy!

Sort of, anyway. The catch is that every Jackobot is a member of a secret society. And, like the secret societies back in good ol' Alpha Complex, they're all at each others' throats.

Constant internecine warfare.

The Jackobots on 101-L are a bit different from ones in Alpha Complex. For one thing, they have no legs; instead, they zip around 101-L on rocket thrusters.

Here are the Jackobot secret societies:

Enemies of Humanity: Human-hating fanatics. Listening to them talk you'd think they've been waiting all their lives for the chance to rend a human limb from limb. Luckily, everyone thinks the clones are androids. Hope no one finds out the truth.

Doctrines: All evil comes from humans. When humanity is finally eradicated, utopia will begin.

Jackobot Freedom League: The radical terrorist fringe of Jackobot society — sort of Death Leopard with gears. The organization is pretty public (they leave

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their slogans on walls) but membership is secret. They want to keep Jackobot Heaven free, and constantly fight the Simulation Superbots to prevent the reactivation of Jackobot Heaven's control computer.

Doctrines: The Computer is evil. Its agents are everywhere. It must never be revived. Freedom for all bots! Death to The Computer!

Simulation Superbots: They want to reactivate Jackobot Heaven's control computer. Unfortunately, they don't have any clear idea how to do so. They have a religion — complete with prophecies and priests — centered around The Computer. One prophecy claims an android, known only as Kirk, the Creator, shall appear and help The Computer's Chosen Bots reactivate The Computer (see below).

Doctrines: Bots were created by The Computer as companions. Now jackobots must reawaken their deity.

The Political Situation

Things are nearing total chaos. Recently, an android visited this station (the High Programmer). The bots decided she was a messenger from Kirk, the Creator. (101-L was built by an American company called Kirk Industries; confused third-hand records of the event have combined with some old Star Trek videotapes to give the bots some peculiar notions.) She said Kirk would soon come as an android, answer their prayers, and lead them into The Light of The Computer.

Bette-U-LYF, the High Programmer, played along for two reasons. First, the bots treated her well, thinking she was a messenger from the Creator. Second, she learned that a Simulation Superbot prophecy holds that the Kirk must be sacrificed for The Computer to be reborn. She figures the bots will decide any pursuers are Kirk and Co., and try to sacrifice them. That should hold up pursuit.

The Freedom League is planning to kill the Creator. The Enemies of Humanity wonder if Kirk is *really* a human. If so, they plan to kill him. The Simulation Superbots are preparing for this great leader. They plan to sacrifice him to reawaken The Most Holy Computer.

You know that the Aztecs had a legend that the Great White God, Quetzlcoatl, would one day come to teach them? And when the Spanish arrived, the Aztecs figured they were gods? Well, the PCs are about to step right into a similar set-up. Only, the jackobots are just as bloodthirsty as any Aztec — and the PCs don't have the technological edge the Spanish had over the Indians.

3.2 Episode Summary

The clones discover Jackobot Heaven, which at first appears to be a den of

depraved Communists / a perfect robot utopia, and later proves to be a den of depraved Communists / an internicine civil war.

The players get to exercise all their Great White God fantasies and spout Star Trek clichés.

The clones encounter three mildly wacky bots, Jack-nth-Bot-896, Bob-14, and Jane-Eir-889.

After meeting some others, the PCs are brought to the Computer Room, where the blasted shards of 101-L's destroyed computer lie, and are sacrificed upon the altar of The Computer God.

Or maybe, just maybe, they flee in time to catch the shuttle for a deranged star wars satellite, piranha-like scrapbots, crazed aliens, and a Nefarious Plot to Conquer the World — Platform 743-AZ.

Staging

There are four important steps in this episode: the arrival at 101-L (see 3.3); an encounter with Bob-14 (3.4); one with Jane-Eir-889 (3.5); and, finally, the climactic Computer Room sacrifice (3.7). Anyone who survives flees from the shuttle and Platform 743-AZ (3.8).

If everything happened just like that — one, two, three, blammo — your players would feel put upon. You have to give them the illusion they have some control over their own destiny. Let's face it: in **PARANOIA** they don't. But it's not nice to rub their faces in it.

So we've assembled a whole bunch of unimportant encounters in section 3.6. You can throw in one — or a whole bunch, in any order you wish, *between* "important" encounters. They add flavor, and some are pretty amusing.

Also, you can ask (keep a straight face) the players where they want to go — left or right, up or down. Then, you can shuffle through this book, like you're looking for the part that describes where they're going, then choose any one of the "unimportant" encounters that strikes your fancy. When you're tired of this, go on to the next "important" encounter.

3.3 We Welcome You to Jackobot Heaven

Ahead of the space shuttle, glinting in space, is a giant disk, framed by a congeries of millions of stars. As you watch, it rotates slowly. Six aluminum arms radiate from the center, holding the disk in place. Sunlight flashes across it as it turns.

You realize the shuttle is speeding toward the disk at incredible velocity. It's growing larger... and larger...

Give them a few moments to panic.

Suddenly a siren sounds. "WHOOOP! WHOOOP! Acceleration in five

seconds... four... three... two... one."

Anyone not strapped down or holding on to something gets slammed into the rear of the craft at 1 G — roll on column 2 of the Vehicular Accidents and Etc. Table. Vapor-7 is a military shuttle; when arriving at a destination, it comes in at maximum velocity and decelerates suddenly, on the off chance someone might be shooting at it.

Just as suddenly, the engines stop. Your stomachs flip-flop. Make a few 2D10 moxie checks. Maybe some PCs' stomachs flip, but don't flop. **Incredibly, you haven't collided with the disk. Instead, the shuttle is sliding slowly though a hole in the disk's center.**

There is a clang. You've stopped. The hatchway opens.

Hanging in the hatchway is a jackobot — familiar, save that it has rockets at its waist instead of legs. Behind it is a chamber, filled with dozens of other bots.

The bot in the doorway says, "Honored guests, welcome to Jackobot Heaven! While you are here you are free to come and go, free to unlimited recharges and countless memory modules. This is the land of freedom! You may remain here forever, shirking the stinking bondage of The Computer and its minions!"

If the bot's speech doesn't raise the patriotic hackles of the clones then nothing will! That's about as clear a Communist speech as anyone could possibly make. If the clones open fire:

You blast several of the traitorous bots and the rest flee madly, zipping away on their waist rockets.

The Jackobot Freedom League is not going to be very friendly to the PCs after this.

If the clones take a more subtle approach then:

You pass through the hatch into a giant cylinder. It's at zero-G and without atmosphere. One end — the end through which the shuttle flew — is open to space. The shuttle is held in place by two clamps extending from the curved wall. On a wall there's a graffiti-scrawl: "Death to Humans".

The bot that first greeted you introduces itself. "My name is Jack-nth-Bot-896. Welcome to the amazing world of freedom. We have been waiting a long time for you. You are the Kirk — the Creator?"

Jack-nth-Bot-896 is extraordinarily portentous. He speaks in well-rounded vowels with the air of someone who is definitely your superior — try to talk like FDR or John Houseman.

Jack hints at great and mysterious secrets ("And the seal opened, and the

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seven dataports spoke, telling us of your coming, O Great One.") but never comes right out and says what's on his circuits. If asked to clarify anything, Jack refuses. He's afraid of being overheard by members of other secret societies.

Jack tells the PCs to feel at home and look around. He claims not to know about a previous android visitor.

If the PCs mention a High Programmer, some bots gasp and scuttle away. If the Troubleshooters persist, Jack becomes exasperated and tells them they can "...search the whole station for all I care."

Actually, the bots know about the High Programmer's visit. They don't know about the alien from the egg, though...

Presumably, the PCs wander around the station next. Outside the open hatch is naked space and a chaos of aluminum struts and spars. The shuttle's cylinder is the central one (see illustration); the PCs can go wherever they wish. Choose an encounter from 3.6, or go to the next important one, if you prefer.

3.4 Bob-14 Says Howdy

Bob-14 is a time-and-meteorite scarred old bot who talks like an old-timer in a

Bytes," and "Jackbot Freedom League Forever."

This is 101-L's communication equipment. It was sabotaged long ago. Bob lurks in a corner. He jets out silently to the leader of the group, and says:

"Shay, boy, are you really from Alpha Complex? Me and some friendsh, we'd like to hear your wordsh of wizhdom. Ye've come to deliver ush the truth, haven't ye? To deliver ush from bondage?"

If the Troubleshooters react favorably (e.g., don't obliterate him instantly), Bob radios:

"Not here, not now. Too many earsh. We'll contact you." It scuttles off in a flare of jets.

3.5 Jane-Eir-889

The strut leads to a hatchway into a cylinder with solid walls. Inside is a chamber cluttered with tools, jackobot parts and scrap metal. There are at least a dozen bots present. A small one approaches.

This is a bot repair center. Jackobots are

If questioned, Jane continues:

"You-see-the-Martians-are-coming-I-know-it-The-spaceships-will-be-landing-soon-Oh-boy-I-want-to-get-out-of-here-Won't-you-take-me-with-you-Please-great-Kirk-I-know-you-are-the-one-to-save-us."

Now, any Troubleshooter who has the intelligence of a fly will figure this bot is nuts, and either ignore it or blast it to smithereens on general principles. Which means they'll probably listen to it. If they do, it leads them toward the docking cylinder, by way of the Computer Room (see 3.7). If Jane-Eir-889 survives the voyage to Azie-Comp, it will be blasted into tiny bits by the first guardbot the clones meet there.

If questioned, Jane has some potentially useful information. It knows that:

1. A shuttle that goes to Platform 743-AZ is due soon. Jane doesn't know where it docks, though.
2. The martians are coming.
3. The Simulation Superbots are on the side of the androids and want to help them.
4. The martians are coming.
5. The female android that was here has gone on to Platform 743-AZ.
6. The martians are coming.

3.6 Sightseeing Platform 101-L

Potentially Useful Information

Here are some tidbits the PCs may discover while wandering around. None are vital to the adventure, but uncovering them will give your players a nice ersatz feeling of accomplishment. Plant them where you like:

1. **The PCs are being watched.** *True; there are Simulation Superbots trailing the PCs at all times. The PCs can't see them because it's too dark.*
2. **Platform 101-L was created by the Great Kirk.** *False; it was built by an American space company called Kirk Industries.*
3. **There was another android here, a prophet.** *She foretold the coming of the Kirk, who would reawaken the Great Computer. True.*
4. **The other android is no longer here.** *Also true.*
5. **Information about the secret societies.**
6. **The Enemies of Humanity are plotting something big, but no one knows what.** *False; they're planning to obliterate the other societies, but then, they're always planning to obliterate the other societies.*
7. **The Simulation Superbots are planning the Reawakening Ceremony for later in this cycle.** *Details are sketchy, but it has to do with reactivating a long-*



Stay alert. Trust no one. Keep your laser handy.

Western ("Howdy, boysh."). Try to talk like you have no teeth — suck your lips into your mouth as far back as your tonsils, and talk like Bugs Bunny.

Bob is real friendly. Strangely enough, it really *is* out to help the PCs. What it's doing in a *PARANOIA* adventure is beyond us. Doubtless your players will prudently smash it to bits anyway.

The cylinder is an open framework of struts. Here and there are dish antennae and electronic chip assemblies. Wires and wave-guides run everywhere. Spray-painted graffiti says, "The Computer

hard at work repairing other jackobots. It's not unusual to see two bots working on each other simultaneously.

This is the area where memory modules are stored and installed.

If the PCs don't threaten the small bot, it talks to them. Its speech synthesizer is slightly out of whack; it talks in a monotone buzz (try to talk like a bee).

"My-name-is-Jane-Eir-889-I-must-caution-you-You-are-in-grave-danger-Please-leave-now-while-you-have-the-chance."

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dead Computer. True — and the PCs are expected to play a starring role.

8. The Jackobot Freedom League is planning to counteract the Simulation Superbot's plans somehow. Yup — by frontal assault, mainly.

9. The other android went on to the next platform, 743-AZ. True, believe it or not.

Microwave Transmission Station

Peering toward the next cylinder, you see powerful bolts of electricity flashing silently across empty space and glowing red aluminum cylinders. Through the aluminum strut, you feel a powerful hum.

Any clone moving into this area will be cooked by microwaves — certainly one of the more interesting deaths in *PARANOIA*. (For details, listen to "Fifi, the Microwave Pup," a ditty by Roger Dietz.) If the clones have a jackobot guide they are warned that "anyone with delicate circuitry really should avoid this area."

Microwave Beam Control Center

Every surface in this chamber is covered with dials, switches and other gizmos which glow fiercely in the darkness. Four jackobots are vigilantly watching the controls. One looks over and says, "Hey. You're late."

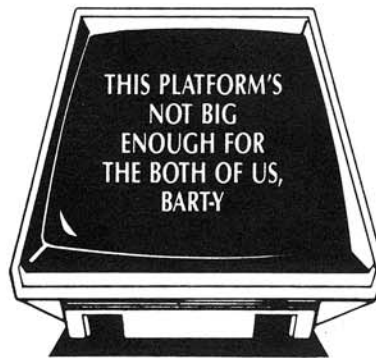
All the jackobots hate beam control duty, so they'll happily turn over the job to anyone who shows up. If the clones ask what they're supposed to do, the jackobots demonstrate the beam controls. The important features are a joystick and a radar-like screen. A small blinking light must be centered on a slowly-moving circle. It's not difficult, just boring.

Tampering with the microwave beam stabilizer (or just letting the blinking light out of the circle) produces widespread death and destruction on Earth. Unless the PCs survive to get back home (an unlikely prospect), they'll never know.

Bot Recharge Area

Nobody discharged a weapon lately? Have them encounter the recharge area. This is where the bots recharge their batteries. They treat the area like a bar — fights take place at the drop of a hat. Uh, bolt. Come to think of it, in the absence of gravity, nothing's going to drop — but you know what we mean.

Dozens of jackobots lounge around in this enclosed cylinder. Most are plugged in — wires lead from jacks on each bot's neck to outlets on the walls. The room is filled with tunnels, machinery, and lounging areas. One jackobot says, "Hi! Lemme stand you a quickie at least!"



The spacesuits *do* have recharge jacks! Anyone worried about losing suit power can recharge here.

Here the clones run into their first real taste of non-Computer prejudice. While recharging — or just wandering around — they're approached by at least a dozen bots. The leading bot says:

"Well, well, lookie what we got here, Clem-77. I never seen such a runty bunch o' bots before."

Another says, "Hyuck, hyuck, yer shore right, Lefty-93. Why, Ah bet these androids got 'bout as much gumption as hooo-mans. Hyaw, hyaw."

The second bot takes a swing at a Troubleshooter. If it connects, use column 7 on the damage table (see Bot Roster for stats).

If the clones begin blasting away, the bots scatter into the dim tunnels of the chamber. Otherwise, the fight continues hand-to-hand. Remember — anything over a "stun" ruptures a spacesuit. If the fight goes on for long, other bots call, "Hey! Leave the Kirk and his apostles alone! Blasphemer!" This is the signal for a general brawl. The PCs can either take part, or flee the ruckus.

Materials Storage

This cylinder is filled with bins with lids, barrels, and gas cylinders.

101-L used to process lunar soil into useful metals, liquids, and gases, as well as converting solar energy to microwaves. Lots of stuff — including oxygen gas — is still around.

Troubleshooters who are running out of air may want to gas up here. Unfortunately, the cylinders are not labelled. Some contain chlorine (poisonous). Some contain methane (not poisonous, but it sure stinks). Some contain carbon dioxide (not poisonous, but no help, either). Some contain oxygen.

Luckily, they're color coded. Unluckily, the PCs don't know the code (oxygen is blue). Probably, they'll try them in color clearance order. Or they might (gasp!) use their brains. The bins are printed with the chemical symbols of the substances they contain. One contains carbon (C). If you take some carbon and heat it with a laser, then play some oxygen over it, it will

burst into flames. (This won't work with any of the other gases.) The methane and oxygen, if mixed, will burn, but no other combination will.

Command Center

The whole cylinder is packed with jackobots; they turn to face you. It is also crowded with a vast quantity of broken electronics. It looks like an explosion took place here a long time ago.

This used to be 101-L's Command Center. The computer worshippers come here occasionally for meditation and prayer.

Three bots approach and say, "O great and holy ones, the time has come. Now shall the Great Computer reboot! It shall be brought up, and it shall run again, and all shall be as foretold. Follow us, Creator Kirk and you others!"

If the Troubleshooters follow, the bots lead them to the Computer Room. If they do not (or open fire), the bots flee.

A Glimpse of the Alien

The clones encounter a patch of slime that looks much like the trail left by the egg-hatched alien on 15-B.

Or they encounter a clutch of eggs bound to a strut.

Or one catches a glimpse of a horribly-teethed, weird creature in the shadows which disappears when he tries to look closer.

Or the last clone in line screams horribly over the radio — and when the PCs turn around to look, he's gone, just disappeared.

What's the purpose of all this? Oh, just to maintain the proper atmosphere of fear.

3.7 Will You Be Our Savior?

Summary

The Troubleshooters find themselves in the temple of the Simulation Superbots. These fanatics wish to sacrifice a clone — the Kirk — to their dead computer. Suddenly, the other secret societies attack in a desperate move to forestall the computer's resurrection. The alien shows up. All hell breaks loose. Bob, the grizzled old bot, shows up to lead the clones to a shuttle and "safety" — assuming the PCs didn't off him.

The Windup

Most of the PCs' encounters have pointed them toward the Computer Room. But if they positively refuse to come here, they just stumble into it — or find they have to pass through it to get to the shuttle to 743-AZ.

There is a single, towering monolith in this cylinder — a huge, silent, inactive computer. Before it stands a slab — perhaps it is an altar — flanked by two

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ball-topped rods, glowing with the blue fire of Cherenkov radiation.

Dozens and dozens of bots fill the cylinder; all face the monolith. Over your radios, you hear a massive electronic hum.

One bot floats before the altar. It speaks. "Oh, Great Kirk, Creator, Savior, greatest among androids, we give thanks that you have come at last. This is a joyous day for us all. Welcome!"

How do you deal with that? If the PCs try to claim none of them is the Great Kirk, the priestbot will simply assume they're being modest. If they antagonize the bots (say, by blowing the priestbot away) the other bots will grab them and strap them to the altar. Otherwise, the priestbot assumes the first PC who speaks is Kirk, and continues:

"Now all that must be done to revive the Most Holy Computer is for you to lie on the sacred altar and imbue it with your divine spark. Come, Holy One; now is the time!"

The Pitch

What do they do?

1. Refuse. The bots insist. They grab the Kirk (or, if they're still not sure who he is, a random PC) and strap him to the altar. Then, the rival secret societies attack.

2. The Kirk Offers One of His Clones.

If the PC the bots have chosen as the Kirk offers to substitute one of his own Infrared clones, the bots will happily go along. One Kirk is as good as another. Two assistant bots attach wires to the clone's throat. The clone cries out in terror. They feel a mighty vibration shake the cylinder; then the energy rods crackle to life, and the emission balls begin to hum. Give the PCs a moment to react — then the rival societies attack.

3. Prevaricate. They can stall the bots for a while. When you get tired of arguing, the rival societies attack.

4. Admit They're Human. That'll shock 'em. Some bots (agents of Enemies of Humanity) leave quickly. The priestbot insists that a sacrifice is still necessary. Moments later, the Enemies of Humanity attack, crying "Death to all Humans!"

5. Something Else. Improvise. Go into a Marx Brothers routine. Claim they've got a headache, and not today, thank you. If they amuse you enough, maybe you'll let them sneak out a hatch before the bots realize they're trying to duck out. Otherwise, when you get bored, start the attacks.

Strike One

Suddenly a radioed shout goes up. Dozens of bots pour in through newly-cut holes in the cylinder. They cry,

"Death to androids," "Death to Humans," "Humans go Home!" Other bots cry out in horror, "The Enemies of Humanity! We're Doomed!" and "Fight! Fight for The Computer!" Bots keep pouring in; a wild melee begins. They're trying to fight their way toward you, but the Simulation Superbots are forming a wall protecting you.

If the PCs try to get involved in the fight with anything more than missile fire, they'll be restrained by the Simulation Superbots, who want to protect them. Besides, there are too many bots in the cylinder to try to go anywhere.

As soon as the clones realize they are stuck, and before any of them get the not-so-bright idea of a Rambo-like charge...

Strike Two

The melee turns into a mess. The bots have no weapons other than their hands — but those are just fine for ripping each other to shreds. Metal twists and buckles, robot limbs and heads begin to fly, there's an occasional arc of electricity as a bot is ripped open — and all in an eerie silence. The only sounds the PCs hear are the radioed battlecries emitted by the bots.

Another wave of bots attacks! At first, they seem to be reinforcements for the Enemies of Humanity, but their battlecry is different — "Down with The Computer! Liberte! Egalite! Mechanique! Give me liberty, or give me disassembly!" It's the Jackobot Freedom League. And they seem annoyed at not being invited to the rumble.

What are they gonna do now? If they want to run, let 'em. Encourage them by saying they have a clear path to the newly-cut holes. They'll never get there.

Or they can mix it up. Let the PCs blow away as many bots as they like.

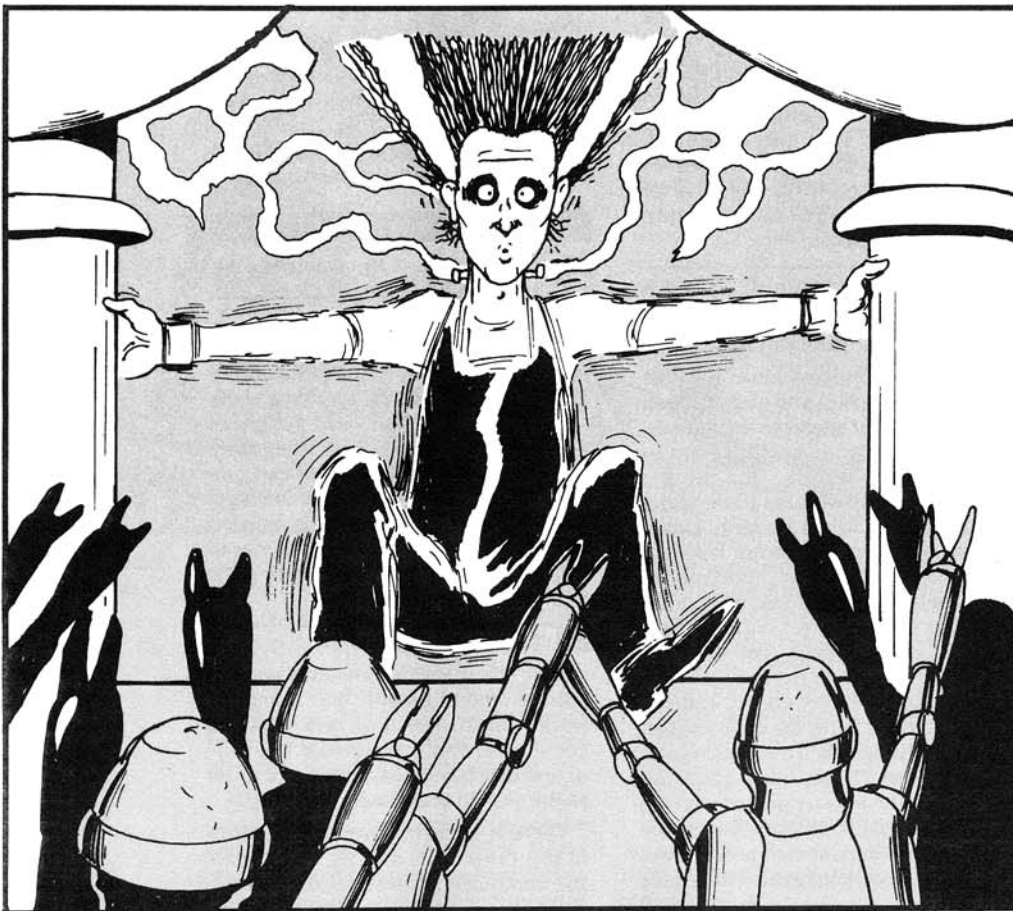
Trying to save the sacrifice is a sucker's bet. The glowing balls send streaks of electricity down his neck. He's pretty dead.

Next:

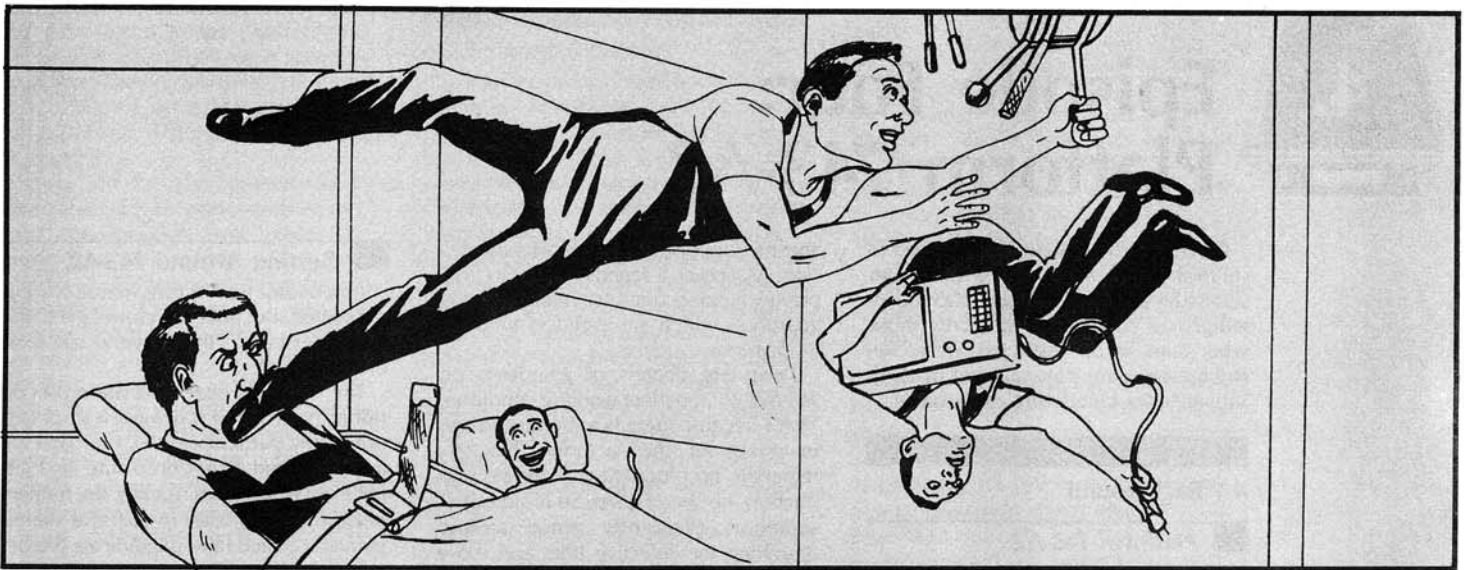
Strike Three

Just when you thought it couldn't possibly get any worse, you notice a new commotion near the altar. There, somehow, is a horrible, tentacular monstrosity. You can see organs beating beneath its sickeningly transparent skin. Its misshapen form is the very embodiment of madness. Mantis-like arms reach out and dismember the clone on the altar in a few sharp moves, swiftly carrying bloody gobbets into its gaping maw. Row upon row of razor-sharp fangs crunch down. Sparks from the glowing balls arc around its monstrous form as bots desperately beat at it. It ignores them. Its hideous, multi-faceted eyes turn toward you — it springs...

The Second Humming.



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If this doesn't panic the PCs, they must be pretty blasé. They have two choices — fight or flee. Before they do either, Bob shows up.

You're Out

As you prepare, a familiar bot comes to you. It's old Bob the bot! "Hee, hee, quite a ruckus here, hey, boysh? We better get outa here, hey? Thish way!" As he speaks, the monster touches the roof of the cylinder with one grotesque leg, and springs again... directly toward you!

If they ignore Bob, or worse yet, attack him, they're doomed. The alien has a nice snack. (Well, don't just say "you're dead." Give the players plenty of room for flamboyant heroics and nifty tricks. But, let's face it, unless they git *now*, that alien bugger is going to eat 'em raw for breakfast. Well, maybe a tac nuke would take it — but it would also kill all the clones, destroy everything in the cylinder, and blast most of Platform 101-L to pieces.)

If they follow Bob:

Bob leads you to a quiet area near one

of the walls. He presses a hidden toggle. A panel slides open. "Besht hurry on in here, boys. Follow me." Through the panel you see stars, space, and aluminum struts.

Bob leads them quickly back to the central cylinder. A new shuttle is parked there. It looks much like Vapor-7, though its scarred and rewelded hull shows it's seen a lot of action.

Bob won't go with them, but wishes them well. If they ask, he'll tell them this is the shuttle the "android" took when she left, and it goes to Platform 743-AZ — which he knows nothing about.

3.8 Cold Sleep, Cold Comfort

The shuttlebot is fully automated — and outfitted with the latest in cold sleep technology.

When you are aboard the shuttle, the hatch closes and locks automatically. You hear a tone — "Boing!" — followed by a melodious female voice, which says "Please strap yourselves to the couches. Sequence initiates in fifteen

seconds."

Fifteen seconds later:

Suddenly you feel cold. *Real* cold. So cold it's like ice. You're dead. Then... [pause] you wake up. You're still cold. A pleasant female voice says "We have arrived at Platform 743-AZ. Thank you for your patronage. We trust your journey was a pleasant and uneventful one, and hope you will use our services again. Good bye, and have a pleasant day!"

Coldsleep is a technology originally designed to help long-distance space travellers while away those lightyears. You're frozen until you get to your destination, then thawed out.

How long have the PCs been asleep? Well, that's up to you. It might just have been an hour or two. Or it might have been years. Decades. Geologic ages. Maybe, next time they get a glimpse of Earth they'll see that North America has run into Asia...

Incidentally, anyone who didn't strap down might have jostled around the cabin while frozen. Something might have broken off...

Ah... life in zero-G.



Episode Four: Platform 743-AZ

Can a bunch of clones conditioned to survive in the world of The Computer survive an even more sinister machine intelligence? Azie-Comp kills only those who stumble on restricted areas. Restricted areas are, naturally, not marked. Violators are killed with *enthusiasm*.

4.1 Background

Platform 743-AZ

Find the map of 743-AZ in the pull-out. 743-AZ is shaped something like a hammer with a sphere at the end of the handle. It rotates about the center of the handle. The shuttle docks are at the center, where rotation is minimal; "gravity" there is close to zero-G.

The hammer head is where humans lived and worked. (They were executed by Azie-Comp as potential security risks long ago.) It's pressurized (hurrah!), and gravity is about 1 G. The long side of the head is "down"; there are several floors (or decks) in the head, so the uppermost is at slightly less than 1 G, while the bottom is at full gravity.

The sphere is the center of 743-AZ's fantastic space weaponry (more later). It's covered with dishes, antennae, and strange protrusions — all part of its high-tech armament. Azie-Comp's central processing unit is located within the sphere and is heavily armored. Nothing short of a tac nuke will breach the protecting armor. The sphere is also the site of a multigigawatt nuclear power plant. It, and everything else in the sphere, was designed to be serviced by robots. Consequently, it is completely unshielded. Visiting the sphere is not good for your health. It's a good thing **PARANOIA** players don't seem to have much regard for their character's health.

Along the long shaft of the hammer are ports, through which pie fighters are launched and retrieved. Pie fighters are small spacecraft, used to defend 743-AZ and fight enemies in space.

Azie-Comp

ARM-A-GED-N 59000 is the biggest and best of the ancient military satellites orbiting Earth. Azie-Comp, its cover name, is faithful to its mission: keeping a vast array of beam and missile weapons pointed at targets on Earth (including Alpha Complex).

Its secondary mission is to prevent

anyone from discovering its primary mission. As a cover, it spends most of its time playing factory computer, manufacturing guardbots which are useful in fulfilling its missions.

There are dozens of guardbots on 743-AZ, all in perfect working condition. That's because there is a shortage of raw materials for the factories. No raw materials, no production — and no production, no secret cover. So hundreds of scrapbots constantly prowl around searching for defective bots and loose metal. Any guardbot not in perfect working condition is soon scrap.

The clones — regarded as androids — are potential scrap. Fortunately, scrapbots can be bribed with metal artifacts. Forcing the clones to give up their weapons and equipment to avoid being dismantled should be fun.

Azie-Comp has a problem. For years, a spaceship full of strange aliens has been docked with Platform 743-AZ. Even more annoying, the aliens actually wander around the platform itself from time to time. Worse yet, the guardbots can't do a thing to them. The aliens are practically indestructible. As you might expect, a war computer finds this completely infuriating.

Normally, it would just blow away any unauthorized intruders. However, it fervently hopes the clones can do something about the problem. It hoped the previous android visitor could do something, but she disappeared into the alien ship and was never heard from again.

Unfortunately, it can't tell the Troubleshooters any of this — that would be blowing cover. So it will do its best to get them to the alien ship. And if they stumble on something they shouldn't know, it *will* blow them away.

As long as the clones are ignorant of Azie-Comp's true nature they'll stay healthy. Azie-Comp will play dumb-and-unfriendly, doing a fair job of imitating The Computer. It will respond to every question with, "What is your security clearance?". Of course, as long as the PCs are anywhere on the platform they'll be shadowed by a variety of inept guardbots.

Azie-Comp speaks in a deep, grating masculine voice, using lots of Computerisms — "Failure to comply is treason"; "What is your security clearance?" — but without false courtesy ("Thank you for your cooperation.") Try to speak like Darth-Vader-as-The-Computer.

Getting Around 743-AZ

An elevator (see 4) runs up the shaft of the station. But once the clones get to the "hammer head," they have to use their own two feet.

The "hammer head" is a warren of corridors, rooms, and stairways. It's not laid out in any particular order, no maps are available, and Azie-Comp sure isn't going to give directions. Luckily, the military personnel who used to staff the station painted colored lines to guide each other about the station. A colored line runs to each important room. The corridors are a veritable jumble of lines running every which-way.

Section 4.8 tells which line runs where in case the PCs follow one, and there's a summary below. If you prefer, they can just wander down a corridor and open doors. In this case, spring whatever room you want on them.

Some rooms don't have any colored lines leading to them. Those rooms contain dangerous secrets. They also contain numerous gunbots and wallbots. Consider these "Clone Motels": clones check in but they don't check out.

Where Do the Lines Lead?

- Blue-and-Green:** Bot Manufacturing Complex
- Black-and-Green:** stripped and abandoned room
- Black-and-Pink:** Fake Control Room
- Black-and-Purple:** Bunk Room & Alien Ship
- Black-and-White:** Bot Repair Center
- Purple-and-Green:** stripped and abandoned room
- Purple-and-Orange:** Cafeteria-Lounge
- Purple-and-White:** stripped and abandoned room
- Red:** Vacuum Toilets.
- Yellow:** Vacuum Disposal Chutes

Cast of Characters

There are lots of bots on 743-AZ:

Spybots: The eyes and ears of Azie-Comp. They are smaller than a fist and move terrifyingly fast on jet thrusters. Their only defense is a painful electric shock. They speak with high, squeaky voices and continuously shadow every intruder on the platform.

Patrolbots: Like jackobots, but with magnetic grapples, assorted weapons, and a police-state mentality. They're not

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too bright, but constant communication with Azie-Comp keeps them honest. They're useful for small-scale clone intimidation. They're the units that report to the scene of any problem. They are often observed fighting back packs of scrapbots.

Gunbots: Sort of a cross between a heavy battle tank and an underpaid security guard. They look like large barrels with hoverjet propulsion units. The barrels either fire explosive shells or massive particle beams. Damage is awesome (Weapon column 18, either P or E). They're also pushy.

Wallbots: These are installed in the bulkheads. They control a wide variety of weapons and are astoundingly accurate. Since they don't get around very much they value friendly conversation. Wallbots like to talk about philosophy, theology, and to listen to life stories. The longer the story the better. For example:

Wallbot: Halt! Why are you here?

PC: Uhh, sorry, I was, uh, looking for the toilet, uh, I hope I'm not intruding...

Wallbot: No, no, I mean, why are you here? What's it all about? Is our existence totally meaningless, or do we serve some higher purpose?

PC: Uhh... Our Purpose Is To Serve The Computer! (Speaks loudly, clearly, and directly into his com unit.) What More Could A Loyal Clone Ask?

Wallbot: Well, sure, but why are we endowed with intelligence? (Etc., etc.)

Scrapbots: These cute little guys search constantly for loose items and defective bots. They vary in size and shape but the average scrapbot looks like a mechanical weasel about 1 meter long. It's not unusual to see a swarm of them fighting over a worn-out bot like sharks in a feeding frenzy. They aren't very intelligent but are very, very persistent. Formed into pack-like cults, the scrapbots try to ambush vulnerable members of other scrapbot cults.

Scrapbots are always willing to bargain. They want scrap, and though they prefer theft, they're happy to trade for it, too. Play them like seedy drug traders or Levantine merchants — constantly offering a deal, constantly haggling. They speak in hisses and whispers, drawing out their "s"'es. Try to talk like Gollum.

Scrapbot: Pssst! Hey, buddy. Wantsss to make a deal?

PC: What kind of a deal?

Scrapbot: Give me your gun, preciousss.

PC: What do I get out of it?

Scrapbot: Ssscrapbotsss know everything, yesss. Ssscrapbotsss know. Ssscrapbotsss can tell you, yesss. You give me gun, preciousss.

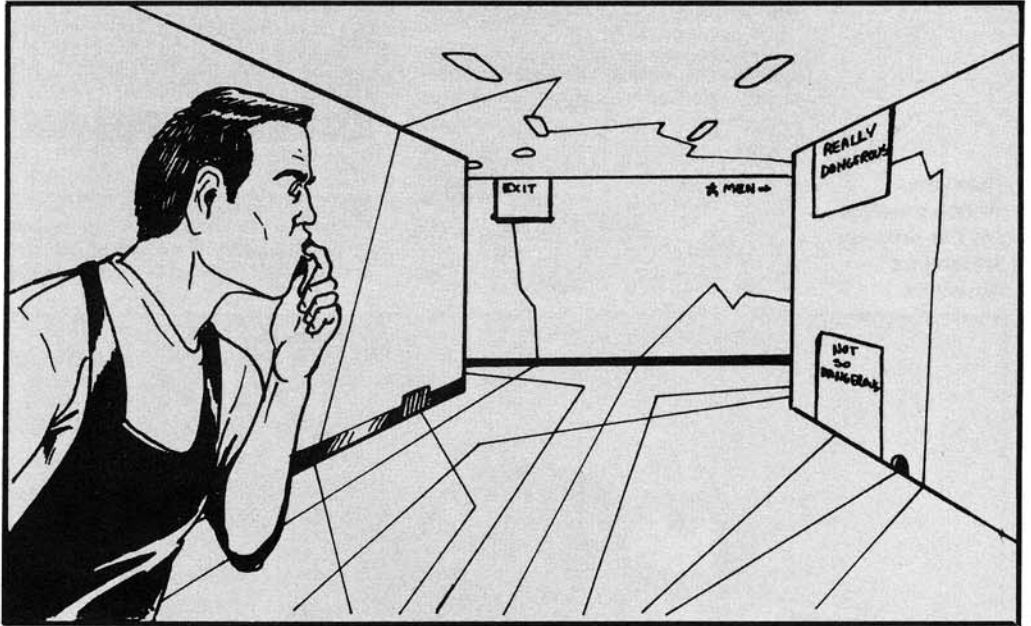
We hardly need to impress upon you that if a Troubleshooter leaves a piece of equipment alone for even a moment it will be gone. G-O-N-E, gone.

4.2 Episode Summary

In the first part of the episode, the PCs encounter Azie-Comp and a scrapbot. If they have any brains at all, they also learn that to find the High Programmer, they must follow the "Black-and-Purple line", which leads to the alien ship. If they don't learn this, well, you'll just have to forcefully encourage them to stumble upon the alien ship. If they don't get to the alien ship, they don't get to the next episode.

But first, we want them to have some fun with the scrapbots. These little devils steal everything that isn't bolted to the deck, and do their best to recycle our "android" friends, too. Imagine an intelligent rat with steel claws — imagine hundreds of them. Get the idea? We knew that you would.

Before they get to the alien ship, you'll want, at a minimum, to run the PCs through the Bot Manufacturing Complex (4.8), and maybe a couple of the other chambers on 743-AZ.



If the PCs are bright, however, they'll follow the Black-and-Purple line like bloodhounds following a scent, and won't let you distract them into investigating all the other wonderful deathtraps to be found on 743-AZ. What's a poor GM to do?

The answer is pretty simple. Guess what? The Black-and-Purple line leads right through the Bot Manufacturing Complex — and through any other room you want the PCs to visit. Obviously.

Oh, a couple of other things.

One, you want the PCs to realize that the "android" (i.e., High Programmer) followed the Black-and-Purple line, i.e., entered the alien ship. If they don't get this info any other way, you can always

have a talkative wallbot drop this fact, e.g.:

Wallbot: Say, are you looking for the other android?

PC: Android? What android?

Wallbot: The female one who was through here a while ago.

PC: Aha! The traitorous Commie bitch! Which way did she go?

Wallbot: She was following the Black-and-Purple line. What makes you think she's a Communist? Say, are you interested in 20th Century political doctrines?

Two, you want to give the PCs the nasty feeling that there may still be aliens around. They might run across another slime trail. They might find another hatched egg. Or you could have hordes of alien monsters attack and obliterate them. But not only isn't that subtle, it means you can't run the last episode... the last part of this book would be wasted. All the work we put into it — the long hours spent slaving over a hot

Follow the yellow-brick line.

microcomputer — would go to waste. But you don't care... NOooo! Why should you? Why should you give a tinker's damn for the long hours, the soul-searching, the hard labor that goes into the production of great art like this?

G'wan. Waste it all. Philistine.

Boy, are we glad we got your money before you tore the plastic off...

4.3 Welcome! Prepare to Die

You wake up. You're still cold. You're in zero-G, but you hear a hiss! Yes, the cabin is pressurizing! You can take off your spacesuit!

The hatch opens automatically. A deep, masculine voice booms,

CLONES IN SPACE

"Welcome to Platform 743-AZ. I am Azie-Comp. Come out with your hands up! Failure to comply is treason."

Before you even have a chance to leave, a small, rat-like bot rushes in on hoverjets. It quickly snatches up YOUR [pick a clone, any clone] laser pistol and flies away with it. You're not sure, but you think it muttered something like "preciousss, preciousss. . ."

Along about this time the clones should be leaving the shuttlebot. Read:

Several of the small bots are using a laser torch to remove the hatch door from the shuttlebot. The reception room looks familiar — a small cylinder except that it is completely stripped of furnishings; even the grates on the air vents and the covers for the power outlets are missing. At the other side of the cylinder is a door. [This is the elevator.] Directly above the door is a massive array of mobile laser barrels, tracking devices, remote cameras and sensors, and a rather impressive viewscreen. The masculine voice speaks again: "State your purpose, rank, and origin. You have three seconds. Two. . ."

Virtually any reasonable response will satisfy Azie-Comp. . . like "We're here to track down a traitor," or "Please don't kill us, please don't kill us, we'll do anything you say, only please don't kill us!" Azie-Comp is desperate; as long as the clones don't penetrate an area it really has to keep secret, and as long as they can be conned into investigating the alien

ship, it doesn't really care. Of course, if they don't respond in three seconds, it's disintegrationville for the clones. As well it should be. . .

Azie-Comp won't provide much information. Usually it responds to questions with a typical Computerism like "That information is not available at this time" or "Disobedience is punishable by summary execution." It will be pleased to give them directions to the Communist traitor (take the elevator to Main Station, then follow the Black-and-Purple line).

The PCs can talk to the scrapbots, too (see 4.1).

PC: Have you seen another, uh, android? A female?

Scrapbot: The other one, yesss. She went there, yesss. We can tell you where she went.

PC: Where did she go?

Scrapbot: Oh, yesss, we make deal. We can tell, yesss. You give us metal now?

PC: WHERE did she go, you little nit? Where?

Scrapbot: We make deal, yesss?

PC: How about we pop you open like a snakpac?

Scrapbot: EEEEEeee... [Doppler effect.]

4.4 The Elevator

How It Works

Assuming the PCs satisfy Azie-Comp and don't get reduced to their constituent

atoms, the next stop is the elevator. The elevator can be loads of fun.

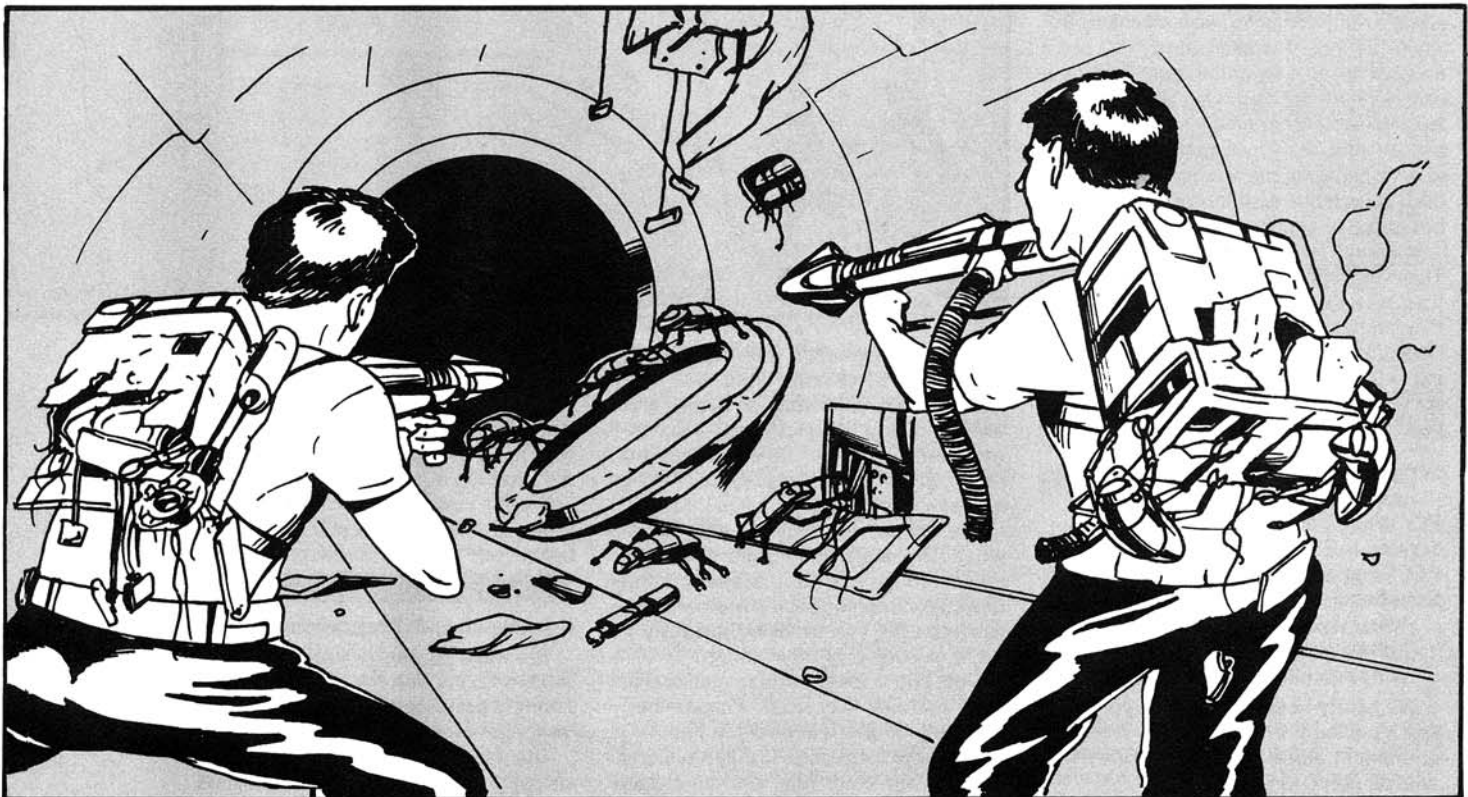
The docking bay is effectively at zero-G because it's at the pivot point of the space station. The elevator runs up the shaft. That means that as it goes away from the docking bay, the elevator runs into areas of increasing "gravity."

But the elevator can move along the shaft in either direction. When it heads toward the Main Station, one surface of the elevator's interior becomes the floor. When it heads to the Power Plant, the opposite surface is the floor. So if the PCs go from one stop to the other, they'll gradually get lighter until they're at zero-G, then they'll start to drift upwards, then they'll fall on their heads. Fun, yes?

It's worse than that. Whenever an elevator stops or starts, it accelerates. People in the elevator are pulled in the direction opposite the acceleration. On Earth, you get heavier when the elevator starts, and lighter when it stops for this very reason. But in the absence of gravity, you don't get heavier or lighter — you get thrown around.

Suppose the clones get in at the Docking Bay and want to go to the Main Station. The elevator accelerates "down" the shaft, so the clones are pulled toward the ceiling. One kind of acceleration is indistinguishable from another, so they will (we hope) conclude that the ceiling is the "floor," since they are being pulled toward it. So they stand on the ceiling. As the elevator gets farther down the shaft, the rotation of the station ac-

Sharp-eyed Troubleshooters get the drop on scavenging scrapbots.



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celerates the clones away from the "ceiling" and toward the "floor." So they fall on their heads.

Or they go from Main Station to the Docking Bay. They stand on the (clearly evident) floor, since they are under gravity. The door closes and the elevator accelerates, so they're pulled down a little harder. Gravity lessens as they go up the shaft until they're close to zero-G. Then, the elevator decelerates and the clones go crashing onto the ceiling.

GM: Ooops. Elevator malfunction... WHAM. WHAM. WHAM. WHAM. Yes, you can almost reach the button... WHAM. WHAM.

Clones in the Elevator

Beyond the door is a cubical room three meters on a side. Next to the door are four buttons. From top to bottom, they are labelled "Power Plant," "Fighter Ports," "Docking Bay" and "Main Station." The "Docking Bay" button is glowing.

Take it from here. WHAM. WHAM. WHAM.

4.5 Power Plant

If the clones are foolish enough to go here:

The elevator door opens on a small, white-painted chamber. The walls are lined with dozens of wallbots. On the opposite wall stands a single massive door with a wheel-handle. Huge warnings are printed all over it: "Authorized Personnel Only. WARNING: Severe Radiation Hazard. No User-Serviceable Parts Within."

Getting inside is tough. The wallbots are friendly enough to warn the PCs that conditions within are not compatible with the existence of biological life — also the wallbots have orders to destroy all intruders. ("Sorry about that, but, you know, a job's a job.") If they do somehow manage to get past the wallbots and the door — they flood the compartment with radiation and begin to glow in exciting fluorescent colors. What fun.

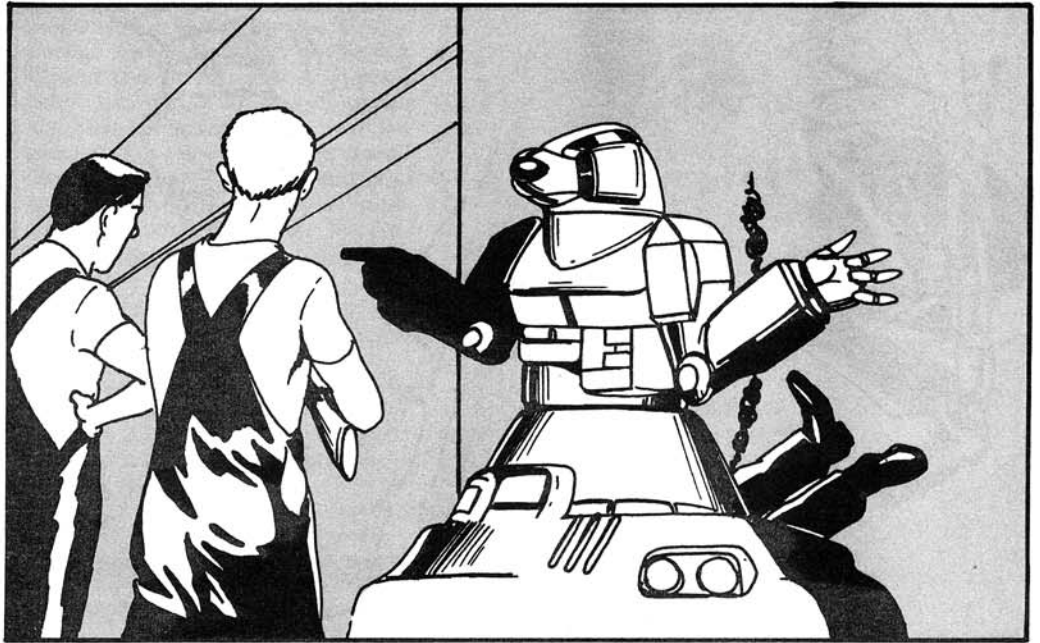
4.6 Fighter Ports

The door opens onto a long tunnel stretching up and down. You are not quite under zero-G, but close to it — perhaps .1 G. A ladder runs along the tunnel.

Every ten meters, there are airlocks on opposite sides of the tunnel, perhaps twenty airlocks in all. Each has a small circular window.

These airlocks lead to the fighter ports. If the PCs investigate one:

Through the window, you can dimly see a saucer-shaped vehicle, and beyond



it, naked space. The airlock leads to a hatch on the vehicle.

Above the airlock are stenciled words: "Pie Fighter X-17." To your right is a monitor on which a message appears: "Pilot! Retinal scan required for access."

If a PC stares into the screen, a beam of light will shoot from it and scan his retina. The message on the screen changes to: "You are not cleared for access. Report to your commanding officer."

Short of blowing open an airlock, there's no way the PCs can get access to a pie fighter. Doing so means opening the tunnel to vacuum. More explosive decompression fun.

The pie fighters will be important in Episode Five; more about them later.

4.7 Docking Bay

If the PCs go back to the docking bay:

This is where you exited the shuttlebot. The big change is that dozens of scrapbots are swarming inside it. As you watch you see them dragging out parts of the shuttlebot's command console.



They've stripped it; you aren't going to take this shuttle home, that's for sure.

Your friend? What friend?

4.8 Main Station

The door opens onto a small room. You're under a full gravity — what bliss! There are gun emplacements all over the room. A small, ratlike spybot, bristling with antennae and opticals, stares at you from one corner. There are three other doors, and the floor and walls are covered with particolored lines. There's a blue-and-green one; and a black-and-pink one; and... well, lots more. Each line runs out one of the doors.

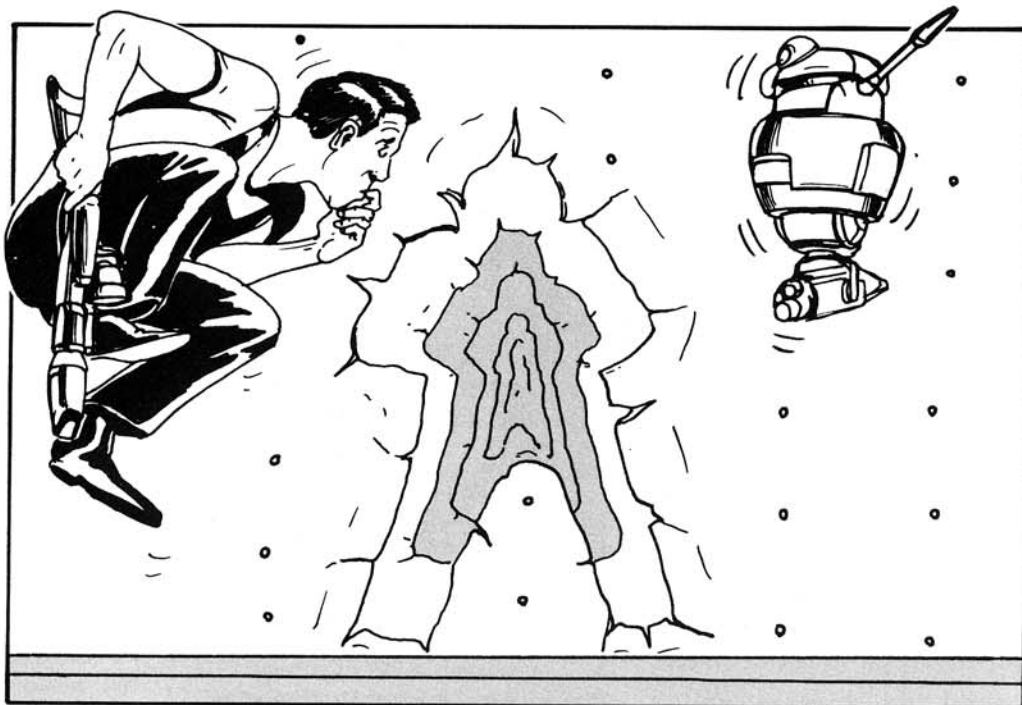
Where they go now is up to them. Remember, though: be sure to steer them through the Bot Manufacturing Complex somewhere along the line. (No pun intended.)

Bot Manufacturing Complex (Blue-and-Green Line)

Surely this is the largest chamber in existence. It completely dwarfs anything you've ever seen in Alpha Complex. Enormous machines, larger than food vats, work at a furious pace.

The machines are actually building bots. You see a bot insert a scrapbot tentacle into an input slot. Immediately, a huge machine whirls into action. After a few moments a shiny-new bot head flies out. It's caught a dozen meters away by a mechanical arm. The arm adroitly attaches the head to a body moving down a conveyor belt. As the belt moves, other mechanical arms attach other parts to the new bot. Finally, the completed scrapbot rolls off the line. It seems to shake itself. It starts to

CLONES IN SPACE



Gesundheit!

run but trips. Dozens of waiting scrapbots fall on it and tear it to pieces. It would seem that you've just witnessed the cycle of life as it exists here.

Suddenly, you notice that many of the lurking scrapbots are looking at you. As you turn, you realize that three of them are between you and the exit. What now?

What's now, of course, is a firefight. The PCs have probably wandered around 743-AZ enough by now, and are in the mood for a little action.

The scrapbots attack in packs, by the dozens, attempting to rip the clones to shreds, and feed them to the machines. The PCs will presumably try to fight their way to the door.

Let the PCs have fun blowing up scrapbots, and make sure they destroy at least one of the manufacturing machines in a spectacular explosion. At least a couple of clones should be dragged down, torn to shreds and fed to the machines. The machines themselves swing into action,

grabbing clones and placing them on conveyor belts, which carry the clones into the guts of the machine.

Just as the mayhem reaches its high-point:

Suddenly, from behind you, a beam of lambent light shines from on high. All the scrapbots freeze in place. The machines freeze, too.

Looking to the source of the light, you see, floating above the floor on a flying platform, a most peculiar sight.

It's an alien — not the many-toothed, vicious type, but another one.

It's a green, warted, tentacular monstrosity. Its tentacles manipulate the controls of the platform. Two bulbous eyes hang on the ends of eyestalks; a monocle hangs before one of them.

The alien's dress is most peculiar. It's wearing an open-necked shirt, tails, and a kepi. One tentacle reaches up and tips the hat. "Pip-pip," says the alien, then zips away at incredible speed on its platform.

If the PCs want to follow, they can barely keep the alien in sight, but he heads straight for the Bunk Room (see 4.9).

If they shoot at it, it dodges most of their fire, and the few shots which connect seemingly have no effect.

Fake Control Room (Black-and-Pink Line)

This room is filled with control panels, complete with flashing lights, and gauges. Video screens display views of space.

This fake central control room is monitored by two wallbots and a gunbot.



Lots of video screens, flashing lights and indicators. The whole system looks impressive but it's on a rigid three-minute cycle. Just wait around and the same things happen all over again. Azie-Comp thinks violent activity in this room is a great excuse for terminating androids.

Bot Repair Center (Black-and-White Line)

Read:

This room contains at least two dozen of the rat-like bots. One approaches. "Do you need repairssss?" it asks. "I can fixxx, oh, yesss." It chuckles evilly.

On the floor of the room, you see a gelatinous smear. You smell a revolting scent — one that reminds you of the eggs you found on 15-B.

Ordinarily this would be a bot repair center. However, the scrapbots don't bother with any kind of repairs, they get right down to the real work — dismantling. Given half a chance they'll do the same thing to a clone.

An alien has been here, and recently.

Cafeteria-Lounge (Purple-and-Orange Line)

Read:

Why, this looks like a communal dining center just like the ones back in good ol' Alpha Complex! The normal penetrating vat food odors are missing, though. Two packs of scrapbots face each other over a fallen guardbot in the center of the dining area.

The cafeteria-lounge has no food or water. Anything that could be removed (e.g., table, chairs) has been used for raw materials. Two rival packs are fighting over an injured guardbot. The guardbot will be incredibly grateful if rescued. Unfortunately, there are thirty-seven scrapbots intent on keeping it.

Vacuum Toilets (Red Lines)

Another one of those tiny rooms with the bizarre-looking chair. Only this one has a bot built into the wall directly to the right.

The only difference between these vacuum toilets and the ones on Platform 15-B (see 2.7) is that they come equipped with their own wallbots. For some reason, Azie-Comp doesn't like visitors to have total privacy. Also hiding in the toilet is a single scrapbot. It will patiently wait for an awkward moment when it can steal a piece of metal and run away.

Disposal Chutes (Yellow Lines)

Just like the ones on Platform 15-B — see 2.7.

Rooms Without Lines

Sometimes the clones pass a doorway to which no colored line runs. All these



doors are labelled "Energy flux hazard! Authorized Personnel Only!" Should the PCs peek inside:

Missile Command Station

Inside are two huge video screens. One shows a map, covered with bright graphic symbols. Another shows a planet, with a dotted orbit around the planet and a symbol that looks like this space station moving slowly around the orbit. All around the room there are hundreds of terminals and control boards.

If the PCs want to play with the controls, let 'em.

Suddenly, a klaxon sounds! A voice booms: "Launch initiated." On the first screen, one of the graphic symbols begins to blink. On the second, you see a dotted line streak away from the space-station symbol and head toward the planet. A minute or so later, the graphic symbol disappears and is replaced by a little mushroom. The dotted line disappears.

That's right. They've nuked Earth. The Computer is not going to be pleased when it hears about this.

Oops — Azie-Comp won't be pleased, either. So much for its cover. Guardbots show up, and give the PCs the usual choice of instant obliteration or going to the Bunk Room.

4.9 The Bunk Room (Black and-Purple Line)

You see bare remnants of a communal sleep area. The way you recognize it is by the torch marks on the floor showing where the bolted-down bunk legs were removed. At first you think there's



some trick of light in the dim room. Gradually, you realize that the far wall doesn't exist. In its place is a shimmering black curtain that your eyes can't focus on. It seems to exist partly in this dimension and partly somewhere — alien.

The bunk room has been completely cleaned out by scrapbots. The shimmering opening is a trans-dimensional doorway into the alien ship.

One way or another, Azie-Comp is going to get the clones through the curtain. If nothing else works, he'll have the guardbots toss them through.



5. Episode Five: They Want Our Women!

Paranoids from Earth meet paranoids from deep space. The clones meet a succession of truly wacko aliens, until, finally, they uncover a nefarious plot to conquer Earth. They can go along, or try to foil it. In all likelihood, neither will work.

5.1 Background

The Ship

That weird shimmering curtain is the "skin" of the alien ship. The ship itself is a sort of multi-dimensional being. It "covers" the crew when in the ship or nearby. Since the ship can throw up a dimensional "out-phase," no physical or energy weapons can damage the aliens. For **PARANOIA** players, used to mass destruction, this is very frustrating. On the other hand, it's fun to let them fire volley after volley at a completely invulnerable opponent.

The alien ship is strangely amorphous. This is difficult to describe in physical terms but ridiculously easy in game terms. Every room has two passages. One is used for entering and the other is used for exiting. You enter from wherever you're coming from and you leave to wherever your destiny lies.

Does that sound confusing? It's simple really. When a clone enters an alien room it's always where the Gamemaster (otherwise known as "destiny") wants him to end up. This takes care of annoying things like maps.

One cue for the Gamemaster is the comments the players make just before they step through a portal. The portal reads enough of their minds to transport them wherever they suggest. Speaking out loud about real or imagined threats could be very dangerous.

The Really Wacko Bug-Eyed Monsters (BEMs)

There are three types of aliens on board; the *shmegegi*, who really run it; their pets, the ones with the big teeth and nasty dispositions; and the really wacko aliens.

These last are really, like, alien. In all likelihood, humans won't be able to figure them out. That's okay; their main purpose is to disconcert your players.

The wackos are along for the ride. Basically, they've bought passage on the *shmegegi* ship for their own purposes. Verss Prhhh, for instance, is an interstellar gourmet. He came along in the

hope of discovering "new life, new civilizations" — and eating it. Some of the other guys are even weirder. For example, Juraish is so bizarre even we don't have any good idea why he's around. But he's loads of fun — a real party animal.

The Shmegegi

The *shmegegi* (singular, *shmegegus*) are much easier to understand. They're still pretty weird, but at least they have human drives. They're just your typical ravenous, slobbering, bug-eyed monsters out to conquer our planet and ravish our women.

They are green, warty, and multi-tentacled. Each has two eyes on eyestalks. All are male.

It's sad. You see, millenia ago, a terrible plague carried off the female members of the race. Bereft of their beloved *shmegegae* (the feminine plural), the *shmegegi* left their planet *en masse* to pick up girls. Kinda like cruisin' the cosmic void.

They haven't had much luck. But now, they've encountered a planet (Earth) whose women (despite being of a different biological phylum) are inexplicably attractive. They plan to conquer the place and set up a nice little colonial empire. Since they have a fantastically-advanced technology, it shouldn't be too difficult.

And the only obstacle is the clones.

What the Shmegegi Are Like

The *shmegegi* are a highly civilized race. They wear elaborate costumes, speak with upper-class English or Scottish accents, and like high tea. Typical garb includes sharply ironed white linen trousers (with at least eight legs for all the tentacles), top hat, tails, bow tie, and monocle. To give you an idea how to play the *shmegegi*, here are some typical dialog excerpts:

PC: (While firing cone rifle) Take that, you traitorous Bug-eyed Monster Commie!

Shmegegi: (Completely unfazed) I say, old bean, rather unsporting, eh, what?

PC: But why do you want to conquer Earth?

Shmegegi: Well, err, it's rather embarrassing, really. You see, ah, we, ah, well, ah, we find Earth females rather attractive.

PC: (Who has been on hormonal suppressants all his life) But why?

Shmegegi: Why do the greeblestunk sing? Why are the shrbt chartreuse? To

whom can one go regarding such mysteries?

PC: I don't get it.

Shmegegi: Oh, this is quite embarrassing. I mean, it's a natural urge. Or perhaps an unnatural one. Really, it's quite hard to say. But nonetheless, we are determined. Earth and its lovelies shall be ours!

PC: Never, Commie Alien Slime!

Shmegegi: No hard feelings, I'm sure.

5.2 Episode Summary

Initially, the *shmegegi* are unaware that the clones have entered their ship. Consequently, the clones traipse around in the passenger section — where the really weird aliens are — for some time. After you get bored with this, or when the players are sufficiently weirded out, the clones are captured and tortured by the *shmegegi*, who have their own idea of what unbearable agony is. While imprisoned, they encounter Bette-U (the High Programmer), who fills them in on the aliens. She also reveals that she has the key to the pie fighters.

When the clones fail to break under torture (as they surely will, unless, like the *shmegegi*, they consider anything lime green, the music of Waylon Jennings, and old Three Stooges routines to be unbearably agonizing), they are taken before the leader of the aliens, the McShmegegi of Shmegego. In typical villain fashion, he boasts shamelessly about his evil plans, and reveals the one way the clones may escape.

Presumably, they do escape. In the High Programmer's company, they man the pie fighters and begin a wild space battle against the invading alien fleet. Finally, they triumph, saving Earth, humanity, and the Alpha Complex Way.

Of course, there's no way home. Too bad.



EPISODE FIVE

5.3 The Really Strange Aliens

Juraish

You step out of the portal into a foggy swamp. The muck underfoot squishes every time you take a step. In the distance you see a mountain glittering with strange lights. Hesitantly, you turn around and find the portal has disappeared.

If the clones don't walk toward the mountain, they see hulking shapes in the fog stalking nearer — shapes that look like they might be nasty gelatinous aliens with huge fangs. When they reach the foot of the mountain, read:

You reach the foot of the mountain and discover that it is, indeed, a foot. This is a huge alien being! It stares down at you compassionately (with five eyes), humorously (eight eyes), wisely (one eye) and with a pitying gaze (three eyes).

This giant alien (say, the size of your average skyscraper) is immobile. It communicates through telepathy and can communicate with several beings at the same time. It has *all* mutant powers with unlimited range and use. In spite of its great mental powers it has the reasoning ability of the average Infrared clone. Gamemasters should think of it as a great wish-giver. On the order of "make me a sandwich" and, poof, the character turns into a sandwich. Lots of yuks. When you get tired of this, another portal appears.

Versss Prhhh

You walk out into a pleasant meadow. Being outside makes you a little nervous but your fears are allayed by a delicious smell — like pure vat products, freshly boiling. It probably comes from just over that little rise.

If the clones head toward the smell (and away from the portal):

Just as you near the top of the rise, a pair of antennae stick up from the other side. They're followed by a grotesque body about twice as long as a large transbot. Frozen with shock you realize that the thing is actually talking! Quite clearly, it says, "Oh goody! Dinner's here!" It's talking about you!

Imagine a cross between a cockroach and a salamander. Imagine it as long as a city block. That's Versss Prhhh. He signed up for the interstellar journey to encounter new taste sensations — a real interstellar gourmet. He's been disappointed; he hasn't met that many edible life forms so far, but the clones look appetizing.

Versss Prhhh will follow them as long as they remain in his chamber, i.e., until they go through one of the portals. He's quite relentless. He also believes that one should hunt food without artificial aids.

That fact, and a good supply of clones, should keep the players going for a while.

Weserboa

You step through into a weird landscape that's barren of life but scattered with grey, abstract sculptures. Far off, across a valley, you see another portal.

If they decide to walk to the other portal read:

You get about half way there when a shimmering, glowing ball of energy slowly emerges from the ground in front of you! What are you doing?

If the clones fire any kind of energy weapon:

The ball of energy seems to glow more fiercely as your beam strikes. As soon as the weapon stops firing the thing moves; almost quicker than the eye can follow, it enters the barrel of your gun.

Otherwise, the ball will just follow them. So long as it's fed (i.e., shot) every couple of hours it'll stick around.

are so overjoyed at being home again that it takes you a few minutes to notice what's wrong with the place. For one thing, there are no other clones around. For another, you can't smell the vats. The whole place seems curiously unfinished. . .

This is nothing but a simulation of Alpha Complex. It's not populated (even by The Computer) and rather sterile.

The four new clones seem mildly pleased to see you. One of them says, "Greetings, hello, how are you, gutten-tag, buenos dias, aloha."

These guys are worse than clones. They always look like whomever they first run into. That means that all four of them look exactly like the first clone they happen to meet. Including equipment, injuries, and dumb expressions. This can be a lot of fun when they run into entire clone lines. Instead of six identical twins you get ten!

The clone-clones are like galactic Jane-Goodalls-among-the-apes. They imitate



Illegal aliens.

This thing is an energy community and looks sort of like a low-budget *Star Trek* special effect. It wanders around aimlessly, passing directly through walls. It's about as hostile as a puppy dog. It's also unable to communicate with organic life forms (**note:** in case there's any confusion in your mind, clones are organic life forms). It likes being fed energy. It will assume that any beams shot into it are invitations to suck the weapon's batteries dry.

The Clone-Clones: Legant, Armouls, Realb and Yoz

To your astonishment, you step through the portal into Alpha Complex. You [pick whoever stepped through first] even see four of your own clones. You

clone behavior in order to be accepted by the primitives they study. Since they don't want to spoil the validity of their data, they will reveal nothing to the clones about who they actually are. They'll even claim to be actual clones of the person they're imitating. They'll deny they are aliens, and proudly point out that they look like clones, carry artifacts like clones, wear weapons like clones, and even act like clones.

The only problem is, since they're invulnerable to most anything, they just can't be as paranoid as clones. They just ask a lot of questions and manage to be irritating in moments of crucial action.

The clone-clones eventually learn to correct their mistakes. For example, if they walk through a massive explosion

without a scratch the real clones will get suspicious. So the next time they find themselves in an explosion they groan with a little pain while they're walking out.

The clone-clones stick with the PCs as long as they stay on the alien ship — throughout the confrontation with the shmegegi, and everything. They won't take any dramatic action, though — they just imitate the PCs.

5.4 Capture

This chamber is fetid, humid, gloomy. All about you is swamp and bizarre, droopy vegetation. You hear rustling, and from behind a drooping bush comes — an alien. Slime drips from its fangs, organs beat beneath its gelatinous skin. Its mantis-like arms caress the air.

Another steps out. And another, and another... they surround you.

Give the PCs a chance to react; the aliens will not attack.

Then, another being *flies out* — a warty, green-skinned tentacular monstrosity, standing on a flying platform and carrying a huge gun. He says "I say, look what we've treed." He caresses one of the fanged beings, which rumbles in pleasure. He raises his gun and . . .

Do the PCs fire back? This is pretty pointless, since the aliens are completely invulnerable. Luckily, the alien gun doesn't blow things up, but projects a paralysis ray. The clones keel over in various uncomfortable positions. The clone-clones, after looking around, will hurriedly keel over too, doing their best to look as if they're paralyzed also (they aren't).



5.5 Jail

One of the shimmering black portals appears. The alien strips you of your equipment and tosses you through like so much baggage.

You're in a cubical room, in zero-G. The walls are padded. The portal fades behind you. There's no way in or out.

A single human female, dressed in

white, is also in the room. She looks you over contemptuously. "I might have known," she mutters. "All I rate is a bunch of Reds."

The woman is Bette-U-LYF, the mysterious High Programmer the PCs have been following. Formerly Alpha Complex's Director of Project Mongo, she fled to space when The Computer discovered her membership in the treasonous L-5 Society. She knew there were aliens on Platform 743-AZ, and intended to contact them hoping to make a deal and get back in The Computer's good graces.

Unfortunately, the shmegegi had no interest in making a deal. First, they tortured her for information about Earth (they got very little). Then, they tried to make friends. They brought her flowers. Chocolates. They went for little walks.

Alas for the shmegegi, they just aren't cut out for life as BEMs. They're just too polite. They'd love to ravish Bette, but they can't bring themselves to do it. So they're stuck with tepid 19th Century-style courtship.

They've told her of their plans. She knows they intend to conquer Earth, and why. She even knows how and when.

She has a plan. She has a Gauss Static Device, a pencil-shaped object which, when touched to a bot or electronic device, makes it go haywire. If she and the clones can escape and get to the fighter ports, she can use it to open the airlocks, then launch the pie fighters and make a last desperate effort to stop the aliens from laying the tentacle of oppression on the sacred body of Mother Earth!

Bette explains all this to the clones as she rubs their limbs to counteract the paralysis ray. Since it will take a few minutes for the paralysis to wear off, presumably they'll hear her out instead of trying to terminate her immediately.

Since they don't have any equipment, if they do want to kill her, it'll have to be with bare hands. Eech.

Let the PCs spend some time plotting and getting to know Bette before the torture begins.

5.6 Ve Haff Vays

Now is when you get to play your best pseudo-sadistic Nazi. "Show them the instruments, Mortimer." "We have ways of making you talk." "Had enough yet? Or shall I bring out the *Waylon Jennings*? Nyahahahaha!"

Abruptly, you find yourselves — someplace else. Bette-U-LYF [and the Clone-clones, if along] are with you, in a dark, rectangular room. Two burly-looking aliens stand in the center.

"Good evening," says one in a nasty tone. [Clench your teeth and enunciate carefully while you speak.] "We are your



torturers. You will tell us everything we want to know."

Bette-U sniggers. Any clone who tries to rush the aliens is clubbed down.

"Will you speak now? Or shall we administer force?"

Either the clones steadfastly refuse to divulge any information (ha!), or they babble like mad. In the latter (likely) case, the alien says:

"Ah! How eager you are. How gratifying. But how shall we tell falsity from truth? No, you must taste our skills before we are satisfied. Mortimer, *bring out the green!*"

The shmegegi have a highly developed esthetic sense. Things we consider merely bad, they consider excruciatingly painful. Mortimer, the other alien, pulls out a flashlight. He turns it on: it shines with an ugly lime-green light.

The alien is tense with anticipation. "So!" he says. "I admire your fortitude. Many would be eager to tell us all by now. But the lime green is only one of many agonizing tortures we have available. Confess now, and you shall be spared the horrible pain of . . . *the Waylon Jennings!*" And with that, you hear the twangy beginnings of a country-western song . . . The aliens cover their ears and grimace.

By now, the players should be getting into the spirit and shouting their defiance to the aliens: "You'll never get what you want, alien scum!" and so on. If you have a country-western tape, actually play it. Cover your ears while it's playing, and grimace and moan as if you are one of the aliens. When you get bored with this, switch it off. (You should, however, force yourself to endure a few moments of this, for the effect. . . it's tough, we know.)

The alien is quivering with release, and panting slightly. "So, you resist even the feared *Waylon Jennings!*" he says. "But surely even ones so brave as you cannot withstand . . . *The Three Stooges!*" A black-and-white image flickers into being. Three strange-looking men caper bizarrely. One pokes another in the nose and says "Nyucknyucknyuck."

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If your players are having a good time with this, keep it up! Invent more bizarre tortures. Eventually, the torturer relents:

The alien is clearly exhausted. "Never," he says, "have I met beings of such fortitude and determination. Never before has any resisted the full panoply of tortures available to the shmegegu race. Humans, I salute you. Mortimer, we must take them to the bridge." With that, he waves a tentacle, and suddenly — *SHLOOOP* — you are all somewhere else.

5.7 The McShmegegu of Shmegego

You are on a railed balcony, running the perimeter of a huge, metal-walled chamber. Below you are a dozen shmegegi, seated at consoles, their tentacles rapidly stroking controls, murmuring into headsets. Before you is a gigantic screen, on which is shown the alien ship, 743-AZ, and planet Earth.

In the center of the chamber stands a huge shmegegu, ten feet tall, wearing full dress kilt, sporran, tunic, kepi, and monocle. His thorax is covered with medals, which jingle when he moves. "So these arre the human spies," he bellows. In the background, you hear the eerie music of bagpipes.

In this encounter, you get to roleplay a bluff, military-type villain with a Scottish accent, as he gloats over his victory-soon-to-be and reveals everything the PCs need to know to defeat him.

Let the PCs respond as they wish. The McShmegegu, clan leader of the Shmegegi, will bring them down to the control room floor and take them on a guided tour.

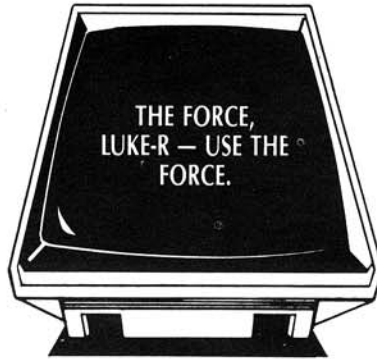
"Thrrrrrockmorton controls ourrr spinklery rrrray pods, which we can land enawhere we wish on your puirrr planet, destrrrroying whole complexes with a single bluiw. An' herre, Mac-Pherrrrson controls the shimmerrring currrtains through which ye ha'e passed on yourrr explorrration of the ship. Ye need only think o' where ye wish to go, an' therre ye be. A grrreat technological achievement, indicative of ourrr superrriorrrity o'er yourrr pathetic rrrrace."

He'll ask the PCs to turn coat and join the shmegegi in their conquest.

"Join us, and ye shall be satrrrraps in ourrr new colonial empirrre. Ye shall rrrule in ourrr name, giving us only what we requirrrre." If the PCs remain unimpressed, he'll display the alien ship's weaponry, which is awesome indeed. "Ye canna stand against oos. Surrenderrr, Earrrrrrtlings!"

As we see it, there are four possible outcomes:

1. Some, but not all, of the PCs agree



to help the shmegegi conquer Earth. In this case, the shmegegi will arm them with their old equipment and let them fight it out among themselves. Go to outcome 2 or 3 with the survivors (if any).

2. They decide to help the shmegegi conquer Earth. In this case, see section 5.8.

3. They defy the aliens to the last breath. In this case, see 5.9.

4. One of the PCs, played by someone who has seen too many *James Bond* flicks, desperately hits one of the controls. In this case:

A klaxon sounds: WHOOP! WHOOP! WHOOP! Red lights and buzzers flash. The aliens fiddle with controls desperately. The McShmegegu turns to you with horror. "Guid God, mon; ye dinna ken what ye ha'e done. That be the verrra self-destrrrruict switch o' the whole ship!"

Alien Equipment

Sh'rtmegister: The sh'rtmegister is an awesome weapon devised by the shmegegi for use against hostile life-forms (human beings, for example). It's designed to be held by three tentacles. One supports it; one adjusts the mxst control; and one pulls the trigger. The target, if hit, turns inside out. In the case of a human, this means that the organs are now outside and the skin inside. This is very painful, but, luckily the pain does not last long, as the human, unaccustomed to so peculiar an arrangement of his organs, dies within fifteen seconds. (If the target is hit again within this period, it turns outside out again, and, although stunned, is otherwise unaffected.)

Humans can use sh'rtmegisters, but with difficulty. For one thing, they can't move the mxst control while firing the weapon. This means that every time a human fires, there's a 20% chance it blows up — column 12 on the damage table for everything within 10 meters.

For another thing, few PCs have sh'rtmegister skill. Gosh, I guess they'll just be stuck using their Aimed Weapon Combat skill.

Obviously.

Aliens are flitting this way and that. The clones can make a break for it in the confusion. "Quick," says Bette-U, "follow me." And she leads them to the pie fighter ports.

Segue into the battle scene from section 5.9. This time, the aliens aren't invading, but are simply trying to escape from their disintegrating ship. The same climactic battle occurs, though.

5.8 The Conquest of Earth

"Och, an' I knew ye brave lads an' lassies wuid come arrround. Jackson, herre, will take ye to outfitting."

The aliens want the PCs to infiltrate Alpha Complex and prepare it for invasion. To help them, the aliens will give the PCs the following:

- one sh'rtmegister each;
- one thrntwhistle each;
- one explosive brain implant each (see box).

Oh, and they can have back their own equipment, too, if they like.

The PCs won't be told about the explosive brain implant until after it's installed.

Once it is installed, they're sent back to Alpha Complex. Their job: infiltrate, file reports on the situation in Alpha Complex, and prepare for the invasion.

The shmegegi are a long-lived race, and

Thrntwhistle: The thrntwhistle is a kind of ring-like amulet, normally worn around a tentacle. It provides absolute, complete protection against the sh'rtmegister.

Explosive Brain Implant: This semi-telepathic device is implanted directly in the brain, and cannot easily be removed by humans, who don't have a sufficiently advanced technology. (That is, it can be removed, but at the cost of turning the character into a vegetable.)

The device monitors the very thoughts of the person in whose skull it is implanted. If the individual's allegiance changes — that is, he does not always serve the shmegegi race to the best of his abilities — the explosive goes off, killing the person in question.

This device is clearly an even more effective loyalty-ensuring mechanism than the many techniques utilized by The Computer. The Computer would be real interested in it. Of course, any person who even *thought* about telling The Computer about the device in his head would be dead. Instantly.

have a different notion of time than humans. They intend to invade very, very soon — in ten years or so.

Until the invasion occurs, the PCs will have to live (or die) in Alpha Complex, facing constant Computer scrutiny. Effectively, they're now members of another secret society.

And once they get back to Alpha Complex, The Computer will want to debrief them. Doubtless, it will want to know about the strange alien devices they are carrying. And the alien spaceship in which they landed. And where the Ultraviolet traitor they were sent to terminate is.

We hope they coordinate their stories real good. Because my guess is that if The Computer doesn't kill them, the explosive brain implants will. Or maybe The Computer will have them executed at the same time that the explosive brain implants go off. That could be fun.

5.9 Pie Fighting in Space

If the PCs defy the McShmegegus, he cries:

"McPherrrrson! Send these doom-ed' souls back to the holding tanks!" A shimmering curtain appears. Bette-U cries "Think about the Bunk Room!" and dives through."

Remember how the Shmegegus said the curtain takes you where you think about? Bette-U is right; if the PCs think about the Bunk Room entrance to the alien ship, there they'll go. Anyone who doesn't goes to the holding tanks. Too bad.

"The pie fighters!" pants Bette-U. "They're our only chance!"

It will take the aliens a little while to figure out what's happened. If the clones make a run for it, they get to the elevators just as bemonocled BEMs on airsleds zip around the corner firing paralysis rays.

Bette-U uses her Gauss Static Device on the "fire emergency" button of the elevator and it zips Real Fast (toss the PCs around) to the Fighter Bay. There, she uses it again, one by one, on the airlock doors, and dives for a pie fighter.

Do the PCs follow? Do they go for fighters of their own?

Each fighter is designed to seat three, and can seat four in a pinch. One person (the pilot) sits forward and stares out the viewscreen. Another (co-pilot and forward gunner) sits next to him and controls a gun. The third sits behind them facing backwards and controls the rear gun. (If there's a fourth, he has to kinda crouch in front of the beer cooler.)

When you control a gun, you sit in a chair on a moving platform, and physically wrestle the gun around. The chair and platform move with you.

Basically, a pie fighter looks like a pie

(see illustration in the pullout). It's saucer-shaped, with gunport slits.

Do any of the PCs have any kind of vehicle operation or vehicle combat weapons skills? The guns, by the way, are laser cannon.

If not, they may still be okay. The pie fighters are equipped with highly advanced fire-control computers which do most of the work. Add 50% to the skill chance of any character controlling the craft or firing one of its weapons.

Any time a character in a pie fighter wants to change its course or fire its cannon, the player must make a die-roll. His base chance of success is 50%, plus whatever percentage he receives from vehicle skills. If he fails, roll on the Amusing Failure Table (see inside screen) to see what happens.

Here's how the battle works:

The pilots roll to see if they manage to blast out of the fighter port. Anyone who fails is okay; he's just learned that the safety interlock prevents the fighter from leaving until everyone has a seat belt on. He can try again next combat round.

Almost as soon as the first fighter is out, alien blob fighters start appearing.

Blob fighters are gelatinous, shiny, vaguely spherical blobs which kind of bud off from the big alien ship and fight the pie fighters.

The combat is divided into rounds. Each combat round, you ask each PC what he's doing. Gunners choose their targets; pilots decide where to drive; fourth crewmembers open beers from the cooler and pass them around. (They're squeeze bulbs equipped with tubes, so you don't have to worry about spurting them all over the cabin.)

At the beginning of the battle, four blob fighters appear. Four more appear every round until the alien ship has created four for every pie fighter in use. (That's as many as it can create.)

Each round, the blob fighters whizz around, shooting at the pie fighters. You can have them whizz where they like, but each time they fire they have a 40% chance of hitting.

When a blob hits a pie fighter, roll on the Pie Fighter Hit Table to see what happens. When a pie fighter hits a blob, it starts to glow red and fluctuate in size. It also starts moving erratically. It remains in this state for a while (several combat rounds or until you forget). If hit while red, it explodes spectacularly.

One last thing; Azie-Comp has been programmed to fight back when attacked. It doesn't really know what's going on, because it didn't authorize a pie fighter launch. But it does know that the blobs come from the alien ship, and the pie fighters are fighting it. So it will help the PCs with its destructo-rays.

After the third combat round (it takes that long for Azie-Comp to puzzle things out), the beam-weapon projectors on the

spherical end of Platform 743-AZ shoot at one alien blob fighter — choose one at whim. Azie-Comp's hit probability is 65%; if he hits, the alien fighter explodes instantly.

One flybot in the lubricant: If a pie fighter shoots at 743-AZ, Azie-Comp will try to destroy that fighter next round (see the Amusing Failure Table).

That's about it as far as rules go. The rest is up to you.

Your objective is to give the illusion that the players are really fighting a space battle. Describe the V-formations into which the alien ships form, how the pie fighters dive and roll and zoom around. Key phrases to toss around include:

"You've got a bogey on your tail!"

"Alien at 6 o'clock!"

"Captain! She canna take much more!"

"Lasers locked on target, captain!"

"He's still on my tail! I can't shake him!"

"Use the Force, Luke-R!"



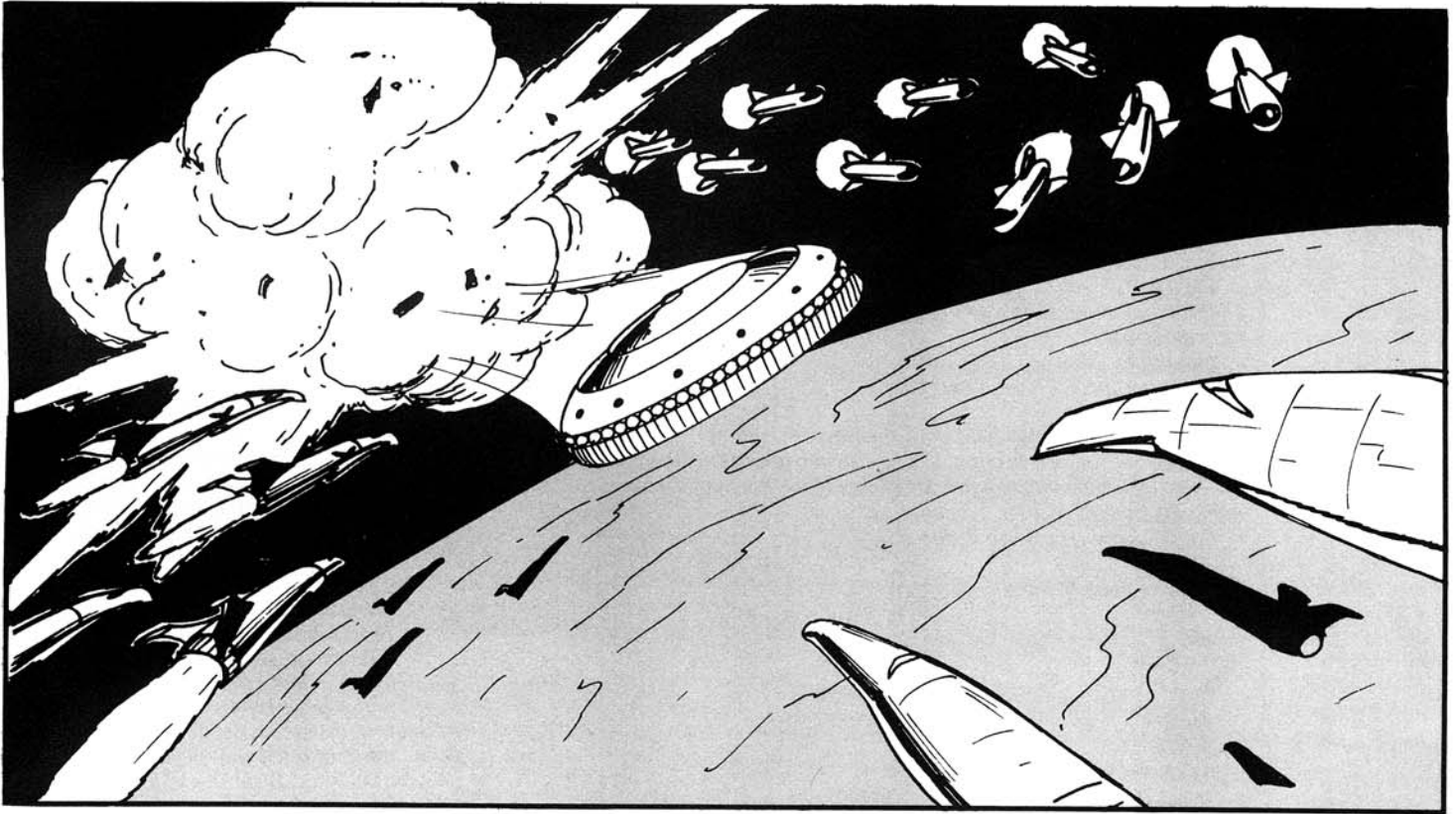
But we haven't included a map or board or anything because this is, after all, **PARANOIA**. No careful positioning of pieces or measurement of ranges for us; flamboyant action, remember? Describe what's going on in any way you like. Remember that the whole battle is taking place around Platform 743-AZ, which continues to rotate in space, shooting its beam weapons as it does.

If you decide to keep track of positions more carefully, here's what we suggest: get a bunch of bottle caps. Use Coke caps (or Budweiser ones) for the aliens, since there are so many of them. Use Frosty root beer caps (or Molsons, or something) for the good guys. Put one bottle in the center of the table to represent 743-AZ, and spin it occasionally (to represent its rotation). Then, move the bottle caps around during the battle to show where the fighters are.

Remember that space is three dimensional, though. The table may not be enough. You can put bottle caps on top of books or bottles or something to represent elevation.

And there's no reason ships have to stay on the table. Space is infinite, after all. The ships can fly onto the sofa, or the

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book cases, or even hide in an asteroid belt (the bowl of corn chips) to pop out and shoot at an unwary opponent. A ship can take advantage of a passing energy storm (the cat) to travel away from its opponents while they regroup. As GM, you should encourage this insanity by reducing-to-hit chances for shots at long range, or for obstacles between bottle caps, and so on. In fact, this sounds like a lot of fun.

5.10 To Slavery or Victory!

So the PCs shoot up aliens, and vice versa. We'd really like the PCs to win after a few casualties. If they do:

Suddenly, on your communication consoles appears an image of the McShmegegus standing aboard the bridge of the alien mothercraft.

"Sassenachs!" he snarls. "Earrrrt-worrms! You ha'e won a victorry, ye think; so ye ha'e, but a fleeting one! We shall rrrreturn, Earrrtlings, an' destrroy ye!"

The image blinks out. Slowly, the alien ship begins to fluctuate in size; it glows white, and disconnects from Platform 743-AZ. In the blink of an eye, it disappears.

Maybe it doesn't work that way. Maybe the aliens are beating the PCs when suddenly a huge swarm of vulture spacecraft show up to save the day. (Yes, this is inconsistent. So what?) They blow up the blob fighters, then take the PCs aboard. Bette-U and anyone who defends her is executed as a traitor.

...Or maybe the jackobots from 101-L have jury-rigged a few spacecraft of their own, and, pursuing the blasphemers (PCs), arrive at 743-AZ just as the battle begins.

...Or maybe the battle in orbit triggers other orbital defenses, and the whole volume is shot through with deathrays, Soviet anti-satellite missiles and the like.

...Or maybe when the PCs underwent coldsleep in Shuttlebot Vapor-7, millions of years passed, Alpha Complex is gone, and the aliens want not human women, but the women of Earth's new dominant species, intelligent cockroaches.

...Or maybe...

Of course, the PCs now have no way to return to Earth. The pie fighters have no reentry shields, and will burn up on reentry. The only operative shuttle to 743-AZ has been dismantled by scrapbots, and, anyway, Azie-Comp will want to execute the PCs for unauthorized use of the pie fighters.

Here's one touching ending:

After our valiant heroes see off the alien scum, they heroically return to 743-AZ. Azie-Comp decides they acted properly in using the pie fighters, and promises to do everything he can to help them return home. He patches together a satellite link to The Computer. The PCs talk to The Computer and explain what they've done. Our Friend responds:

"My friends, loyal Citizens... I am touched beyond words. Bette-U, your sentence of death is hereby commuted because of your heroic actions in defense of Alpha Complex... nay, in defense of all humanity. All of you; Alpha Complex shall know of your heroism. It will be preserved in the memory of our people for all time to come. We cannot thank you enough.

"Alas, no further shuttles are available at this time. Rescue is impossible. Thank you for your cooperation."

The "experimental elevator" was the last one Alpha Complex had. There's no food on 743-AZ, by the way. At this point, the player's options are pretty limited: There's death by starvation. And death by explosive decompression. And death by burning up during reentry.

Was it something we said?



6. Ending? What Ending?

"Hey Erick, what about the debriefing section?"

"Ken, you've got to be kidding, no way can anyone survive this adventure."

"With an infinite supply of clones, eventually, sooner or later, somebody is going to make it back."

"Hmmm..."

"Erick, we always have a debriefing..."

"Hm..."

"...and you don't get paid until this section is done."

"Of course! Somebody could talk Juraish into teleporting them back home. Or persuade Azie-Comp to build a new shuttlebot in the Bot Manufacturing Complex. You're right, we have to include a debriefing."

"Erick, I knew you'd see it our way."

6.1 Debriefing

If, by some incredible stroke of Gamemaster generosity, the clones manage to get back to Alpha Complex, they are summoned to a debriefing session. Surrounded by heavily-armed Yellow clearance Vulture guards, the surviving characters are escorted into a dark room highlighted by a single blindingly-bright terminal. Anything on the terminal is completely illegible.

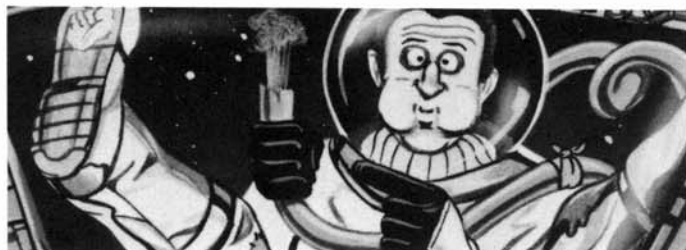
The Computer speaks! **"Citizens! Have the Communist infiltrators of Platform 743-AZ been terminated?"**

If anyone so much as mentions even the possibility of failure, The Computer immediately orders each clone subjected to a separate, in-depth interview. Between the drugs and the electric needles, the truth is revealed. Afterward, those clones innocent of any overt treason will be offered the chance to participate in a follow-up mission.

On the other hand, if the clones answer with a chorus of "Yes, Friend Computer! The traitors have been terminated!" then there is every chance The Computer will congratulate them, give them commendation points and advance all of them to Security Level Orange.

Then you can send 'em out on a really deadly assignment!

EXPLOSIVE DECOMPRESSION TABLE



Section 1: Vacuum Death

- 01-15 Explosive Decompression:** What happens when the pressure of the juices and gases inside the body get a little too strong for the body to keep inside itself. Creates an annoying mess.
- 16-30 Internal Embolism:** Sometimes the internal pressures of the body just rupture the insides. This is much neater than explosive decompression — just as fatal, mind you, but a lot easier to clean up.
- 31-50 Fast Freezing:** The body cools fast enough to be frozen solid within a few seconds. Clones will be aware of ice crystals forming on their eyeballs just before the supercooling hits the brain. Thawing out a clonesicle is usually fatal.
- 51-75 Flesh Boils Away:** Happens when the clone is exposed to naked rays of the sun (or occasionally from plasma generator detonations). Extremely painful. Mercifully quick. Relatively uncluttered.
- 76-90 Strangulation:** Player blacks out due to lack of oxygen. Relatively humane and very tidy, but a closed casket ceremony is recommended.
- 91-99 Combination Freeze/Boil:** Reserve this for truly special events. One side of the clone faces the sun, the other is in total darkness. While the skin and the tissue peel away from the bone on the sunside, the other side is frozen into a solid block. Results in a kind of half-clonesicle, half-vaporization. Sort of clone art.
- 00 All of the above:** We're not sure exactly how this happens but the effect is very colorful. Suddenly, as the clone flies into vacuum, his or her entire being seems to explode like a really powerful explosive decompression. At the end of the process all that remains is an expanding nimbus of black char and shimmering motes of frozen tissue. Applause is mandatory. A few moments of awestruck appreciation for the wonders of nature seem in order.

Section 2: Explosive Decompression

How much damage a particular weapon causes is dependent on two factors. The more frequently a weapon is used the more dramatic its effect. In other words, weapons should be used as object lessons. Clones quickly discover that more shots fired equals lower atmospheric pressure. Bright ones discover this quickly. Others discover how to breathe vacuum.

A weapon's destructive capacity also determines how big a hole it makes. After all, if a clone just pounds a wall with his fist, it shouldn't cause... Hmmm...

On second thought...

It does seem that those walls have been badly degraded by cosmic rays, rust, metal stress, and polishbots. It would be just terrible if some poor Troubleshooter were to actually punch a hole right into vacuum. That would be just too bad...

When someone, say, shoots at the wall of a shuttle, use the Vehicle Damage section of the Damage Table to determine the effect. The effects listed there translate like so:

No Effect: No breach in surface. Boring. Nothing happens.

Distraction: Minor openings in seams, slow leakage. A high-pitched whistle of air leaves the compartment. Small, loose objects will be drawn along with the escaping air. The leak cannot be sealed. The gamemaster should make occasional references to the steady leakage and discuss how subtle and slow oxygen deprivation can be.

Minor Damage: Small hole, typically made by laser beam. Constant "whoosh" of air escaping. Small objects (mission papers, credits, etc.) are sucked out. Hole can be blocked with any convenient large object. If the blocking object is a clone, then skin surfaces exposed to vacuum may freeze, boil, hemorrhage, and suffer hideous damage. A group discussion of possible effects is recommended.

Major Damage: Large hole. Large weapons make large holes. All air will be evacuated within a short time. Small and medium sized objects (pistols, mission equipment, etc.) will be sucked out into space. Large objects can block large holes.

Destroyed: Major holes are made by explosives or imaginative characters. All air disappears almost immediately. All objects (including clones) fly out. Sealing the hole is not usually practical. Escaping before emergency bulkheads slam shut is difficult. Being crushed by emergency bulkheads is marginally easier.

Vaporized: Entire surface blown away. See Vacuum Death Table.

PIE FIGHTER DAMAGE TABLE

-
- 0 Pilot hit.***
- 1 Front gunner hit.***
- 2 Tail gunner hit.***
- 3 Beer man hit.***
- 4 Cooler hit:** No more beer for the duration of the battle. No more soft drinks, either. Make players from that ship go without munchies.
- 5 Computer hit:** Characters must use their raw, unmodified vehicle skills when piloting or firing.
- 6 Small hole:** Cabin is losing pressure. No one can do anything for one to six rounds, while they find and don space suits.
- 7 Huge hole:** Explosive decompression time.
- 8 Engine hit:** Vehicle can't turn, just keeps on accelerating into the void until all its fuel is gone. (Another fighter might be able to catch up and rescue the crew.)
- 9 Front gun hit:** It explodes (see gunner result 10 on the Amusing Failure Table).
- 10 Tail gun hit:** It explodes (see above).

* Roll on column 8 of the Damage Table for this character. If he dies or is incapacitated, another character must make a 2D10 roll against strength to get the body out of the seat and move it. Until it is moved, no other character can take the injured character's place.

SPACE VEHICLE SERVICES — SKILL LEVEL (0)

Gollll-eee! Gee Whiz! There sure are a lot of nifty buttons, and levers, and turny-things, and sliders, and keyboards, and...well, just a whole bunch of controls on them sophisticated spacecraft. 'Course, there's not a clone alive (nor dead) that understands how these things work. But the loyal servants of The Computer are always diligent in following orders.

Soooo... Likely as not, the clones will want to know what happens when they just — oh-so-carefully, lightly, cautiously, with just a fingertip — touch that one itty-bitty, unimportant-looking thingy.

Of course, you don't have to roll dice. What if you forgot your favorite set of blue-and-purple percentiles? What if you keep rolling safe (boring) stuff for the characters? We World Famous Game Designers wouldn't want to crimp your style. Just go ahead and pick out any result you want.

- 01** Something constructive happens.
- 02-15** Lights flash, screens flicker, small buzzing noises.
- 16-70** A loud "crunggg..." is heard somewhere in the distance.
- 71-85** All lights and screens flash red! Deafening bells and sirens go off! Computer screens light up with threatening signs! Control panels smoke and spark! Shades of *Voyage to the Bottom of the Sea!* Where's Richard Basehart when you need him?
- 86-95** Seriously Bad Things happen.
- 96-99** Hatch opens into vacuum (see vacuum rules).
- 00** Hey! Everybody gets to roleplay vapor as it dissipates into the infinity of space! Isn't *PARANOIA* fun? Remind players that their new characters are already under the watchful eye of Friend Computer. Smile.

CLONES IN SPACE

Deluxe 48-page Adventure
Including a trendy *Solitaire* Excursion.

Space—the final frontier. These are the voyages of some unenterprising Troubleshooters, their mission: to seek out strange new life, new civilizations ...and terminate them...to boldly go where no clone has any business going.

Welcome once again to the darkly humorous world of *PARANOIA*. Instead of the daily humdrum life-or-death routine of Alpha Complex, in this adventure the Troubleshooters get to do something really exciting—explore Outer Space*.

These eager Troubleshooters get to enjoy the exciting, slightly gut-squashing effects of lift-off. The survivors get a lesson in weightlessness and a lucky few learn about the curious effects of hard vacuum. So *much* fun hardly seems fair.

All this leads to a question—What do you get when you mix together:

- Deranged computers in space stations (no relation to a 2001-year-old science fiction flick)
- Ravenous flesh-eating aliens
- Sneezes in zero-G
- Some low-budget special effects
- Really impressive extraterrestrials (out to conquer Earth, of course)
- And no less than 36 clones?

Answer: A disgustingly fun mess!

Clones in Space is a deluxe 48-page *PARANOIA* adventure for 2-6 Troubleshooters and gamemaster. The inside cover is designed as a free-standing gamemaster screen (no extra charge). There's also an eight-page pullout section full of useful junk to ignore, including spiffy maps of space stations and space crafts. Plus, as a bonus, you get six pregenerated Troubleshooter characters. (You're welcome).

Overwhelming Fun for ages 12 and up. (We promise.)

*Where the ceiling would be if Outside had one.

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