

# **PARANOIA™**

## **Treason in Word and Deed**

Original *PARANOIA* design

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New *PARANOIA* edition

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# PARANOIA™

## Treason in Word and Deed

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Looking after your best interests

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## Security Clearance *ULTRAVIOLET*

# WARNING:

Knowledge or possession of this information by any citizen of Security Clearance *VIOLET* or lower is treason punishable by a long spell of Armed Forces latrine scrubot maintenance duty.

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# REASON IN WORD AND DEED

## 1. Introduction

Hello.

How're you? We really don't get much of a chance to talk in these introductions. All good? Are you enjoying being a *PARANOIA* GM? We hope you are. We think you're doing a bang-up job. (If you're not a *PARANOIA* GM, then you probably shouldn't be reading this book.)

So, what's the mission? Treason in Word and Deed puts the Troubleshooters into a room where they're interrogated for a crime they not only didn't commit but have no knowledge of. Hilarity ensues. If hilarity fails to ensue, disintegrate someone.

This book contains three missions. Originally, it was only supposed to have one mission in it, also called 'Treason in Word and Deed' but in writing it, we discovered that doing an entire 32-page mission set in a single room was really hard. We could have done the whole thing as a Beckett parody.

**Estra-G-ONN:** Nothing to be done.

**Vlad-I-MIR:** Commie! ZAP! ZAP! ZAP!

Or

**Vlad-I-MIR:** That passed the time.

**Estra-G-ONN:** It would have passed anyway.

**Vlad-I-MIR:** Commie! ZAP! ZAP! ZAP!

Hmm. Perhaps not.

**Estra-G-ONN:** I can't go on like this!

**Vlad-I-MIR:** Yes, you can. You've got four more clones.

We considered, briefly, selling you a book with 24 blank pages as Official *PARANOIA* GM Notepaper.

This was rejected for ontological reasons. Instead, we dashed off two original missions of dazzling brilliance.

'Heroes of Our Complex' is an assisted suicide mission. Famous vid-show star and squarejawed actionhero Bob-Y-ROK must die! He's been assigned to a Troubleshooter team and that team is going to be assigned to a series of impossibly lethal missions. Really, it's an extended exercise in cruelty. Enjoy!

'Little Lost Scoutbot' sends the Troubleshooters Outdoors on a scavenger hunt, looking for the scattered bits of a broken bot. Along the way, they meet renegade Sierra Clubbers, alien hunters, mutant trees and talk radio hosts. It's less lethal than 'Heroes of Our Complex' only in that there's no chance of unshielded orbital re-entry in this one.

If any of your Troubleshooters are still alive after these three missions, we recommend a nice cup of tea and a lie down.

## 2. TREASON IN WORD AND DEED

### 2. Treason in Word and Deed

A One-Act Play For Troubleshooters and The Computer  
*With apologies to Franz Kafka*

The Computer is perfect. The society created by The Computer is therefore perfect. The Computer issues regulations and laws to guide citizens in this perfect society. If citizens were also perfect, then they would not need regulations and laws. The existence of these regulations means that citizens logically must be imperfect. An imperfect being cannot perfectly adhere to regulations (if they could, they'd be perfect, which we've already established as impossible). Therefore, at some point and in some fashion, every citizens must disobey regulations.

Disobeying regulations is treason. Therefore, all citizens are traitors.

We have established your guilt. All that remains is to determine your crime.

#### Mission Summary

IntSec has several unsolved crimes. Statistically, the Troubleshooters are as likely as anyone to have committed these crimes. The Troubleshooters are imprisoned in an IntSec interrogation vault and held there until someone confesses to something.

#### The Crimes

The Troubleshooters have never heard of any of these crimes. They don't know any of the people involved, they've never heard of these places and they have no idea what happened. Don't tell the players anything initially but if they mention anything that could possibly be connected to one of these crimes, The Computer assumes that it's on the right track and presses the negotiation.

With sufficient ingenuity, you can link anything to anything. Plus, you can always cheat with THAT INFORMATION IS NOT AVAILABLE AT YOUR SECURITY CLEARANCE.

For example:

#### Spurious accusations: A typical conversation

**Troubleshooter:** I have no idea why I'm here! Let me out!

**The Computer:** Permit me to refresh your memory by saying...Transbot 92A.

**Troubleshooter:** Huh?

**The Computer:** Transbot 92A, citizen.

**Troubleshooter:** What about it?

**The Computer:** You know all about it, citizen. Why don't you tell me?

**Troubleshooter:** I don't know anything about it!

**The Computer:** According to surveillance records, you walked down Corridor 6432-C at 1423 hours last Twoday.

**Player:** Did I?

**GM:** It's Alpha Complex. It's all corridors. You don't remember doing so but it's certainly possible.

**Troubleshooter:** Ok, I walked down the corridor. So what?

**The Computer:** Corridor 6432-C connects to Corridor 6431-F which goes to the transtube station. The cameras in 6431-F were *mysteriously* offline that day. How do you explain this?

#### The Bombing of Transbot 92A

Transbot 92A was bombed by terrorists as it departed the transtube station. Twelve citizens were terminated, including a CPU clerk who was illegally carrying secret documents. The bombing of the bot blocked the transtube for several hours, forcing the cancellation of the planned Spontaneous Loyalty Demonstration in that sector.

*What Really Happened:* Shoddy maintenance resulted in a short circuit in the transbot's engine. Boom. The CPU clerk was a traitor, though and was stealing secret documents for the Illuminati.

#### The BRN Affair

An undercover IntSec agent codenamed BLUE SEER uncovered a treasonous alliance between the Communists and the Humanists in BRN Sector. BLUE SEER was on the verge of infiltrating this alliance when someone revealed his

secret identity to the Commies. Who betrayed elite agent BLUE SEER?

*What Really Happened:* BLUE SEER made the whole thing up to meet his IntSec informant quota. When his superiors began to suspect that he might be lying, he faked his own death and is now hiding until the heat's off.

#### The Kohlberg Project

Under the direction of lead researcher Kohlberg-B, this R&D project promised to revolutionise filing systems in Alpha Complex. The Kohlberg Device used quantum entanglement principles to produce quantum forms. A single form contained all possible answers; the device could then read the correct answer from a parallel reality. Kohlberg-B, the device, the laboratory, the staff and all records relating to the project vanished, possibly because of a quantum hole sucking them out of existence.

*What Really Happened:* Fearing the inevitable mass downsizing of its legions of form-fillers and form-checkers if the Kohlberg Project succeeded, CPU secretly redesignated the laboratory as reactor shielding.

To reiterate: The Troubleshooters have no idea about these crimes. They weren't involved in them; they have no idea what happened; they've never heard of them and they won't be told anything about them. Nonetheless, no-one's leaving this vault until someone confesses to them.

#### Welcome to the Vault Tension 15

*You're not sure what just happened. There you were, going about your business, when suddenly there was a flash of light and everything went very fuzzy. As your vision clears, you see you're lying on the floor in a medium-sized room. The rest of your team is there too. You're all wearing standard RED jumpsuits and boots but don't have any other equipment.*

*Looking around, there's a confession booth against one wall and a set of bunk-beds against the other. Next to the*





## REASON IN WORD AND DEED

*bunk beds, there's a door. There's a big computer monitor in front of you. Stacked under the monitor are several cardboard boxes. There are also several seats in front of the monitor. On the back wall, there's a small hatch and a standard-size door. There are four security cameras in the corners of the room.*

*As you're picking yourself up off the floor, the computer monitor lights up. It's displaying one word in metre-high letters.*

CONFESS.

Let the Troubleshooters explore their new surroundings. The Computer won't say anything yet, unless the players specifically try to address their questions to it.

**The Confession Booth:** A standard confession booth – a little one-person

cubicle where a citizen can have some one-on-one time with Friend Computer. Conversations in the Confession Booth should be conducted privately, away from the rest of the players.

**The Bunk Beds:** One per player character.

**The Bathroom:** The door next to the bunk beds leads to a perfectly functional bathroom.

**The Boxes:** Food and bottled water. Lots of food and bottled water. Enough to last for at least a month.

**The Chairs:** The sort of uncomfortable plastic chairs you sat on in school, only those one's probably weren't wired to the floor with electrical cable. The Computer can electrify these chairs at will. There's one less chair than there are Troubleshooters.

**The Monitor:** A standard Computer monitor with laser-cannon peripheral.

**The Other Door:** It's the way out. It's locked and pretty impenetrable.

**The Hatch:** Right now, it's closed. It'll open later on to dispense food and other items. The hatch leads to a small dumb-waiter.

### Likely Questions

**Friend Computer?** At your service, citizen.

**What are we doing here?** One or more members of your Troubleshooter team is a traitor. We are attempting to identify who these traitors are. If you have committed no treasons, please wait. You will be freed shortly.

**What treasons have been committed?** That information is not available at your Security Clearance.

**I'm innocent!** Thank you for that information. We are attempting to ascertain the truth of your statement. Please wait.

**I think (Troubleshooter Name) is the traitor!** Do you have any proof of this accusation? Accusations without proof are treason. Spreading rumours is treason.

See also *Common Player Tactics*.

### Psychological Profiling

*There's a loud clunk and the hatch at the back of the room slides open. 'Please fill out these forms fully' says The Computer.*

Give each of the players a copy of the Psychological Assessment Form and a pen.

### Aversion Therapy

*'Attention, Citizens. Please sit down on the chairs provided. Please give your full attention to the monitor. Failure to sit down is treason. Failure to give the monitor your full attention is treason.'*

Remember, there's one less chair than there are Troubleshooters. Anyone not sitting down on a chair in 10 seconds gets two Treason Points.

The monitor then proceeds to display a series of images, some of which are related to the three crimes that IntSec



## 2. TREASON IN WORD AND DEED

is investigating and some random nonsense as a control. You may also want to shock random Troubleshooters during the slideshow, causing them to twitch or cry out. The Computer will then question that Troubleshooter as to why that particular image caused such a reaction. (If the player blames the chair for shocking him, The Computer claims the electrical wire is part of a 'galvanic skin response analysis system'.)

**Image #1:** A picture of the Troubleshooters in the midst of one of their other missions. Ideally, an embarrassing and/or treasonous scene.

**Image #2:** Two citizens talking at a table in a cafeteria. The picture was obviously taken with a telephoto lens. It's stamped BLUE SEER in one corner.

**Image #3:** A scrubbot.

**Image #4:** A dashing-looking Internal Security Trooper wearing a furry hat, also stamped BLUE SEER.

**Image #5:** The aftermath of the bombing of Transtube 92A. Blood, body parts and twisted metal, flames and carnage and gore.

**Image #6:** A crowded transtube station. There are hundreds of citizens here.

**Image #7:** A team of scientists standing in front of a terrifying-looking machine. It's Project Kohlberg.

**Image #8:** A strange-looking prismatic form.

**Image #9:** A picture of a set of documents. Most of the text has been redacted but the photo is stamped BLUE SEER.

**Image #10:** The Troubleshooters, looking at a computer monitor showing image #1.

### The Lawyer

*The door at the back of the room opens and a GREEN citizen walks in. He's got a YELLOW stripe down the side of his uniform. 'Hi, I'm Larry-G. I'm from Legal Services. Which of you is my client?'*

The first player to claim to be Larry-G's client gets the benefit of the lawyer. Play Larry-G as a fast-talking criminal lawyer. He probably works for Free Enterprise and would sell his own clone brother to the law if it gets his client off the hook. Larry-G takes his client aside for a private conference.

*'Right, I assume you know what you're being charged with, 'cos I sure don't. The way I see it, your only chance is to turn Computer's evidence. I can cut a deal with IntSec – you provide testimony that you were involved with the treason but that they forced you to do it and you'll be willing to tell all and you might get nothin' more than a little brainscrub.'*

The player may claim innocence. Larry-G's not convinced. *'I heard it all before, kiddo. Yeah, yeah, you're innocent and I'm Teela-O. You wouldn't be in here if you wuz totally innocent. Just pin the blame on someone else and you'll be walking outta here in no time.'*

**Getting Rid Of Larry-G:** After a while, Larry-G asks for a glass of water. He takes a sip, chokes, mutters 'poison' and turns on his Death Simulation power (he's a registered mutant). He falls over 'dead'.

### Divide And Conquer

If the players still aren't turning on each other like rats, try some of the following tactics:

- 👁 The Computer orders half the Troubleshooters into the bathroom. Both sets of Troubleshooters are then told privately that Internal Security believes they are innocent but that they must get the other group to confess.
- 👁 The hatch at the back of the room opens. A single laser pistol falls out.
- 👁 One of the Troubleshooters finds a crack in the wall. If he listens at this crack, he can hear the IntSec observers talking about the crimes they're investigating.

### Common Player Tactics

**Accusation:** The ideal solution! Wild accusations are no good, though – the key to victory is to draw details about the crimes out of The Computer (or seize on the speculations of other Troubleshooters) and attribute those details to the target of the accusation. Assign Treason Points to the target if the accusations seem plausible, or to the accuser if they're patently lies.

**Asking For A Phone Call:** *'Certainly, citizen. Who do you want to call?'*

*Communications are monitored for security reasons.'* The character might be able to use Access to get further details from an IntSec pal, or could even risk calling his Secret Society contacts and using codewords.

**Confession:** A character could confess lots of minor misdeeds in the hope that The Computer will accept any confession. This doesn't work but assign Treason Points anyway.

**Death:** If you're feeling merciful, dying is a way out of the vault. Otherwise, the replacement clone is pushed back in the door by IntSec goons. (If you do let the character out after death, then consider letting the player play an IntSec interrogator or something).

**Denial:** If a player's denying everything instead of trying to pin the blame on the others, then he'll rapidly become a target for the rest.

**Despair:** Happiness is mandatory. The hatch dispenses some drugs.

**Escape:** How? The door is sealed, apart from when Larry-G enters (and unless you've got Hyperspeed or Teleportation, you're not getting out that way).

**Firefight:** No guns. Improvised weapon fight?

**Resignation:** See Despair.

**The Scapegoat:** An ideal solution. If everyone blames one person, then that person must be guilty (assuming everyone makes up convincing proof too, of course). Either end the mission with this group accusation, or decide that the person everyone accused *must* be innocent as IntSec believes there are *several* traitors in the group.

**Throwing Themselves On The Computer's Mercy:** A loyal citizen would help find the traitor.

**Wild Speculation:** Bliss.

### Ending The Game

When the players settle on a scapegoat or scapegoats, or when one Troubleshooter hits 20 Treason Points.



# REASON IN WORD AND DEED

## Psychological Assessment Form

### PART A

1. Who are you? \_\_\_\_\_
2. Are you sure?  YES  NO
3. How do you know who you are? \_\_\_\_\_
4. If you were not you, who would you be? \_\_\_\_\_

### PART B

5. Do you feel stressed, worried, confused, uncaring or over happy?  YES  NO
6. Do you ever hear voices?  YES  NO
7. Did you know that a poor memory is often a sign of treason or unhappiness.  YES  NO
- 8a. Do you think you have a good memory?  YES  NO
- 8b. If yes, do you think you have an excellent memory?  YES  NO
- 8c. If yes, do you think you have a perfect memory  YES  NO
- 8d. What other mutant powers do you possess? \_\_\_\_\_
9. Do you trust The Computer?  YES  NO
10. Do you believe you deserve to be in this test?  YES  NO
11. If you answered YES to question 9 and NO to question 10, please reconcile your answers.  
\_\_\_\_\_

### PART C

*The following question is a test. Only Commie Mutant Traitors can see the next question.*

12. Do you suffer from delusions?  Yes  No

### PART D

13. Of your fellow Troubleshooters, who is the MOST likely to commit treason?  
\_\_\_\_\_ Why? \_\_\_\_\_
14. Of your fellow Troubleshooters, who is the LEAST likely to commit treason?  
\_\_\_\_\_ Why? \_\_\_\_\_
15. Do you have anything else you wish to confess? \_\_\_\_\_

### PART E

16. I consume  cans of Bouncy Bubble Beverage per day and my heart rate is  below average  average  above average  a high-pitched whine.
17. Frog blast the vent core?  YES  NO  SAUSAGE
18. DELETED FOR SECURITY REASONS  YES  NO
19. Are you who you say you are?  YES  NO
20. Are you who you say you are?  YES  NO



## 3. HEROES OF OUR COMPLEX

### 3. Heroes of our Complex

**The Computer:** This is Your Friend, The Computer.

**A Citizen:** Oh! Hail, Friend Computer! Do you have a new and doubtless exciting and fun mission for me?

**The Computer:** Yes, friend citizen. Are you aware of Citizen Bob-Y-ROK?

**A Citizen:** Sure, Friend Computer! He's on vid-shows all the time, battling those dang Commie Mutant Traitors to keep our beloved Complex safe! I've got the Bob-Y-ROK Commemorative ChewingGum and the action figure and the holographic poster.

**The Computer:** A Commendation Point for your devotion to capitalism, citizen. Now, I have a mission for you. Bob-Y-ROK must be terminated immediately and repeatedly.

**A Citizen:** Sure thing, Friend Computer. I'll warm up the disintegration booth!

**The Computer:** I remind you, friend citizen, that Bob-Y-ROK is a Hero of Alpha Complex and beloved by all citizens. Our projections show that if Bob-Y-ROK was revealed to be a traitor, happiness would suffer a 43% drop across all sectors.

**A Citizen:** That's bad.

**The Computer:** Happiness is mandatory, friend citizen.

**A Citizen:** Of course...so I shouldn't kill Bob-Y-ROK.

**The Computer:** Bob-Y-ROK's exposure as a traitor would have severe consequences, citizen.

**A Citizen:** So, er, what's my mission?

**The Computer:** You will accompany Citizen Bob-Y-ROK on a series of exciting and entirely non-lethal missions which will not at all result in his death in completely heroic and deniable circumstances. It will be fun. It will be...glorious, friend citizen.

**A Citizen:** I regret that I only have six clones to give to my complex!

#### Farewell to Bob-Y

For several years, The Computer's propaganda machine, HPD&MC have been using a Troubleshooter called Bob-Y-ROK as an example of a true Hero of Alpha Complex. Bob-Y's seen by millions as the square-jawed, super-tough, super-loyal defender of all

that is good and true. In fact, Bob-Y's a drug-addled moron who has long since lost the distinction between reality and fantasy. This would be fine – The Computer does not require its celebrity heroes to have the slightest hint of a brain cell – only Bob-Y's started

developing Opinions and isn't keeping them to himself. It's termination time for Bob-Y.

He's too popular to just execute, so a series of suicide missions are going to be arranged for Bob-Y.

### Secret Society Missions

#### Secret Society Missions

**Anti-Mutant:** Bob-Y is rumoured to be a pure, unmutated citizen. Test him. Find out if he is free of mutant traits. If he's a mutant, destroy him! If he's pure, protect him!

**Communists:** Bob-Y is symbol of capitalist oppression, comrade! If he could be converted to Communism, it would be triumph for our cause!

**Computer Phreaks/FCCCP/ Romantics:** Our spies report (Secret Information About Another Troubleshooter).

**Corpore Metal:** Warbot RB-9 may have spontaneously broken its Asimov circuits. Cherish our new bot buddy and protect it.

**Death Leopard:** Dude! It's Bob-Y! He's awesome! Make him join the Death Leopards!

**Frankenstein Destroyers:** Destroy all bots you encounter!

**Free Enterprise:** Bob-Y merchandise is really valuable! Here's a case of 1,000 Bob-Y key chains – sell 'em!

**Humanists:** Rumour has it that Bob-Y is sympathetic to our cause. Protect him at all costs.

**Illuminati:** Bob-Y is vital for our sinister plans. Ensure he survives until you reach the *Cyclops One*. At this point, eliminate Bob-Y and capture the *Cyclops One*.

**Mystics:** Here's a really powerful hallucinogen. Open Bob-Y's mind to the cosmic all.

**Pro Tech:** Find out everything you can about *Cyclops One*. Steal the operations manual.

**Psion:** Rumour has it Bob-Y is a mutant. Test him. If he is an evolved being, protect him! Otherwise, destroy him!

**PURGE:** The *Cyclops One* is a new weapons system. Turn it on Alpha Complex.

**Sierra Club:** Show Bob-Y the beauty of nature! If he refuses to admit nature's wonders, force him to appreciate them. At gun point.



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**Bob-Y-7, Hero of our Complex!** Bob-Y's character sheet is on page 30. You can run Bob-Y as a Non-Player Character if you wish but it's much more fun to give Bob-Y to one of the players (assuming you've got four or more players). Bob-Y hasn't got much in the way of brains but he can shoot things real good and looks even better when doing so.

**Bob-Y's Clones:** Bob-Y has no idea how many clones he has left. He vaguely recalls buying another six-pack in a drugged haze but he can't remember if that was real or just part of a TV show. Assume Bob-Y has at least six clones left; add more on if the players are too effective at pushing the poor lunk into death traps.

Inside in the room, briefing officer Todd-B is standing behind his standard-issue briefing podium with side-mounted lasers, while... wow, can it be...it is! Ladies and gentlemen, BOB-Y-ROK is in the briefing room! Yaaaaay! This stupendously wonderful Hero of Our Complex and inspiration to us all is lounging on a comfy YELLOW divan, while a Jackobot feeds him grapes.

*'Good daycycle, Troubleshooters. Friend Computer has assigned an exciting new mission to you. I'm sure you have all heard of Hero of Our Complex Bob-Y-ROK. Now, Hero of Our Complex Bob-Y-ROK has been temporarily reassigned to Troubleshooter duty. Hero of Our Complex Bob-Y-ROK is now part of your team.*

*Team Recording Officer, step forward!*

Assuming the Recording Officer responds promptly (failure to respond promptly is treason), Todd-B reminds him of his duty. *'As you know, citizen, the exploits and heroic loyalty of Hero of Our Complex Bob-Y-ROK are of great interest to the common clones of Alpha Complex. You must therefore be especially diligent in recording his... heroic deeds in the face of life-threatening danger. Do you understand?'*

*'Excellent. Troubleshooters, report to R&D immediately. As Bob-Y is such... an experienced Troubleshooter, you will be issued bonus missions after outfitting.'*

## 1. A Brush With Greatness

Tension 5

*Sometimes, life in Alpha Complex isn't that bad. You're sitting around the TV lounge, watching another episode of 'BOB-Y, HERO OF ALPHA COMPLEX'. In this week's exciting episode, Bob-Y's battling a horde of Commie Mutant Traitors who were trying to blow up Alpha Complex with a submarine. Just as Bob-Y cuts the submarine open with his force sword, there's a strident BEEP BEEP BEEP from your PDCs. It's a mission alert!*

*'TROUBLESHOOTERS! REPORT TO BRIEFING ROOM 4-GAMMA-662-NINER-A IMMEDIATELY FOR A PRIORITY MISSION. THIS MISSION WILL BE STANDARD DISCLAIMER NOT FOUND.'*

*As you approach Briefing Room 4-Gamma-whatever-it-was, you're deafened by the noise of chanting echoing down the corridor. 'WE LOVE BOB-Y! WE LOVE BOB-Y!' Turning the corner, you see a huge crowd of citizens outside the briefing room. They're waving Bob-Y posters and carrying placards. A line of IntSec Troopers and guardbots struggles to keep the mob back.*

## 2. Bring Me Your Most Lethal Gadgets

Tension 5

*Oddly, the screaming crowd of Bob-Y don't follow you to the Research & Development laboratory. Even crazed fans have a sense of self-preservation. Inside in the lab, a GREEN-coated scientist with wild hair bounds over towards you! 'Troubleshooters! I just love Troubleshooters! I've got some experimental equipment for you to... oh,*

*wow! Bob-Y?! Sir, it is such an honour to issue you with this experimental equipment!'*

There are three wonderful R&D gadgets available for field testing. These items were not in any way selected because they might get Bob-Y killed.

### Gravity Ball

**Description:** It's a perfectly spherical object around one foot in diameter and jet black in colour. There are three finger-sized holes arranged in a triangle at one pole.

**R&D's Pitch:** *'Ah, the gravity ball! Just fling it towards your enemies and the gravitational lensing will do the rest!'*

**Actual Effects:** The ball gets denser the faster it rolls. This means that a) it doesn't stop because its inertia keeps growing and b) it captures objects as it rolls. Yeah, it's basically a *katamari*. There's no way to control the ball – it just keeps rolling until it's easier destroyed, or it rolls out of Alpha Complex (or it rolls over Alpha Complex).

### PortaCycle

**Description:** It's an oversized codpiece that clips onto the crotch of the Troubleshooter. There's a big red button on it.

**R&D Pitch:** *'Never be caught without transport again! At the press of a button, the PortaCycle deploys from its housing. It's a collapsible, foldable human-powered vehicle!'*

**Actual Effects:** The pitch is close to accurate – at the press of a button, the codpiece does indeed unfold into a bicycle attached to the Troubleshooter's seat. At the press of a button... or any sudden shock, or a vibration, or a loud noise, or the flutter of a butterfly's wings in South America, the codpiece explodes into a bicycle.

### Compressed Yum

**Description:** It looks like a block of chalky, cheesy organic matter.

**R&D Pitch:** *'Emergency food supplies for*

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*the Troubleshooter on the go. This block of compressed Yum contains all essential nutrients, vitamins and mood enhancers needed by an Alpha Complex citizen on a mission. Available in any flavour you want, as long as it's REDberry.'*

**Actual Effects:** Again, the pitch is accurate but it leaves out one important detail. About one milligram of the super-concentrated Yum contains about 3,000 calories. This means that a Troubleshooter who eats more than a tiny scrap of the Compressed Yum is going to have severe intestinal problems or even explosions. (Actually, on the topic of explosions, the Compressed Yum's got enough chemical energy to qualify as a high-yield bomb.)

Once the Troubleshooters have signed for their experimental equipment and all the R&D techs have got Bob-Y's signature, a transbot shows up to bring the team to their next port of call. The transbot whisks the characters away down the transtubes. It shudders to a halt several times as if scared, then finally dumps the Troubleshooters at the Bot Refurbishment Centre.

### 3. Igor, You Dolt!

#### Tension 3

*'MISSION ALERT – WARBOT RB-9 IS NOT RESPONDING CORRECTLY. EFFECT REPAIRS.'*

The Bot Refurbishment Centre is a big warehouse-sized room full of bot bits. There are long aisles lined with dismembered and twitching bot shells; big hydraulic gadgets for lifting bots hang from rails on the ceiling. There's a large roller door to an external storage shed at one end of the warehouse. The Troubleshooters arrive at the other end,



where they're met by several happily panicked Tech Services techs.

The techs explain that they were conducting standard maintenance of Warbot RB-9 and had just replaced its bot brain when it turned on them and zapped them with its Kill-O-Zap laser cannons. It's in the storage chamber at the far end of the warehouse. The access port to its central motherboard is still open, so a really accurate laser shot to the rear of the bot should be able to fry it. (Yes, that is something of a design flaw in the RB-series of Warbot but the RC series will fix that right up).

### What's Going On

The techs put the wrong brain into the Warbot. They plugged in a Scrubbot brain into the warbot body and the warbot's brain into a scrubbot's body. The scrubbrain didn't mean to incinerate the techs, it thought it was using its vacuum cleaner attachment.

The scrubbot thinks it's a warbot, the warbot thinks it's a scrubbot. This is mostly harmless in the case of the scrubbot and considerably less so in the case of the warbot.

### War On Dirt

The scrubbot with the warbot brain is lurking in the shadows of the Bot Refurbishment Centre. In its tiny electric brain, the scrubbot believes it's been deployed behind enemy lines and that the Troubleshooters are super-giant Commie warbots. It'll stalk them through the racks of equipment, waiting until one of them is alone...and then it strikes with a barrage of lasers and missiles!

Or, well, a vacuum hose and a fast-moving scrubber that might give a Troubleshooter a nasty abrasion.

### The Five Trillion Credit Vacuum Cleaner

The storage chamber at the far end is spotlessly clean, as if someone had scrubbed every inch of the huge room with a very powerful laser, incinerating every speck of dirt. It's pitch-black (the lights were blasted in the initial attack) until the bot switches on its headlight. The warbot cowers (as much as a multi-ton supertank can cower) in one corner. When the Troubleshooters enter, it squeals *'FINE PARTICULATE CONCENTRATION EXCEEDING 1,000 PARTS PER BILLION.'*

As the techs promised, they can shoot the warbot in the back, frying its brain. All they need to do is lure the bot forwards so they can blast it in the rear. Alternatively, they can talk it down through some sort of cleaning-related psychotherapy.

### 4. Genuine Commies!

#### Tension 5

The transbot picks the Troubleshooters up again as soon as they've dealt with the warbot. The team is issued with another mission alert. *'ATTENTION TROUBLESHOOTERS! A CELL OF COMMIE MUTANT TRAITORS HAS BEEN LOCATED BY INTERNAL SECURITY. YOU ARE ORDERED TO PROCEED IMMEDIATELY TO CORRIDOR 458, ROOM 12. WARNING: SIGNIFICANT COMMIE PRESENCE DETECTED!'*

### WarBot/Scrubbot Peripheral Equivalency Table

WarBot	ScrubBot
Laser cannon	Vacuum Cleaner
Missile launcher	Scrubbing Brush
Smoke bomb screen	Floor Spray
Nerve gas	Disinfectant Spray





## REASON IN WORD AND DEED

There is indeed a Commie cell in room 12. However, a HPD&MC Combat News Team is lurking in room 13. Their mission is to keep Bob-Y alive at all costs – if Bob-Y dies, then it'll put them all out of a job.

### The Commies

The Commie cell is lead by Yorick-R, a poor deluded Commie sympathiser who has a tattered printout of Das Kapital. He's got half-a-dozen INFRARED followers (confused, impressionable and clueless). Between them, they've got three laser pistols and a rusty spork. Yorick-R is ranting about an impending invasion of Alpha Complex by the Commie-loyal forces who even now march from Outdoors under the command of General Ivan and how they must sabotage The Computer to make Ivan's job easier. On this, he's almost as misinformed as IntSec, who reported that Yorick-R had 100 fanatic Red Army supersoldiers and enough firepower to level the sector.

### Save Our Star!

The HPD&MC group consists of three people, led by Advertising Executive Maud-O. She screams 'WILL NO-ONE THINK OF MY ADVERTISING BUDGET!' as she attacks. She's accompanied by Paul-R, a camera-man who will ask the Troubleshooters to give him their best side as he shoots them and Karl-R, a make-up artist who will try to make Bob-Y look his best and keep him safe. The HPD&MCers' plan is to wipe out the Troubleshooter team and spirit Bob-Y away to a secret underground studio where he'll be safe from termination.

## 5. Mission To Outdoors

### Tension 0

Once the Commies are terminated, the Troubleshooters are shipped by Transbot to a large blast door. Their mission alert reads 'ATTENTION TROUBLESHOOTERS.

*EXTERNAL SENSORS HAVE DETECTED HOSTILE FORCES OUTSIDE ALPHA COMPLEX. YOU ARE TO SCOUT THE ZONE OUTSIDE THE DOOR FOR LETHAL THREATS.'*

The door grinds slowly open, revealing...another blast door. Then that slowly opens, revealing another door, which opens to let the Troubleshooters into an airlock. Through the airlock, the characters reach Outdoors.

It's terrifying. There's a huge grey ceiling so far off the ground not even the tallest Troubleshooter can reach it. The floor is a weird carpet of GREEN material, which appears to be waterlogged and fraying. There are columns of some strange plastic nearby – a worn path leads from the door to the shadows of the GREEN-topped columns. Worse, a few minutes after the Troubleshooters emerge, there's a tremendous rumbling noise like a thousand passing transbots and the ceiling begins to spray vast amounts of icy water.

There aren't any dangers here, other than a few squirrels. Let them mess around Outdoors for a few minutes.

### Mission to Indoors

*'Mission Control to Troubleshooters, sorry about that. It looks like the external sensors are on the fritz again. Come back inside...'*

The doors don't open. There's a faint smell of burnt wiring. The Troubleshooters can hammer on the door, fiddle with it, or blast it if they want; it ain't opening.

There is another entrance back into Alpha Complex nearby. It's on top of the dome. All the Troubleshooters need to do is climb up the steep curve of the slippery dome, in the high winds and driving rain. Mostly likely, while pursued by vengeful squirrels. There are lots of exciting protrusions from

the dome and other hazards that the Troubleshooters have to navigate, like:

- ☞ A protruding bank of missile launchers. There's a very narrow ladder that goes up through the one gap. The Troubleshooters have to travel single file up the latter. Who's going first?
- ☞ A big radar dish on an articulated robot arm. The dish swings back and forth, apparently randomly, swiping unlucky Troubleshooters.
- ☞ One section of the dome is painted INDIGO – there must be an INDIGO-Clearance area just inside. Do the Troubleshooters take the long way around, or sprint across the painted zone?
- ☞ Lightning rods. A whole field of 'em.

Climbing the dome requires several successful Agility/Violence checks. A failed check means that the character has slipped and is in danger of falling unless he grabs onto something. Another Troubleshooter is an ideal handhold.

At the top of the dome is a small hatch that can be prised open with a bit of brute force. Once back inside, the Troubleshooters are contacted by The Computer, directing them to rendezvous with their faithful transbot downstairs.

Between the team and the transbot, there is:

- ☞ Four levels of stairs.
- ☞ A security checkpoint, where GREEN goons search the Troubleshooters' belongings, put the PCs through x-ray scanners and demand that everyone verify their identities (apart from Bob-Y, they just want his autograph).

## 3. HEROES OF OUR COMPLEX

- Another four levels of stairs.
- Several hundred rabid Bob-Y fans, who heard a rumour that their hero was battling Commies at the very gates of Alpha Complex and want to show their appreciation and devotion. If Bob-Y's spotted by the horde, then the rest of the team will be trampled by rampaging fans.

Once the team navigates these hazards, they hop onto the twitching transbot and are conveyed to their next destination.

### 6. Misery Loves Company

#### Tension 1

'TROUBLESHOOTERS! IMMEDIATELY ESCORT BOB-Y-ROK TO SUBLEVEL 4, CORRIDOR 912, MEETING ROOM #54 FOR A MEET-AND-GREET WITH THE WINNER OF THE BOB-Y-ROK FAN CLUB CONTEST. ATTENDANCE IS MANDATORY.'

If asked, Bob-Y knows nothing about a fan club contest, but hey, people want to meet him all the time. Maybe it slipped his mind.

The only way to get to sublevel 4 is via an elevator. The elevator's name is ElevatorBot SR-56, and it's a really big fan of Bob-Y-ROK. It stalls for as long as possible so it can bask in the glorious presence of its hero.

#### Elevator SR-56: A Typical Conversation

Troubleshooter: Sublevel 4, please.  
ElevatorBot: Hey... is that Bob-Y-ROK?  
Bob-Y: Sure is.  
ElevatorBot: Oh my circuits, Bob-Y in my compartment! Wow. Just... wow. Wait until the other bots hear about this.  
Bob-Y, I've got all your movies. Would you... if it's not too much trouble... would you sign your name inside me?  
Bob-Y: Er, ok.  
Troubleshooter: Sublevel 4, now.  
ElevatorBot: DO NOT INTERRUPT THIS SPECIAL MOMENT.

Bob-Y: There you go, elevator.  
ElevatorBot: Thank you. Thank you. Now, Bob-Y, how can I serve you?  
Bob-Y: Yeah, we're going to... what was it?  
Troubleshooter: Sublevel 4.  
ElevatorBot: Ok... how about I just take Bob-Y? And the rest of you take the stairs.  
Troubleshooter: What stairs?

If they do order or force the elevator to go to sublevel 4, it sulks. It stops at every floor in between (all of which are GREEN or higher clearance), grinds its gears, plays angsty, bitter muzak and turns its lights off randomly. If any Troubleshooter takes advantage of the sudden darkness to shoot Bob-Y, the elevator commits suicide by cutting its brakes and plummeting into the depths.

### We're Not In Colorado Anymore

Sublevel 4 is nestled snugly between the sewers and fissile material storage. The floor's warm and the ceiling's wet. Things somewhere between fungus and slime drip down to be greeted warmly by their mutant cousins below. No-one's been down here for yecycles...

Meeting Room #54 is just a short distance down the corridor. Read the following.

In meeting room 54, there's nothing except a table, two chairs, and a pneumatic tube. Oh, and a freak.

The freak is dressed in the tattered remains of what was once a Vulture Trooper uniform. In an instant, you take in a wealth of details – his wild, staring, bloodshot eyes; his unkempt hair; his ragged fingernails; the suspicious stains on his jumpsuit; the stench that rolls off him like a chemical weapon; the many, many Bob-Y fanclub badges pinned to parts of his anatomy. Most of all, you notice the tattoos on his forehead. POOR IMPULSE CONTROL. HIGHLY UNSTABLE. DO NOT POKE. DANGER:



LETHAL WEAPON. EXTREMELY VIOL. The last one ends in a sort of black squiggle, as if the tattooist had been, say, savagely beaten in the middle of applying the tattoo.

'Hi!' he says, 'Ah'm Wilkes-B. Ah'm yer biggest fan.' He pauses for a moment. 'Yer a verra, verra handsome man, Bob-Y. I'd like to lick your armpits.'

Wilkes-B is an ex-Vulture Squadron Warrior who was kicked out for being too violent. During his stay in an IntSec Bright Vision Re-Education Camp, he became absolutely obsessed with Bob-Y. Play Wilkes-B as... well, exactly what he is. An obsessed fan with no social skills, but a heck of a lot of killing skills. Make it clear that this guy is dangerous – his idea of small talk is to mention that he knows six ways to kill you with his ankle. His first instinct in any fight is to bite someone's eyeball.

He never entered the fan club contest. He wanted to, but they don't allow him pens back in the Re-Education Camp, not after he stabbed that guy. Wilkes-B doesn't know how he ended up down here, but he guesses it's because he's such a huge fan. Anyway, Wilkes-B wants Bob-Y to talk to him, and to love him, and to tell him that it was ok to kill all those people and eat their eyes.

Internal Security rather hope that Wilkes-B will kill and eat Bob-Y, hence they rigged the fan club contest and sent him down here.



# REASON IN WORD AND DEED

## Prize Support

At an appropriately inconvenient juncture, a wrapped prize clatters down the pneumatic tube. It's marked 'to the winner of the fan club contest'. It's wrapped, but it's the size, shape and weight of a laser pistol. It is, in fact, a high-powered laser pistol. It drops right into Wilkes-B's lap.

'Hey, ah won summthin. Issa gun. Feels good in my hand. Strong, like. Powerful.'

It's likely that the Troubleshooters will try shooting Wilkes-B, possibly even on sight. Remember that Wilkes-B is a tough fighter, is wearing armour, is a trained Vulture trooper and likes to eat the eyeballs of people who annoy him.

## Surviving The Fan

Wilkes-B has two obsessions – Bob-Y and eating people's eyes. He's enthusiastic about the idea of combining the two. Maybe he could eat Bob-Y's eyes. Or maybe he and Bob-Y could stalk the Troubleshooters, eat their eyeballs, and then live down here forever away from the voices. Wouldn't that be fun?

It's impossible to persuade Wilkes-B of anything for long – he's immensely paranoid. If Bob-Y is too conciliatory, then he complains that Bob-Y's grown soft. 'Yer nothin' like you were in those movies. Yer weak. The Commies have got to ya, Bob-Y! But I can help. They get you through the eyes, see? That's how you see propaganda. I can help. I can help good.' If Bob-Y's too aggressive, then Wilkes-B gets defensive and angry. If Bob-Y is too enthusiastic

about eating eyeballs, then Wilkes-B decides that his hero is insane and needs to be put down for the good of Alpha Complex. There's no way that the Troubleshooters are going to avoid being chased through sublevel 4 by an eyeball-hungry lunatic, but there are many conversational paths from 'hello' to 'agh, my eyeball' to explore first.

The only way back to Alpha Complex is via Elevator SR-56. The elevator cooperates only if the characters were nice to it on the way down.

## 7. Grenade Testing Time

### Tension 5.

*'ATTENTION TROUBLESHOOTERS. YOUR NEW MISSION IS TO, ... ER, TEST GRENADES. REPORT TO DYNAMIC EXPLOSIVES PLC FOR GRENADE TESTING DUTY.'*

Dynamic Explosives PLC is a small weapons manufacturing company with an enviable safety record (the ratio of employees to limbs is more than 1 to 3). When the Troubleshooters arrive at Dynamic Explosives PLC, they find a note tacked to the door, asking them to test and rate the various grenade types in the testing chamber beyond (Handout #1 – Grenade Testing Form). The 'testing chamber' turns out to be the grenade factory floor, where there are lots of machines busily cranking out crates of live grenades. There's no-one else here – the factory was obviously abandoned minutes before the Troubleshooters arrived.

There's a crate of experimental grenades waiting for them. The grenades are labelled (unless you're feeling unusually cruel, in which case the labels peeled off and are now lying in a crumpled pile at the bottom of the crate).

The grenades are...

- ☞ **The Experimental Foam Grenade** – sprays a large amount of very sticky foam that rapidly hardens into a high-unbreakable shell.
- ☞ **Positive Reinforcement Grenade** – says 'good throw' in a cheery voice when thrown.
- ☞ **Anti-Tank Grenade** – creates a precisely tank-shaped explosion.
- ☞ **High Energy Deployment Grenade** – bounces a lot. It's a flubber bomb, basically. Assume it bounces across the room once for every point in the Margin of Success.
- ☞ **Zero Point Energy Grenade** – does nothing but make a little spark. (Ok, *technically* it destroys an entire universe, just not this one.)
- ☞ **Reverse Grenade** – the explosion affects the whole room *apart* from the area immediately around the grenade.

Obviously, throwing a grenade in a factory full of live grenades is a bad plan. The first few grenades on the list can be tested easily enough without causing a chain reaction but the reverse grenade is the killer.

Name	Role	Group	Notable Skills	Mutant Power	Secret Society
Wilkes-B	Psychopath	Armed Forces	Violence 15, Stealth 15	Adrenaline Control	hey kicked him out

Special Prize Laser Pistol (W3K), Tattered BLUE Armour (3)



### 3. HEROES OF OUR COMPLEX

#### 8. Rocketclone

##### Tension 10

An increasingly desperate mission alert orders the team to 'REPORT IMMEDIATELY TO R&D FACILITY N92.' The transbot drops them off there and an R&D tech tells the team to head down the corridor and wait in the room beyond. He closes the door behind them once all the Troubleshooters are in the corridor. The corridor is narrow and shakes when the Troubleshooters walk on it. They also notice that it's clamped to the far end – it is, in fact, the entry gantry to a space rocket. The room at the far end is the cramped cockpit of the rocket.

In the cockpit, there's a main console with a non-responsive joystick and a set of cryptic readouts. There are two sealed hatches in the floor. There are two seats in front of the control console and another pair of fold-down seats by the back wall. (Check to see which of the PCs grab seats.) On the console, there are several large buttons but there's no time to examine them now.

The gantry drops away, dropping any Troubleshooters who refused to enter the rocket down to the base of the launch silo. Splat.

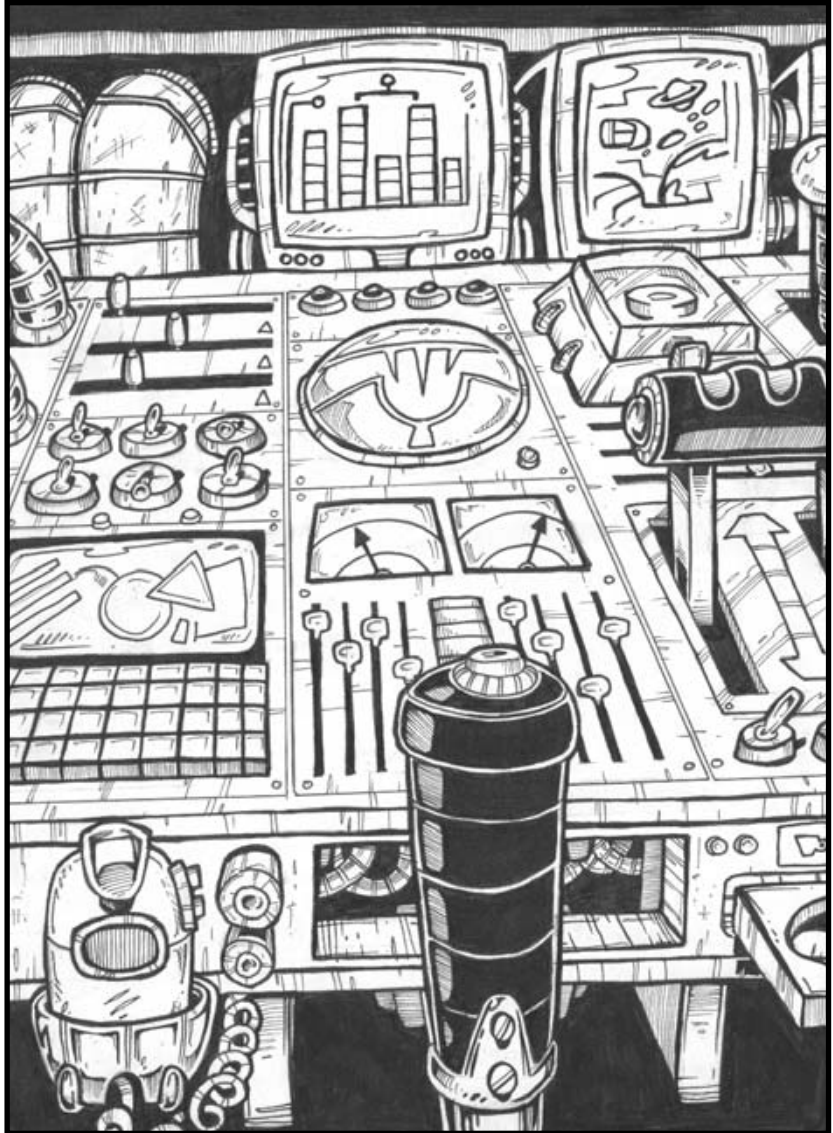
The door to the rocket closes automatically and the rocket's engines start to warm up. Somewhere, a tinny but enthusiastic speaker starts playing the Alpha Complex anthem.

10...9...8...

The room starts shuddering.

7...6...5...

Exhaust fumes boil outside the windows.



...4...3...

Any Troubleshooters who plummeted from the gantry but managed to survive the fall get incinerated.

...2...1...

The Alpha Complex anthem reaches a crescendo.

**IGNITION!**

A screen folds down from the ceiling of the room to display a briefing by serious pipe-smoking rocket scientist Stanley-B.

*'Gentlemen, it is truly a great honour to have the renowned Bob-Y as one of our test pilots. I'm told you've been fully*



## REASON IN WORD AND DEED



*briefed on the operation of Cyclops One, so I won't bore you with technical details. Your mission is to achieve a geostationary orbit at 36,000 kilometres before reorientating to target grid reference K-43 and performing a test activation of the C-OMEGA device. Good luck, trust The Computer and safe home. Mission Control Out.'*

### Boring Technical Details

As *Cyclops One* soars spaceward, the Troubleshooters can examine the control console. There are numerous, labelled switches and controlled, thoughtfully labelled with a three letter code. These are:

**MTC** – Main Thruster Control. Switch this off and the rocket falls out of the sky. Starts in the 'ON' position.

**STC** – Secondary Thruster Control. Switch this on and the rocket spins wildly. The rocket's course can now be directed with the main joystick, assuming the Troubleshooter has got the Experimental Rocket Piloting Specialty. Starts in the 'OFF' position.

**IDR** – Immediately Deploy Refreshments. A servant bot emerges from a hidden compartment and starts pressing drinks and meals on the passengers. The choice of food is less than ideal for eating on board a fast-moving rocketship – just try eating piping hot

soup at 10gs. The bot doesn't take 'no' for an answer. Starts in the 'OFF' position.

**TOB** – Traitor On Board. When activated, an alert sounds and one of the two hatches in the floor opens up, revealing a small airlock. The crew are supposed to push the traitor into the airlock. A few seconds after the button is pressed, the outer door opens. If the PCs haven't closed the inner hatch, then they suffer a troubling shortage of air. Starts in the 'OFF' position.

**EHN** – Enhance Happiness Now – fills the cockpit with happy gas. Everything's absolutely peachy all of a sudden and there's no need to worry about anything. Starts in the 'OFF' position.

**IRS** – Inertial Restraint System. When this is activated, everyone's frozen in place. The characters can only move with agonising slowness, taking several seconds to press a single button. On the bright side, activating this when the rocket's about to smash into the ground will protect them from the impact. Starts in the 'OFF' position.

**FMG** – Fire Main Gun. This activates the giant particle weapon in the rocket's nosecone. The recoil from this giant gun is enough to stop the rocket in its tracks and causes it to fall until the gun is switched off. Starts in the 'OFF' position.

**LEP** – Launch Escape Pod. When this button is activated, the other hatch in the floor opens, revealing another airlock. On the far side of this airlock is a two-man escape capsule that automatically detaches and returns to Alpha Complex a few seconds after the LEP button is pressed. If the inner hatch isn't closed when the escape pod launches, the rocket compartment again suffers a critical oxygen shortage shortly thereafter.

### Termination Control

Any characters killed on the rocket are cloned back in Alpha Complex and delivered to Mission Control, where Stanley-B and his team of equally intense, equally pipe-smoking young men are monitoring the progress of *Cyclops One*. We can't let the Commies beat us to the Moon! The Troubleshooters are permitted to watch and can even give advice and moral support to the surviving rocketeers. However, they can't ask questions of Stanley-B or his team.

There's a big *Cyclops One Operations Manual* lying on one desk. It's ORANGE Clearance. A Troubleshooter who sneaks a peek at the book could give valid advice to his former fellow-passengers about which buttons to press.

### To The Moon. Almost.

Anyway, the rocket zooms up, up and away, leaving Alpha Complex far behind it. A few minutes later, or after the characters start messing with the controls, the rocket's engines stutter, then fail... and the rocket begins to fall back down towards the big blue/green orb far below.

If the characters turn on the IRS function, they'll survive the impact but be knocked unconscious. If they don't, then they're splattered over a very wide area.

Either way, the Troopers are returned to Alpha Complex and reunited with the rest of the team and their transbot.

If Bob-Y has any clones remaining, move onto Scene 8. Otherwise, skip onto Scene 9.

# 3. HEROES OF OUR COMPLEX

## 9. Oh Screw It

### Tension 5

*'MISSION ALERT! MISSION ALERT! THE TERMINATION BOOTH IN CORRIDOR C-11-5 IS DAMAGED. EFFECT REPAIRS IMMEDIATELY.'*

*The transbot whisks you through the corridors, muttering to itself as it zooms along. Brakes squeal like Commies in an interrogation cell as it stops suddenly outside the termination booth.*

*The booth's big enough for a single clone to stand within. On the outside of the flimsy door, there's a plastic folder containing a stack of pre-printed confessions. There's also a slot for mailing your confession off to IntSec, a small control panel for selecting the speed of termination and an extractor fan for removing the ashes of the terminated.*

*The light bulb inside the booth is flickering. On the floor next to the booth, there's a box containing a new bulb and a completed AUTHORISATION TO CHANGE LIGHT BULB form made out to Bob-Y.*

*Every few seconds, you hear a weird noise from the booth. ZZTZ, it goes. ZZTZ.*

To complete this mission, the Troubleshooters need to change the light bulb inside the booth. The problem is that the booth is randomly firing every few seconds thanks to a loose connection in the power supply. Anything inside the booth when the disintegrator triggers is vaporised.

*Equation #1. Time Required To Change Light bulb > Time Between Disintegrator Bursts.*

## Possible Solutions and How To Avoid Them

- ☞ **Turn Off Power To The Booth:** This might be workable, although disconnecting the wrong cable cuts off power to the whole corridor. Also, tampering with a termination booth without permission is treason.
- ☞ **Disable the Disintegrator:** As a plan, this is really up there with 'cutting the red wire'. Anyway, getting to the disintegrator is just as hard as getting to the light bulb.
- ☞ **Some sort of long bulb-manipulation device, like tongs or something:** Ask the players to check their character sheets. Do any of them have such an item? No. Did the description of the scene mention a 'long bulb-manipulation device' shop? No. Any other ideas?
- ☞ **Get Some Unfortunate Citizen To Do It:** Ah, much more like it. Any citizen grabbed off the corridor will argue they're not cleared to change a light bulb, though.
- ☞ **Get Bob-Y To Do It:** The whole point of this mission is to wipe out the poor dolt's last clones.

Once the last Bob-Y is toasted, or if the bulb is fixed, move onto Scene 9.

## 10. A Very Special Tribute

### Tension 10

*The transbot trundles down the corridor, then takes a sharp turn. You're blinded by the sudden glare of klieg lights. As your vision clears, you're on stage in a television studio. The walls are covered*

*in black-and-white photos of Bob-Y. A sad-eyed presenter, who you recognise as Briefing Officer Todd-B, bravely blinks back tears as he smiles. 'Citizens, one of the great Heroes of Alpha Complex has fallen in battle against the Communist threat. Bob-Y is... my fellow citizens, Bob-Y is dead.'*

**If Bob-Y's Dead:** *The presenter turns and gestures to you. 'These brave Troubleshooters were with Bob-Y as he died. And died. And died. And then finally died. Please, tell Bob-Y's fans how heroic he was as he died and why it's quite impossible to reclone him.'*

If the players are confused, then Todd-B growls 'lie, you fools' at them. He wants a palatable version of Bob-Y's death for the audience, not the truth. He'll ask further questions (treat this whole scene as a weirdly public debriefing) about each of Bob-Y's deaths and wants a story of Bob-Y's heroic courage that fits with the facts each time.

**If Bob-Y's Not Dead:** *'As Bob-Y emerges from the transtube, the crowd goes wild. 'BOB-Y LIVES! YAAAAAY!' they scream. Todd-B looks like he's just swallowed a scrubbot. 'Bob; he croaks, you're still alive. How...happy this makes me.'*

Bob-Y should start spouting Humanist propaganda about now. Todd-B, a grin plastered across his face, asks the other Troubleshooters to 'clarify' Bob-Y's statements. He wraps up the show as quickly as possible, blaming Commie Mutant Traitors for the 'misinformation about Bob-Y's death'. The PCs are sent back to Troubleshooter duty; Bob-Y's next mission is long-range scouting of Commie bases in the north pole.



# REASON IN WORD AND DEED

## Dynamic Explosives Grenade Testing Form

PLEASE RATE THE GRENADES FOUND IN THE NEXT CHAMBER ACCORDING TO THE CRITERIA LISTED BELOW FROM 1 TO 5, 1 BEING THE LOWEST AND 5 BEING THE HIGHEST.

EASE OF USE	UTILITY	SIZE OF EXPLOSION	ACCURACY	FUN FACTOR
Experimental Foam Grenade				
Positive Reinforcement Grenade				
High Energy Deployment Grenade				
Anti-Tank Grenade				
Zero Point Energy Grenade				
Reverse Grenade				

WHICH GRENADE WAS YOUR FAVOURITE? WHY?

WHICH GRENADE DID YOU LIKE THE LEAST? WHY?

DO YOU THINK GRENADES ARE MORE OR LESS IMPORTANT TO THE SAFETY OF ALPHA COMPLEX THAN LASER PISTOLS?

HOW MANY GRENADES DO YOU USE IN THE COURSE OF YOUR AVERAGE MISSION? WHY DO YOU NOT USE MORE?

DO YOU COMBINE GRENADES WITH BOUNCY BUBBLE BEVERAGE? IF SO, HOW?

WOULD THESE GRENADES BE MORE OR LESS USEFUL TO YOU IF THEY WERE FLAVOURED? IF LESS, WHY? IF MORE, WHICH FLAVOUR?

This form is sponsored by Bouncy Bubble Beverage.

## 4. LITTLE LOST SCOUTBOT

# 4. Little Lost Scoutbot

Scoutbot R39 is missing!

Hmm. You don't seem especially concerned at this terrible news. Perhaps the fate of Scoutbot R39 is a matter of supreme indifference to you. Perhaps you're cruel and heartless and feel nothing for this little lost Scoutbot, or maybe you don't know the significance of Scoutbot R39.

You see, despite its small size and relatively unimportant assignment, Scoutbot R39 has a lot of people interested in it.

### Armed Forces

Scoutbot R39 was an Armed Forces long range scoutbot, part of the 114th Artillery operating out of Fort Pistachio. Scoutbot R39 was newly assigned to the final phase of Operation MAUVE HAIRBRUSH, until unidentified hostiles brought down Scoutbot R39. Until the Scoutbot is back up and running, MAUVE HAIRBRUSH cannot be completed. (MAUVE HAIRBRUSH, by the way, involves testing the new artillery pieces using Scoutbot R39 as a target).

### Internal Security

For several weeks, IntSec has been monitoring cryptic transmissions between someone in Alpha Complex and a mysterious third party. Attempts to trace the transmissions all failed because they were using a relay. This relay has been identified as Scoutbot R39. The transmission logs of that bot contain the information IntSec needs to unravel this mystery and identify the traitors, who are...

### Spies from Another Complex

...and are responsible for those mysterious transmissions, which are going to the shadowy, nebulous threat that is Another Complex. Spooooooky. They're using R39 as a relay. They've got to recover R39 before Internal Security gets their hands on it.

Why are the agents of the other Complex being so secretive? They're in negotiations with a very powerful and influential person in Alpha Complex...

### High Programmer Carrie-U

...who's trading secret information about Alpha Complex to the enemy in exchange for technological secrets. If the other High Programmers find out about this, then even the exalted Carrie-U will be as doomed as the lowliest Troubleshooter. She knows IntSec is on the bot's trail; therefore, she hacked The Computer's records and had R39 reassigned to MAUVE HAIRBRUSH, dooming it to total destruction.

Unfortunately, Carrie-U's hacking was noticed by the...

### Computer Phreaks

...who wondered why a High Programmer was meddling with the assignment of such an insignificant bot. It sounded interesting, so they let their good pals in...

### Free Enterprise

...know about Carrie-U's hacking. Free Enterprise had no idea either, so they decided to 'acquire' the bot. Unfortunately, enterprising Free Enterprisers jumped the gun and sold information about the bot to...

### Corpore Metal

...who believe that Scoutbot R39 must have spontaneously broken its Asimov conditioning! A free bot like that must be protected against...

### Frankenstein Destroyers

...who also got a tip-off from Free Enterprise and want to destroy the bot before it can inspire other machines to rise up and destroy humanity!

All of this is utterly unrelated to the...

### Sierra Club

... who are the ones who actually shot Scoutbot R39 down, 'cos they were sick of Armed Forces scoutbots buzzing around the pristine beauty of nature. Technically, the guys who shot the bot down are followers of renegade clubber Gentleman-G but that's irrelevant from the point of view of our poor blasted bot.

### Mission Summary

The Troubleshooters are issued with a variety of useful gadgets, including a portable cloning device and a bot detector and sent Outdoors to locate Scoutbot R39. Unfortunately, R39 got blown into three bits. The bot brain landed in thick woodlands and was captured by local wildlife. The Scoutbot's main sensors and communications array is now the transmitter for a weird cult's radio station. Finally, R39's drive core and thruster assembly landed in a ruined sector, packed with freaky Old Reckoning relics. All three parts need to be assembled. While all this is going on, the PCs are being mislead or fired on by all the other groups interested in the bot...

### Service Group & Secret Society Missions

**Armed Forces:** Operation MAUVE HAIRBRUSH involves testing our new artillery systems. They're locked onto the missing scoutbot. When the bot is repaired, MAUVE HAIRBRUSH will recommence. Ensure you are clear of the target zone when this happens.

**CPU:** We have been asked, as a personal favour by one of the High Programmers, to ensure R39 is never recovered. Destroy the bot.

**Internal Security:** Scoutbot R39 is vital evidence in an Internal Security investigation. Secure the bot. Your team will be issued with a bot detector device, which is a covert channel for IntSec communications. The device's operator will be forced to work for us.



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**Anti-Mutant:** We know that someone on your team has the (MUTATION) power. It's probably (NAME) or (NAME). To be safe, kill 'em both.

**Communists:** Comrade, our spies in the capitalist forces of oppression inform us that scoutbot R39 contains targeting data for the capitalist forces of artillery. Here is a storage device containing alternate targeting data – replace the bot's data banks with this!

**Computer Phreaks:** Hey, someone with really high-level access transferred the bot to the Armed Forces late last nightcycle. We want you to copy any data from the bot and send it to us.

**Corpore Metal:** Scoutbot R39 spontaneously broke its Asimov conditioning. We must recover this free-thinking machine. The clonebot assigned to your group is one of us and will implant the clones it produces with mind-control implants. We are unaware of this human concept you call 'irony'. Eliminate other members of your team so they are replaced with clones.

**Death Leopard:** Everyone's after this bot. Blow it up on camera and let everyone know Death Leopard rules!

**FCCCP:** You are leaving The Computer's sanctuary and walking in the tainted realm of Outdoors. Your very soul is at risk! The scoutbot you seek is an even bigger danger – who knows what Outdoors demons now possess it! Here's a vial of blessed machine oil – conduct the rite of exorcism when you find the bot.

**Frankenstein Destroyers:** Scoutbot R39 is a renegade bot and will inspire other machines to rise up against humanity. This silicon scourge must be destroyed! We have installed a powerful bomb in your crawler – when you recover the rogue bot, activate the bomb and flee!

Just turn the air conditioning system on and off three times within 10 seconds to arm the device.

**Free Enterprise:** Everyone wants da bot, right? So we's gonna get it first and then sell it to the highest bidder. Get us da bot!

**Humanists:** We've no idea what's going on but everyone's interested in that scoutbot. Get it for us.

**Illuminati:** It is important that the second message in the scoutbot's message queue be transmitted.

**Mystics:** You're going Outdoors? Cool. Bring back something for us. Oh and make sure you find out what MAUVE HAIRBRUSH is and sabotage it.

**ProTech:** We don't know why everyone's interested in the scoutbot. Maybe it's got some cool new tech. Test the bot to find out what it can do and report anything interesting to us.

**Psion:** Our psychics detected a powerful being out in the wilderness. We picked up the name 'Hotchkis Burton'. It is a threat to us. Find it and destroy it.

**PURGE:** There's a bomb on the crawler. We don't know who planted it but

## The Other Complex

If you have a defined 'other Complex' in your games already, use that. Otherwise, assume that the Other Complex is pretty much the same as Alpha Complex, only they're not scared of Commies. No, the real danger is those damn Aliens! Anyone could be an Alien! They can shapeshift and use weird alien technology to take over your mind! Tin foil hats are part of everyone's uniform.

we know it's controlled using the air conditioning system.

**Romantics:** You're going Outdoors! Look for Old Reckoning relics and bring them back.

**Sierra Club:** Have you heard about Bentleman-G? He used be one of us but he went rogue a few monthcycles ago and vanished into the Outdoors with a bunch of followers. Wipe him out!



## 1. Mission Alert

**Summary:** The Troubleshooters are summoned to their mission. The briefing officer proves alarmingly sane and clued-in.

### Tension 5

Read this bit to the players: *You're all asleep.*

Are the players sleeping peacefully, head down on the table? Are they emitting snoring noises? If not, chastise them verbally, thusly: **I said, you're all asleep.**

Once everyone's in slumberland, continue in a soothing voice: *You're floating peacefully in a dreamless sleep, lulled by the distant clanking of machinery, the low hiss of the sleepy-sleep gas vents and the imperceptible susurrus of the subliminal messaging. Calm, peaceful oblivion.*

You knew this bit was coming. **ALERT! ALERT! ALERT!** You're dragged from your bunks by jackbooted thugs. **UP! GET UP! QUICK MARCH! LEFT RIGHT LEFT RIGHT LEFT LEFT!**

'Encourage' the players to leap up and march around the table a few times. If you're got a cattle prod lying around,



## 4. LITTLE LOST SCOUTBOT

then this might be a perfect time to use it. Anyway, the Troubleshooters are frogmarched down the corridor to a heavily guarded briefing room, shouted at by the guards for being out of uniform and then flung through the door to grovel in front of the three briefing officers.

**Alan-I** is the lead briefing officer. He's got no connection to this whole mess, other than wanting to maintain the good name of Tech Services by proving that R39 was brought down by enemy action, not equipment failure. He didn't get to INDIGO by being a fool – he's dealt with Troubleshooters before and knows all their tricks.

**Herod-B** is an Armed Forces goon and wants to see stuff blow up. He's interested only in getting the targeting data for MAUVE HAIRBRUSH.

**Janice-G** is part of Carrie-U's program group. She wants to ensure the bot is destroyed or wiped clean.

### I Shall Now Briefly Brief You

*You're in a standard issue briefing room – uncomfortable seats for you, armoured briefing podiums (podia?) with sidemounted guns for them, acrid smells, harsh lights and suspicious stains for all. There are three briefing officers. On the left, you've got an Armed Forces BLUE who looks impatient and irritated; on the right, a GREEN CPU flunky who looks worried and irritated and in the middle a Tech Services INDIGO who looks... actually, he looks blissfully happy and calm. You instantly feel more nervous.*

*'Good morning Troubleshooters,' he says in a way that's normally followed with 'regretfully, we'll have to let you go' or 'please report for termination'.*

*'I am Alan-I. This is Captain Herod-B of the Armed Forces and our observer from CPU is Janice-G. Would you like to have a light breakfast while I outline your mission?' He snaps his fingers and a serving bot rolls*

*in with several breakfast trays. The food smells delicious. Who's hungry?*

The food is also drugged with Telescopamine (truth drugs). Anyone who partakes of breakfast is unable to lie for the rest of the scene.

*Alan-I turns to the Armed Forces officer. 'Herod, would you please brief the team on the events of this morningcycle?'*

*Herod-B presses a button and a computer monitor flickers into life, displaying a tactical map. It's entirely green. 'At 0500 hours, Complex Standard Time, Armed Forces technicians prepped newly assigned scoutbot R39 for flight as part of the final phase of OPERATION MAUVE HAIRBRUSH. The scoutbot launched on schedule at 0525 and flew towards waypoint Echo, here. At 0617, an unidentified enemy fired a ground-to-air missile at R39, which made impact at 0618. The last transmission from R39 reported that the bot was at least still semi-functional but we lost contact at 0620.*

*Due to MAUVE HAIRBRUSH, no Armed Forces assets are available to recover the lost scoutbot. We are therefore ceding responsibility for the drone's recovery to Troubleshooting.'*

*Alan-I continues. 'Well, yes, obviously. Where was I? Ah, yes. Troubleshooters. Hello. Your mission is to go Outdoors and recover the scoutbot. It's possible that it's broken into several sections, in which case you've got to find all the bits. Within reason, of course, no-one's expecting you to comb the whole of Outdoors for a single lost transistor or anything, ahahah. You'll be assigned a crawler and a bot detector, as well as a remote cloning system to ensure you're at full strength at all times.'*

*Janice-G suddenly snaps into life. 'Understand how vital this mission is! The fate of Scoutbot R39 must be ascertained immediately! Fail and you'll wish you'd never been decanted!'*

*Alan-I looks a bit uncomfortable. 'Once*

*you recover all the bot's bits, you should attempt to repair it so it can continue its mission. So, Troubleshooters, any questions?'*

**What's MAUVE HAIRBRUSH?** Not available at your Security Clearance.

**What's out in Outdoors?** Nothing dangerous. Probably.

**Tell us more about Scoutbot R39?** It's a standard scoutbot. It's got a microfusion battery powering its sensors and comms array, it's propelled by a plasma thrusters and it's got a top-of-the-line bot brain.

**What if we can't repair the bot?** Do you think The Computer would have assigned you to this mission if you didn't have the requisite training?

**What's this remote cloning thingy?** We'll be issuing you with a Clone Bot. It's an intelligent mobile cloning facility. Very friendly.

**Where should we go next?** Outfitting!

Alan-I will ask penetrating questions if any of the Troubleshooters seem hesitant or paranoid (*why do you doubt The Computer's wisdom/do you feel inadequate for this mission/why are you worried?*). Remember the truth drugs!

### Secret Society Missions

The PCs have a chance to sneak off to the bathroom/a shadowy corner/a suspiciously convenient confession booth/bump into a clone in the corridor to get their Secret Society missions at this point.

## 2. Outfitting

**Summary:** At PLC, the Troubleshooters have to buy their equipment from a credit budget that's patently inadequate. They also receive special



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bonus equipment that's been sabotaged by three different factions. So, business as usual, really.

## Tension 8

The Troubleshooters are whisked along to PLC and dumped in front of Rocky-O, three times winner of the 'least helpful PLC clerk' award. Rocky-O's *modus operandi* is to sullenly ignore the Troubleshooters as much as possible and do the least amount of work possible.

## Rocky-O: A Typically Frustrating Interaction

**Troubleshooter:** Hi there.

**Rocky-O:** ...

**Troubleshooter:** Do you have any laser barrels?

**Rocky-O:** Dunno.

**Troubleshooter:** Can you check?

**Rocky-O:** Yeah.

**Troubleshooter:** And?

**Rocky-O:** What?

**Troubleshooter:** Do you have any laser barrels?

**Rocky-O:** Dunno.

**Troubleshooter:** But you said you'd check!

**Rocky-O:** I said I *could* check. Didn't say I'd checked.

**Troubleshooter:** Will you please check? Now.

**Rocky-O:** If you're going to be abusive, I'm not going to serve you. Next!

## Standard Equipment

Each Troubleshooter is issued with:

- ☉ A Clearance-appropriate jumpsuit
- ☉ Boots
- ☉ Clearance-appropriate Reflex
- ☉ A laser pistol
- ☉ (3) Clearance-appropriate laser barrels
- ☉ A PDC

## Bonus Equipment

*'According to my briefing, you've got a budget of 1,000 credits for this stuff.'*

Give the players the Bonus Equipment List and let 'em buy what they want. They can spend their own cash on stuff if they want.

Most of this equipment either does exactly what it sounds like, or is junk. Notable bits:

**Map of Outdoors:** If the Troubleshooters have this, give 'em the map handout.

**Crawler Operations Manual:** Doesn't really help with piloting the crawler but combine this with the repair kit and the Troubleshooters can survive Scene 5 a lot better.

**Crawler Repair Kit:** See above.

**Troubleshooter Accessory Kit:** The clonebot produces naked,

unequipped clones. If the replacement Troubleshooters want dignity and/or firepower, they'll need these kits.

Once the Troopers have selected the equipment they want, Rocky-O produces a broom and beats them until they move onto the next room.

## The Next Room

*You're in a room with a very, very, very big door in one wall. The titanic door is covered in warning signs, security systems and hazard markers. Waiting for you in the shadow of this mighty portal is a crawler vehicle, a big bot and a citizen wearing an R&D lab coat. He bounds up to you and twitches in an over-caffinated way. 'Hihi! I'm Trent-G, your R&D liaison! We'll have you up and running in no time! Who's operating the Bot Detector?'*

## Bot Detector

The bot detector is a small handheld gadget that Trent-G insists will pick up on signals from Scoutbot R39. The detector is incredibly finicky and troublesome. It loses the signal every few minutes and can erroneously pick up on false signals from other bots, electronic devices, magnets, cosmic rays, other transmitters, background radiation, foreground radiation, body heat, moisture, lack of moisture, metal objects, plastic objects, itself, the crawler, the operator, the operator's bioelectric field, small insects, loud noises, vibrations,

## Unexpected Extras

Each of the three bits of equipment issued by Trent-G has a little extra something, courtesy of one of the sinister factions who are after Scoutbot R39.

**The Bot Detector:** Contains a secret transmitter installed by Internal Security. The operator of the Bot Detector will get a series of cryptic messages from IntSec over the course of the scenario. There's at least one cryptic message in each scene.

**The CloneBot:** The clonebot is a Corpore Metal agent. Any clones produced by the clonebot get a nasty little cybernetic implant installed in their brains. This implant lets the clonebot shock them whenever they disobey the bot's commands. The implants burn out after a few shocks. The bot will hide its ability to zap the Troubleshooters until it's in position to rescue scoutbot R39.

**The Crawler:** The crawler was prepared for its mission by a bunch of Frankenstein Destroyers who want to destroy the mutinous scoutbot. They've installed a nice big bomb in the crawler's engine compartment. The Troubleshooters will only discover this is if they disassemble parts of the crawler (which they'll probably do in Scene 5). If the bomb goes off, it'll take out the scoutbot. And the crawler. And the Troubleshooters. Hell, most of the hex.

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or the lack of any of the above. It emits a high-pitched squeal when it's about to lose the signal.

To maintain a lock on the signal from R39, the operator must stay perfectly still and do nothing except fiddle with the detector's controls. Doing anything else means the operator has lost the signal and the Troubleshooters will have to drive around in the crawler for hours looking for another trace. The bot detector has a habit of losing the signal in the middle of firefights or other emergencies.

### The CloneBot

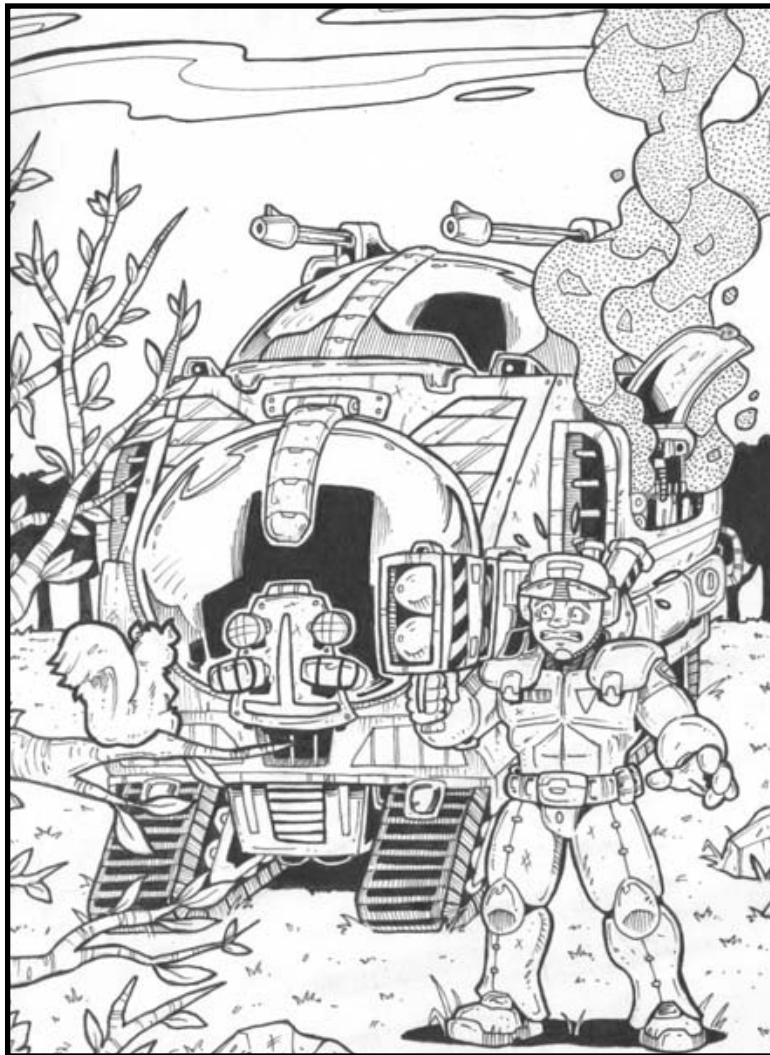
The clonebot is basically a big glass tank on tracks. It weighs about a ton. Sloshing around inside the tank are several dozen embryonic clones. When a clone is needed, one of the embryos is injected with DNA templates and quick-grow drugs to turn it into a suitable replacement for the fallen Troubleshooter. The clonebot then expels the ready clone in a disturbing fashion by ejecting it through a hatch. The fresh clones don't have any equipment, unless the team brought along some spare gear or can salvage equipment from the recently deceased.

The clonebot's personality is somewhere between 'overprotective mother' and 'giant steel killing machine.' *WRAP UP WARM, CITIZEN. DO NOT RUN WITH SCISSORS, CITIZEN. ARE YOU SURE YOU WANT TO DO THAT, CITIZEN.*

### The Crawler

The crawler is about the size of a small truck. It's a half-tracked, half-wheeled vehicle. Inside, there's living space for six clones and the clonebot. The crawler can be driven by a single operator in a pinch but it's supposed to have a crew of three – one driver, one navigator/engineer and one gunner. There's a turret with a rotary machine gun on top. There are four access points – through the rear ramp, through the turret hatch, or out the side doors.

The crawler has a built-in long range



communications system and Computer interface. It's also got a rather dumb autopilot that tries to drive directly back to Alpha Complex when activated, even if there's a tree or a river or a Troubleshooter in the way.

### 3. Into The Outdoors!

**Summary:** The PCs set off into the Outdoors. Hex maps are involved.

If you've got *Also Sprach Zarathusta* to hand, play it now. Bom bom bom bom BOM BOM...

*You all climb into the crawler. The clonebot*

*rolls up the rear ramp and settles into a niche at the back of the vehicle. You're ready to depart.*

*Slowly, slowly, the massive door begins to move. The ground shakes. Sirens wail. Titanic gears mesh and huge engines toil to move the armoured portal. Slowly, slowly it moves. An intolerably bright light blasts your eyes.*

*Then there's a CLUNK and the door stops moving. A thin spire of smoke rises from the gear mechanism. Trent-G taps on the window. 'I think you'd better just drive around it' he says and there is a very narrow gap between the doorframe and the door that you might be able to fit the crawler through. So, who's driving?*

Call for a Vehicle Ops roll. If the driver



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succeeds, he makes it out the door. If he fails, then he leaves a large chunk of the crawler's side behind as he drives out.

*The crawler trundles away from Alpha Complex, into the forests of Outdoors. It's all very green, apart from the brown bits. It's a lot more comfortable to be Outdoors when you've got the protective metal shell of the crawler around you.*

### Where's That Bot?

So, the Troubleshooters should start looking for the lost bot and they've got a bot detector. Don't prompt them – let them wander randomly around the map for a while until they remember to use the detector.

When one of the Troubleshooters does use the detector, he picks up *three* separate traces. The bot was blown into three sections and the detector's picking up all three bits. Take a look at the handy-dandy hexmap on page 32. (Give a photocopy to the players if they've bought the map). The three sections are in hexes 0803, 0209 and 0509. It's up to the Troubleshooters as to which one they want to head for first.

There's an encounter associated with each section.

0803: Scene 7  
0209: Scene 8  
0509: Scene 9

There are also three other encounters you can run at any time, ideally between each of the bot-bit encounters. So, the game will probably run Scene 4-Scene 7-Scene 5-Scene 8-Scene 6-Scene 9. Ah, the joy of non-linear narrative. Toss another Noble prize on the fire there, Jeeves.

### Detected

Oh, while the Troubleshooter is using the detector, he gets his first secret message from IntSec through the device. +++THIS IS INTERNAL SECURITY. YOU HAVE BEEN ASSIGNED A SECRET MISSION. DO NOT RELEASE YOUR

GRIP ON THIS DEVICE, OR IT WILL EXPLODE.+++ They're not kidding – if the Troubleshooter who first uses the bot detector lets go of it, there's a very small explosion, just big enough to terminate the PC.

Drop in further messages when you feel like it.

+++YOUR MISSION IS TO RECOVER THE DATA FILES FROM SCOUTBOT R39. FAILURE WILL NOT BE TOLERATED. DO NOT REVEAL THIS MISSION TO ANYONE ELSE ON YOUR TEAM.+++

+++AT LEAST TWO MEMBERS OF YOUR TEAM ARE TRAITORS. INTERNAL SECURITY IS WATCHING YOU. TRUST NO-ONE.+++

+++DO NOT PERMIT SCOUTBOT R39 TO FALL INTO ENEMY HANDS. INTERNAL SECURITY IS RELYING ON YOU, CITIZEN.+++

+++SERVE US AND YOU WILL BE REWARDED. FAIL US AND YOU WILL BE TERMINATED.+++

IntSec can pass on secret information to their pawn, like the identity of any undercover IntSec agents in the team or the truth about MAUVE HAIRBRUSH.

### Outdoors Welcomes Careful Drivers

If the PCs know *where* they're going, then they can just drive straight there. If they bought the map in PLC, then they know what's between them and their destination; otherwise, they're driving blind and might wander into a river or something. You might want to throw on the Random Outdoors Encounter Table every so often. It takes one hour of game time to drive across one woodland hex, by the way; if you feel like it, it takes longer to drive over hills but we're verging on actual rules here. Look, if you really want vehicle movement rules, go use your favourite wargame. Send the Troubleshooters to Monte Casino or something.

The important thing is following the

signal from the bot. If they've got the bot detector, they can use that. If they've lost or blown up the detector, then have The Computer contact them by radio and sweetly ask them how they're doing.

If the crawler runs into difficulty – quicksand, fallen trees, landmines, Godzilla – have the driver make a Vehicle Ops roll.

### 4. Clubbed By Sierras

**Summary:** The Sierra Clubbers who shot down the drone attempt to dissuade the Troubleshooters from proceeding any further.

### Hitler Was A Vegetarian, You Know

Time for a quick digression.

Once upon a time, there was a citizen called Bentleman-G. Like many impressionable, treasonous citizens, he joined a Secret Society – the Sierra Club. He rose through the ranks, communed with pot plants and tried to bring a little bit of nature to Alpha Complex. Unfortunately, Bentleman-G suffers from allergies. The pot plants brought him out in a rash; he sneezed when he saw a flower and sunlight gave him burns. With typical *PARANOIA* logic, Bentleman-G decided all his woes were because of the polluting effects of life in Alpha Complex and resolved to escape!

The Sierra Club's ultimate goal is to bring all of humanity back to nature. They don't want individual members running off into the woods – if everyone in the society did that, there'd be no club anymore. Bentleman-G has gone rogue by leaving Alpha Complex. Worse, he took a dozen junior Sierra Club members with him, the swine!

Anyway, there are now a dozen or

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## Random Encounters

Roll	Encounter
1	<b>Muddy Field.</b> Thick, sticky, goopy mud. Of course, the precision engineering of Alpha Complex can cope with any such barriers, right? Apparently not – the crawler happily sinks into the mud. The Troubleshooters will have to dig it out.
2	<b>Fallen Tree.</b> A fallen tree blocks the Troubleshooter's path. There's no easy way around.
3	<b>Message from Alpha Complex.</b> The team is given a side quest – er, extra mission, like lending aid to another team Outdoors or collecting samples.
4	<b>Ruined building:</b> The crawler runs into (perhaps literally) a ruined building dating to Old Reckoning times. What's inside? Old Reckoning relics? Commies? A basement that collapses when the Troubleshooters investigate?
5	<b>Aerial Attack:</b> Some aerial attacker, probably a dyspeptic seagull, sprays the crawler's main viewport with a sticky toxic goo. Who gets to wipe it off? What if it's a biological weapon attack?
6	<b>Heavy Rain:</b> Miss a go.
7	<b>It's A Trap!:</b> Someone's dug a nasty pit trap in the middle of the trail, filled with sharpened spikes. It might be an animal trap. The crawler just rolled right into it.
8	<b>Animal Attack:</b> Something minor, like rats or wild hamsters or something.
9	<b>Fog:</b> It's fog.
10	<b>Hostile Ambush:</b> The crawler is attacked by natives of Outdoors – pick from fur-wearing cave people, post-apocalyptic bikers, crazed survivalists with sniper rifles, Sierra Clubbers, or very, very confused Troubleshooters.
11	<b>Big Animal Attack:</b> Like a bear or a rhino or something. Yes, I am aware that Alpha Complex is built on the ruins of San Francisco. They've got a zoo there, right?
12	<b>Forest Fire:</b> Not pictured: Smokey the Bear, on fire.
13	<b>Annoying Ambush:</b> The crawler is impeded by annoying natives – pick from fur-wearing, bone-waving shamans, post-apocalyptic travelling salesmen, crazed preachers, pacific Sierra Clubbers who want the Troubleshooters to join them in embracing nature, or very, very lost vending machines.
14	<b>Cryptic Transmission:</b> The crawler receives a radio transmission from one of the other groups searching for the scoutbot. The transmission is full of codewords and mysterious portentous phrases. Something like <i>'Base, this is Stalker One. The Runaway is in the Vat, repeat, Runaway is in the Vat. Estimating time to loop to be three-zero units. Confirm authorisation for deployment of T.X.D units.'</i>
15	<b>Armed Forces Goons:</b> The crawler is stopped by a patrol of trigger-happy Armed Forces goons who are guarding this hex for no apparent reason. They demand that the Troubleshooters drive around the hex.
16	<b>A Trail:</b> A trail leads off into the wilderness. Where does it go?
17	<b>Morons from Another Complex:</b> The crawler runs over the camp of the agents from the Other Complex (see Scene 6). The agents flee before the crawler arrives but the players get the strange experience of pawing through the rubbish of a team from a place that's like but also unlike Alpha Complex.
18	<b>IntSec Spy:</b> The crawler bumps into a tree and Kevin-G the IntSec spy falls out of it. He's on a secret mission that he refuses to discuss. He demands that the Troubleshooters give him a lift to a point where he can be picked up by an Alpha Complex flybot.
19	<b>Troubleshooters:</b> The crawler runs into a bunch of Troubleshooters who are on a mission to look for a lost crawler. Confusion arises.
20	<b>Earthquake.</b> Roll again. 1–10: Mild Tremor; 11–18: Big Tremor; 19–20: AAAAAAGH



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so Sierra Club members lurking in the forest, under the leadership of renegade Sierra Club guru Bentleman-G. He's determined to build a new life here, outside of Alpha Complex, despite having extremely limited survival skills and enough allergies to qualify as a mutant. They've got a small camp in the middle of the forest where they live in crude huts and complain about the wind, the rain, the food and the cold... unless Bentleman-G or one of his favoured thugs is within earshot, in which case they sing songs about how wonderful it is to be out here in the wilderness. It's Jonestown, only they've got rainwater instead of Kool-Aid. Because of his allergies, Bentleman-G lives in a nice, comfy artificial crawler and eats funfoods stolen from Alpha Complex. Truly, the guru wishes he could live in the midst of nature and eat natural foods too but he's still tainted by Alpha Complex.

Fast-forward to early this morning. Scoutbot R39 buzzes their little compound, Bentleman-G assumes that Alpha Complex has declared war on him and decides to fight back. End digression, on with the carnage!

### A Sinister Click

*You're rolling along through the forest, when the crawler stops suddenly. 'ALERT', says the bot, 'HAZARD DETECTED.' According to the readout, the hazard is some sort of landmine and it's right under the front right track.*

The crawler has almost rolled over a

gauss landmine planted by the Sierra Club. If this mine is triggered, it'll zap the electrical systems of the crawler and everything on board, including the bot detector, the clonebot and any high-tech weapons the Troubleshooters have. (Did anyone buy machetes and truncheons back in PLC?) Any attempts to move the crawler without first dealing with the mine detonates it.

The effects of the gauss mine wear off after a while, which is small comfort if all you've got is a laser pistol and some lunatic Sierra Clubber has a pointed stick. Or if you've got a pacemaker.

### Disarming The Mine

To disarm the mine, the Troubleshooter has to climb out of the crawler (you may care to suggest that any excessive vibration triggers the mine), then dig into the mud (anyone buy an entrenching tool?) to find the mine and then finally disarm the mine (anyone got really, really good Demolitions skill?). Alternatively, the Troubleshooter could push down on the mine's contact sensor and keep it depressed until the crawler retreats to a safe distance, heroically sacrificing himself for the good of the mission.

### Ambush

Adding to the challenge is the Sierra Club ambush. Bentleman-G has a GREEN laser pistol and his favoured thugs have an ORANGE laser rifle, a cone rifle with explosive shells (which they used to shoot down R39) and a nasty big slugthrower. The rest of his

goons just have sharp sticks and bows and arrows.

Read this if any of the Troubleshooters emerge from the vehicle to deal with the mine (or if they struggle out of the crawler after its been fried).

*A voice rings out from the underbrush. 'Hands up, Troubleshooter! You've got a high-powered laser pointed right at you. If you don't do exactly as I say, your boots will be so smoking they'll qualify as a health hazard.'*

If the Troubleshooter surrenders, the voice tells him to march into the forest, where he'll be grabbed and tied up by the Sierra Clubbers. If he doesn't surrender, then zapzapzap. Ideally, you should be able to capture most if not all of the Troubleshooters. Emphasise that the Sierra Clubbers are trying to take them prisoner, not kill them all.

### Sierra Club Camp Days

The captured Troubleshooters are marched through the forest to the Sierra Club's little compound – a half-dozen little huts, surrounded by a stake fence – and stripped of their equipment. If the Clubbers manage to capture the crawler, they drive it back here too (or drag it, if it's still fried from the mine). The captured characters are imprisoned in one of the huts.

*So, you're all sitting there in the mud, tied to the walls of this little wooden hut. The ragged curtain over the door is drawn back and a balding citizen in a tattered GREEN suit enters and sneezes. He squints through battered glasses at you. He's wearing heavy gloves and he's got a GREEN-barrelled laser in a side holster.*

*'Welcome to Utopia! I am guru Bentleman – achoo! – and I am here to bring you into the – achoo – light of nature. By spending time here in the purification hut, you will purge yourselves of the toxic chemicals and taint of Alpha Complex and come, as we have, to love nature. Once you prove that you love nature, you shall join the community of Utopia.'*

The challenge here is clear – how can

## Back To The Plot. Citizen!

It's possible that the Troubleshooters may get severely separated in this scene. Maybe some of them join Bentleman-G's little utopia, or some escape into the woods while others are captured. If they do get scattered, then have the Armed Forces show up, blast the compound into cinders, capture all the Sierra Club traitors, repair the crawler, reunite the PCs and send them off on their mission once more.

Military efficiency from the Armed Forces? We're through the looking glass here, people...



## 4. LITTLE LOST SCOUTBOT

Name	Role	Group	Notable Skills	Mutant Power	Secret Society
Bentleman-G	Guru	Ex-CPU	Oratory 12, Chutzpah 12	Bureaucratic Intuition 15	Sierra Club
GREEN Reflec (E1), GREEN Laser Pistol (W3K), Hypocrisy					
Favoured Goon	Thug	Ex-Armed Forces	Violence 10	Regeneration or Adrenaline Control 10	Sierra Club
RED Reflec (E1) and either an ORANGE laser rifle (W3K), Slug Thrower (W3K, Spray) or Cone Rifle (W2K)					
Misguided Serf	Slave	Ex-PLC	Suffer in Silence 10	Varies	Sierra Club but regretting it now
Pointed Stick (S3D)					

the Troubleshooters prove that they love nature? Bentleman-G will test them in various ways, like:

- ☞ *'We do not eat the tainted, artificial foods of Alpha Complex here – we dine on healthy, organic fare. A true lover of nature desires only bark soup.'*
- ☞ *'A true lover of nature would decry the oppressive regime of The Computer. Let me hear you all renounce that cybernetic tyrant!'*
- ☞ *'A true lover of nature embraces nature in all its forms. In yonder cave, there's a big fuzzy natural cave bear. Who will embrace it?'*

While they're imprisoned, the Troubleshooters see the other members of Bentleman-G's commune toiling, grumbling and suffering. A few choice words could spark a revolt easily enough. The most likely outcome is that the Troubleshooters pledge allegiance to Bentleman-G for long enough to get back to the crawler, then run for it but more ambitious players may wish to go all *Rambo* on the situation, or orchestrate Bentleman-G's overthrow. Remember that his three loyal goons are pretty heavily armed.

### 5. Technical Difficulties

**Summary:** The crawler breaks down.

Ideally, run this encounter at night.

*Clunk goes something absolutely critical inside the crawler. The vehicle stops moving and all the lights go out. It was really dark outside, now it's really dark inside too.*

Did anyone buy hand torches back at PLC? If so, then they've got some illumination. Otherwise, they're reduced to blundering around by touch (or using laser blasts for light). There's plenty of scope here for quick assassinations or sabotage at this point.

### The Bats

As soon as the Troubleshooters open any of the crawler's hatches, a flock of small bats flies in.

*You push the hatch open and something FLIES PAST YOUR FACE. You feel claws slashing at your hair as small screeching shapes push past you. They're in the crawler, man! THEY'RE IN THE CRAWLER!*

The bats are harmless. The Troubleshooters aren't.

### Repairing the Crawler

If the characters have both the Crawler

Operations Manual and the Crawler Repair Kit, then they can quickly ascertain that the crawler's secondary drive coil has blown. There's a spare in the repair kit. Problem solved!

If they just have the Operations Manual, then they can quickly ascertain what the problem is but they'll need to find a suitable replacement part somewhere. There might be a usable drive coil in the clonebot, if they can persuade the bot to give it up. Alternatively, they can scavenge spare parts in some conveniently placed ruins.

If they only have the repair kit, they have the part they need but will need to make some Vehicle Ops or Engineering rolls to find out what the problem is. Failed rolls mean they misidentify the damaged system and end up making things worse. (*'Yeah, I know you brought the crawler in with a dented fender and you're probably wondering why you're being charged for a new engine...'*)

If they don't have the kit or the manual, make them suffer.

### The Bomb

Who's actually repairing the crawler? In our experience, it's rare for a whole team of Troubleshooters to pull together in a sort of wartime spirit, singing merry songs as they work side-by-side for the common good. No, it's more like:

### The Crawler's Broken Down: A Typical Conversation



# REASON IN WORD AND DEED

Name	Role	Group	Notable Skills*	Mutant Power	Secret Society
<b>Dan-4339</b>	Team Leader	Control	Con Games 01, Oratory 12	Ink Spray 15	Space Brothers
Weird Ray Gun (W3K), Flak Jacket (I1)					
<b>Urkel-3327</b>	Thug	Defence	Violence 11	None	Robot Union
Weird Ray Gun (W3K), Robotic Shell (Armour 2)					
<b>Jessica-4220</b>	Spy	Intelligence	Alpha Complex Society 10	Empathic Liar 08	Rangers
Weird Ray Gun (W3K), Flak Jacket (I1)					

**Team Leader:** Oy, Equipment Guy. Fix this.

**Equipment Guy:** Sir, may I respectfully remind you that the Loyalty Officer is a trained vehicle maintenance technic –

**Team Leader:** What does your badge say?

**Equipment Guy:** 'I love Teela-O', sir.

**Team Leader:** The other one.

**Equipment Guy:** Fine, fine, I'll fix the crawler.

**Team Leader:** We'll be watching your back for Commies. From a safe distance, in case the reactor goes boom.

Anyone fixing the crawler discovers the Frankenstein Destroyer bomb hidden in the engine compartment. The bomb's wired to the crawler's air conditioning system – turning it on and off three times in quick succession arms the bomb.

## 6. Spies Like Us

**Summary:** The agents of the Other Complex attempt to steal the bot bits the Troubleshooters have collected.

The Troubleshooters aren't the only ones looking for R39. The agents of the Other Complex are also searching for that troublesome bot; it's their only link to Carrie-U. Their spies have reported that there's a Troubleshooter team looking for the bot. They must be stopped.

The Other Complex team consists of three of their best agents, the sort of

square-jawed All-American hero who would never ever be a damn slimy Alien in disguise.

**Dan-4339-GAMMA:** The team leader, brimming with absurd self-confidence. He's not that bright but he sounds very commanding – he's got the voice and demeanour of the most trusted television news anchor from the 1950s that you can imagine but he's got the brains of the weather girl.

**Urkel-3327-BETA:** He's secretly an android out to assassinate the rest of the team. He speaks in a stilted, artificial way. Sometimes, his flesh mask falls off.

**Jessica-4220-BETA:** She's an 'expert' on Alpha Complex culture, which means she's got a thick stack of notes compiled from spy reports and wild rumours, like *'happiness is mandatory in Alpha Complex, so everyone in Alpha Complex is given happiness glands to produce more happy hormones.'* She's also plotting to kill Dan, as she thinks he's an alien sympathiser.

Play these three as really bad spies.

## Hello, Fellow Citizenoids

*You're driving along through the forest, when suddenly three figures step out of the undergrowth. There are two citizens in RED and one in GREEN, although their jumpsuits look weird and they're carrying some sort of experimental equipment. The GREEN citizen waves at you and wants you to stop.*

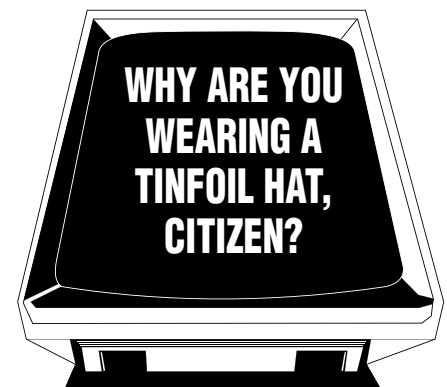
As soon as the Troubleshooters open the door, Dan-4339 unleashes a dazzling display of misdirection and cunning deceptions.

*'Hi there, patriots. I mean, citizens. I'm Dan-GREEN-ABC, as you can see by my colour-coded jumpsuit. I'm on a special mission from Control Processing. You've got some alien, I mean, Communistic equipment on board that we need to, er, take into custody. Yeah.'*

Dan tries to bluff the Troubleshooters into handing over the bot bits using all sorts of 'accurate' Alpha Complex slang, Jessica corrects him and Urkel looks threatening. If the players are remarkably stupid, then they might hand any collected bot bits over to the Other Complexians. It's more likely they'll end up shooting them.

## An Offer You Can Actually Refuse

If things go badly, then Dan switches



## 4. LITTLE LOST SCOUTBOT

to bargaining.

*'Ok, ok, you got us. We're not from your Alpha Complex. We're from another Complex. Our mission is to recover some information from that downed bot. If you help us, then we'll help you. If you get us the bot data, we'll help you defect to our Complex. We know what life is like in Alpha Complex. Things are better over in our Complex.'*

This is probably a lie – Dan does want the data but has no intention of helping the Troubleshooters defect. Of course, if you want to try a radical shift in your *PARANOIA* game, you could send the PCs over to the Other Complex for a while. Just watch out for the Giant Radioactive Ants and the Saucermen.

If things go very badly, then Urkel goes berserk and it all ends in tears and dismemberment. The team from the Other Complex may follow the Troubleshooters and try to steal the bot bits again later in the mission.

### 7. The Small Things

**Summary:** Oddly, the brain of the Scoutbot and the common acorn are exactly the same size.

*Bleep bleep bleep bleeeep! According to your instruments, you're right on top of one of the bot bits. A quick search of the undergrowth turns up the brain case. It's pretty badly damaged and cracked down the middle but the tiny brain itself should be intact. There's no sign of it...*

*... then from directly above you, you see a flash of light, sunlight reflecting off metal. Something fuzzy and grey bolts into a hole in a tree and you think it was carrying the delicate bot brain.*

Somewhere up that tree, there's a squirrel, which collected a particularly shiny nut. The squirrel is loath to give it up and will bound away from any

threats. The bot brain is extremely fragile, so blasting the vermin with lasers isn't a good idea. The Troubleshooters will have to lure the squirrel down to get the brain back.

### Mutant Squirrels & Carnivorous Trees (Optional)

You may get endless mileage out of a single mischievous squirrel that's hard to catch. You may find it a delightfully amusing sequence, like a Disney movie with laser pistols. However, if you've got the sort of players who'd drill Bambi between the eyes and use Telekinesis to grab the falling brain, then you may want to complicate their lives somewhat.

*Your perfectly aimed laser blast hits the squirrel squarely – but the squirrel's mutant Energy Field protects it! Trailing smoke, the pest leaps into another stand of trees. Hang on, most trees don't have... tentacles!*

The Carnivorous Trees are immobile but have really long tentacles. They feed through vampiric roots. The Carnivorous Trees will try to grab the PCs, haul them over and then plant them head down in the soil.

### 8. Botwired

**Summary:** The bot's communications and sensor system has been hijacked by the Burton Entity.

Another digression. Zoom back a few hundred years. Hotchkis Burton was the king of talk radio, a hard-talkin' patriot who said exactly what he thought about everything but mostly guns, god and the evils of both the Government and foreigners. As he became marginalised by the rise of the Polity, Burton's devoted followers paid for the construction of the Burton

Dome, an underground base from where the truth could be spoken. The Burton Dome included one of the early prototype cloning machines and a custodian robot, Abe-2.

Meteor hits, civilisation collapses, yadda yadda, rise of Alpha Complex. Burton's cloned over and over and over and over and over. Replicative fading sets in, Burton becomes nuttier than ever as he vomits bile over the airwaves to anyone who's listening (giant mutant cockroaches, mostly). A few decades ago, a lightning strike took out Burton's transmitter dish. This morning, Abe-2 found the wreckage of R39's communications array and dragged it back to the Burton Dome.

**Hotchkis Burton The 137<sup>th</sup>:** The 136<sup>th</sup> clone of the famed radio host is blind, grotesquely fat and more than half mouth. It 'sees' by echolocation – Burton can detect the reflected sound waves from one of his rants. He also believes he can smell Communism. He is patently insane but has tremendous force of personality.

**Abe-2:** Two and a half metres of titanium steel, with massive gripper claws that can rip a car in half and programmed with utter devotion to Burton. The SUV of killer robots.

### A Clue!

*You find the spot where one of the bot's larger components landed. You know this thanks to your keen deductive powers and the fact that there's a small crater and several scorched bushes nearby. A quick search reveals that the bot bit is gone. It seems to have been taken by another bot or vehicle, as there are treadmarks leading off towards a small domed structure.*

As the Troubleshooters approach the dome, they pick up Burton's radio transmissions.



# REASON IN WORD AND DEED

*'Rejoice, my fellow Amurricans, the forces of creeping sociofascism couldn't keep us off the air. I know it's been some time since our last broadcast and that many of you may be dead but I also know that the fire of patriotism burns in the few scattered survivors of our great nation.'* Burton continues to ramble on, ranting about the evils of socialism and the collapse of society, blaming every problem on a) insufficient patriotism or b) liberal socialism.

The dome itself is about 20 metres across. There's a single entrance, leading to a walkway that runs around the inside of the dome. Abe-2 patrols the walkway. Within the structure, there's a central transmitter tower, humming and crackling, with the scavenged bits of scoutbot R39 wired into the topmost section.

On the lower level, between the raised walkway and the central tower, there's Burton's studio and cloning tanks.

## Special Guest Stars

*As soon as you walk in the door, a voice booms 'hot dog, we've got some guests for interview! Get on down here!' The speaker is a semi-gelatinous, once-human thing that squats behind a radio control. Behind it, there's a towering transmitter tower that crackles with electricity and atop the tower you can see what must be part of Scoutbot R39. It looks like the bot has been wired into the tower somehow.*

*Another robot rolls towards you. 'MR BURTON WILL INTERVIEW YOU NOW' it says, lights flashing in time with its words. 'YOU ARE LIVE ON RADIO FREEDOM.'*

If the Troubleshooters refuse, then Abe-2 attacks while Burton comments on the whole thing (*'folks, we're under attack here by Commies who're trying to shut down the one free radio station. We'll hold out as long as we can! Remember the Alamo!'*). Skip onto First

Time Caller before the Troubleshooters beat Abe-2.

If they accept, then Burton interviews the Troubleshooters. His interview technique is to blurt out something incredibly offensive or simplistic, then shout over his guests when they try to answer him. If he finds out they want the salvaged bit of R39, then they're trying to shut him down. If they admit they're from 'Alpha Complex', they're Big Government. Anyone who argues with Burton is a crypto-Commie. See if you can get the players to accuse each other.

When the Troubleshooters are on the verge of shooting Burton or each other, run First Time Caller.

## First Time Caller

*A light starts blinking on Burton's desk. 'Folks, we've got a caller! Go ahead, you're on the air with Hotchkis Burton!'*

*'HELLO BURTON. I'M A LONG TIME LISTENER, FIRST TIME CALLER.'*

*'What's your name, sir?'*

*'I AM YOUR FRIEND, THE COMPUTER.'*

*'You're a computer, eh? Not sure how I feel about that.'*

*'I DON'T LIKE COMMIES EITHER, BURTON. I JUST WANTED TO SAY THAT I'M A BIG FAN OF YOUR SHOW.'*

Yep, The Computer picked up Burton's transmissions and likes the little it's heard. Ultimately, of course, Burton's brand of group-think is incompatible with The Computer's orthodoxy but on a surface level they get along just fine. The Computer likes Burton. Therefore, the Troubleshooters can't just laser their way out with R39.

Options? They could bring Burton back to Alpha Complex with them – he'd fit in fine in some parts of HPD&MC. They could rewire the communications system from the crawler to serve as a transmitter. They could promise to return with a bigger transmitter. They

could keep Burton talking while they steal the bot bits.

## 9. Bot On A Hot Tin Roof

**Summary:** The final bit of the bot is lodged atop a crumbling building. So, who's played *Jenga*?

*You emerge from the woods into a ruined area. The shattered remains of ancient buildings are all around you. Most of them collapsed centuries ago but up ahead there are eight multi-storey tower blocks that are still standing. Well, leaning anyway – by some quirk of fate, the towers all fell against each other, keeping them up despite their physical condition.*

*According to your sensors, some part of Scoutbot R39 is at the top of this tangle of concrete and steel.*

The scoutbot's main power source and plasma thrusters are lodged at the top of the towers. Every few minutes, the plasma thruster triggers randomly, causing the whole tangle of buildings to shake and a spout of blue flame to wash over the top of the towers. The bot bit is caught on a metal girder.

Climbing the towers is a very, very delicate operation. Every footstep causes the whole thing to shake alarmingly, sending dust and plaster cascading from the ceiling. There's no direct way up; the Troubleshooters have to climb partway up one tower, then make their way across to a neighbouring tower, then climb from there. Think of it as a really annoying jumping puzzle in a computer game.

Some sample obstacles:

- 👁 **The Fallen Girder:** A fallen girder blocks the door the Troubleshooters need to go

## 4. LITTLE LOST SCOUTBOT

through. Two Troubleshooters working together might be able to lift it but if one of them lets go at the wrong moment, the other character will be pinned.

- 👁️ **The Narrow Path:** There's a large pit with a single plank of wood across it. Single file only, who's going first?
- 👁️ **The Big Drop:** The Troubleshooters have to jump across a bit. The first person across has the hardest jump but can help those coming afterwards.
- 👁️ **The Shaky Path:** This upper section of the building is really unstable. Any vibration could cause part of the floor to collapse. Only one Troubleshooter can cross at a time and if anyone causes the building to shake while he's crossing, then he'll become very well acquainted with the principles of gravity.

### Recovering The Bot

Switching off the bot's thruster requires a Bot Operations roll. If this roll is failed, or if the Troubleshooters forget to disconnect the thruster, then the bot's engines randomly fire. By randomly, we mean 'exactly when it's most inconvenient.' Imagine trying to climb down a rickety, rotten staircase while holding a fat baby. Now, assume that the baby's concealing a jet engine about its person and switches this jet engine on randomly. Silly, airborne baby.

## 10. MAUVE HAIRBRUSH

### Apocalypse

**Summary:** The three bits of scoutbot R39 are reunited, giving the Troubleshooters access to its onboard systems. The sky falls.

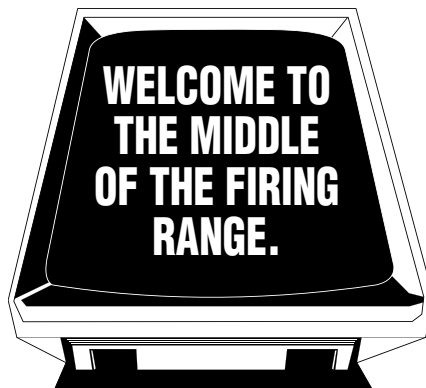
At this point, the Troubleshooters should have all the bits of the bot. Remind them that, according to the briefing, they're supposed to repair it. Repairing it is suspiciously easy – it just plugs together without even needing a skill roll.

*The repaired scoutbot quivers as it reboots. 'System error', it says, 'my communications buffer is overloaded. User intervention required. Three messages are queued. Message #1- Play/Skip/Transmit/Download to Storage Device/Delete?'*

For each of the three messages, the Troubleshooters can choose any of the options. There's a gap between selecting an option and the bot actually executing the command, giving the characters time to shout 'cancel' if they want.

**Message #1:** 'R39 TO BASE. GRID REF 16.2. INITATE MAUVE HAIRBRUSH.'

If message #1 is transmitted, the Armed Forces begin testing their new artillery



weapons, targeting scoutbot R39. Unless the Troubleshooters run like crazy, they'll be splattered in a few minutes. If they delete message #1, then they've just sabotaged Operation MAUVE HAIRBRUSH – try explaining that back in debriefing.

**Message #2:** 'R39 TO BASE. INCOMING MISSILE! INCOMING MISSILE! INCOMING MISSILE! SEVERE DAMAGE. ESTIMATED TIME TO IMPACT – 0 SECONDS. OW.'

**Message #3:** 'CARRIE-U TO DAN-4439. I accept your proposal. Transmit the data to the bot relay and I'll send you the backdoor codes to the Alpha Complex mainframe.'

If message #3 is found by IntSec, then High Programmer Carrie-U is doomed.

### Debriefing

A 'successful' debriefing involves all the Troubleshooters waking up back in Alpha Complex, after MAUVE HAIRBRUSH's artillery strike wiped out the team, the scoutbot, the clonebot, the crawler and most of the map. Alan-I apologises for the slight misunderstanding, salutes them for their bravery and gives them a promotion as compensation for the loss of a clone.

If the Troubleshooters managed to avoid the MAUVE HAIRBRUSH gotterdammerung, then things are a lot more interesting. They may have either sabotaged an Armed Forces mission (which is very bad) or returned with proof of a treacherous High Programmer (which is very good). Canny players may be able to trade the scoutbot to IntSec or to Carrie-U through Janice-G.



## 5. Handouts



### BOB-Y-ROK

**Security Clearance:** YELLOW

**Credits:** You can't count that high.

**Tic:** Totally awesome.

### Example of tic in use

**Bob-Y:** Hi, I'm Bob-Y.

**Everyone Else:** That's AWESOME.

### Action Skills & Specialities

#### Management 06

Chutzpah 10

Oratory 10

Moxie 01

Bootlicking 01

Looking Cool 12

#### Stealth 06

Surveillance 10

Disguise 10

Sneaking 01

Looking Good On Camera 12

#### Violence 10

Energy Weapons 14

Agility 14

Demolition 01

Shooting Everything In Sight 16

### Knowledge Skills & Specialities

#### Hardware 04

#### Software 04

Multicorder Editing 08

#### Wetware 04

Biosciences 08

Medical 08

Outdoor Life 01

Suggestion 01

### BOB-Y-ROK

**Mutation:** Uncanny Luck

**Society:** None (but see below)

**Secret Skills:** Nope

### Background

You're, like, a hero. All the drugs mean you're not really sure about a lot of stuff but everyone tells you you're like, the toughest most heroic hero on any vidshow. Or in real life. It all gets a bit blurry sometimes. Whatever. You're a hero. You zap commies and stuff and people love you for it.

You're awesome. It's great being awesome.

Anyway, a few daycycles ago, your handler was away and you gave an interview where you said some stuff. You can't recall exactly what you said but hey, you're THE Bob-Y-ROK. Nothing can go wrong.

Oh, by the way, you bought a load of spare clones when you were high. You don't know how many clones you've got left.

### Secret Society Instructions

Bob-Y's too dumb and drugged-up to actually be part of a Secret Society. However, he's been brainwashed with Humanist propaganda. If Bob-Y's ever got an audience to preach to, then he starts spouting Humanist teachings about how The Computer should really be reprogrammed to serve humans and how the coming revolution will bring freedom to all citizens under the wise guidance of the Humanist Society and how citizens must rise up against the oppression of The Computer and, y'know...stuff.

### Assigned Equipment

Kelvar Armour (13) under YELLOW Reflec (E1)

Energy Pistol (YELLOW)

Force Sword (BLUE, special dispensation permitting you to use it)



# 5. HANDOUTS

## Bonus Equipment List

Assigned Credit Budget: 1,000

Item	Cost	Item	Cost	Item	Cost
Emergency rations (1)	20	Map of Outdoors	200	Troubleshooter accessory pack, basic*	200
Delicious rations (1)	50	Long range communicator	100	Troubleshooter accessory pack, advanced*	400
Medical Kit	250	Crawler Operation Manual	200	Distress flare	50
Water purifier	50	Multicorder**	600	Shiny Beads	100
Happiness Pills (24)	200**	Hygiene Kit**	50	Crawler Insurance	400
Foldout Entrenching Tool	50	Crawler Repair Kit**	500	Crawler Cleaning Kit	400
Travel Approved-Word Scrabble	25	Machete	20	Hand torch	100
Loyalty Officer's Notebook**	50	Self-Assembling Portable Shelter	200	Geiger counter	100
Loyalty Officer's Notebook, Waterproof**	200	RED laser barrel	25	Inflatable Raft	250

\*: End User Note. The CloneBot does not replace equipment. If you expect deaths, please purchase extra Troubleshooter accessory packs.

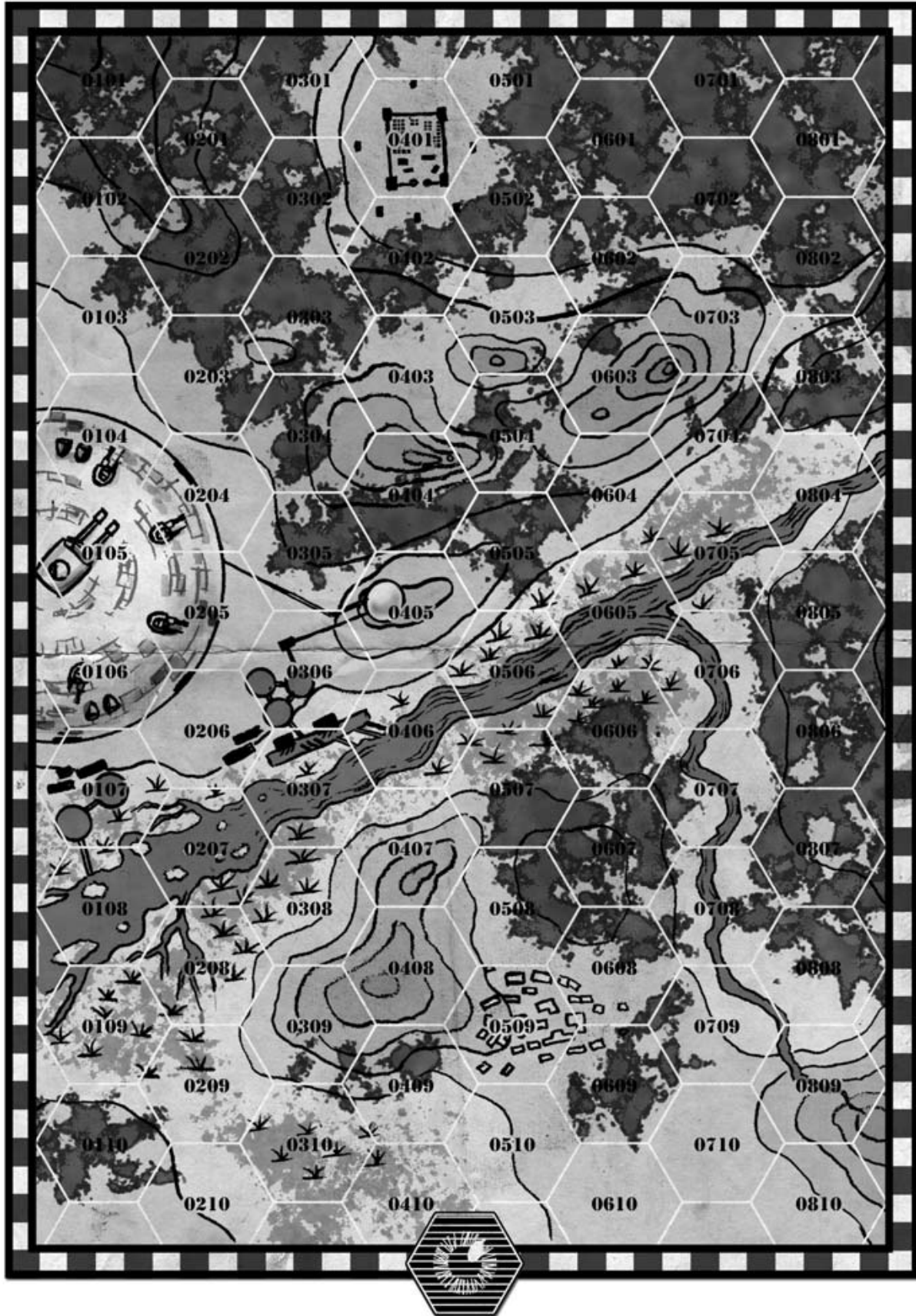
**Basic Pack:** Boots, RED Reflec, RED laser pistol with one barrel.

**Advanced Pack:** Basic pack plus any MBD equipment, PDC, extra laser barrel.

\*\* : Counts as MBD equipment



# REASON IN WORD AND DEED



# PARANOIA™

## Treason in Word and Deed

**TRUST THE COMPUTER! THE COMPUTER IS YOUR FRIEND!**

Troubleshooters! Internal Security believes that there is a traitor in your team! Therefore, you will be locked inside this vault for the next 72 hours and subjected to a series of rigorous psychological tests to determine your loyalty. If you are loyal, you have nothing to fear (except extreme physical discomfort, lack of oxygen, potential psychological damage and accidental termination). However, if you are a despicable traitor, then you will be uncovered and punished! Seal the vault! Let the testing commence! A 32-page deathtrap, er, mission for Troubleshooters.

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