

Project File: Discovery

A mini-adventure for THE MORROW PROJECT

by Joseph Benedetto, Jr.

McWilliams was the first on his feet, stepping slowly from the hibernation tube that had been his home for untold years. The bright glare of the bolt hole lights made his eyes water; he glanced around the small concrete room. They were alone. He turned to the computer that monitored them all this time: Red lights.

"Hey John!" It was Lynn, their communications specialist. "Where is everybody?"

"Red Light on the radio link. Guess Prime Base felt we should be awake." He wiped his eyes and sighed. "Back-up plans must be in effect. I don't even want to think why." He then noticed the pile of crates stacked in the far corner of the room. "What the hell is all that stuff?"

"It's got our code stencilled on it: 'FW-1 1(S)'. Must be for us." Lynn tried to move one of the boxes and then saw the heavy electrical cable running out of it, right over to the bolt hole computer. "Sweet Momma, what & this stuff for?" She looked around and found a packet on the top of a large plastic drum. "Maybe this is the manifest." She tossed it to McWilliams. "You should get a kick out of this. I'm going to call Prime Base and find out what the emergency is."

It took McWilliams, with the help of Powers and Jones, 10 minutes to locate each crate on the list, they had been packed too tightly into the underground bunker. The rest of the team had fitted up their packs by the time Jones found the last item, an AN/PRC-70 backpack radio.

"Probably be useless," Lynn said as she stepped over from the computer. "Prime Base isn't responding, despite having sent the recall code." She shoved a piece of paper at them. "Code designation matches for Prime Base. But I can't raise them. Or U.S. Gov., or any civilian operators, HAM sets, or anything." She bit her lower lip nervously. "I don't like this, John."

"Yeah...well, we can't stay buried forever." He opened the #1 locker and broke out the escape tools, tossing a shovel to Powers and another to Peterson, the RTO with the MARS patch. "Primary Exit Hatch. Let's do it."

PROJECT FILE: DISCOVERY is a mini-adventure for a six-man team; MP Unit FW-1 1(S); who are just awakening to a world not of their making.

During the early years of the Project, some of the designers on the Council of Tomorrow foresaw

one problem the Project would have to face: People have a tendency to die. MP teams in the field might not be able to cross hundreds of miles of harsh terrain to reach a permanent depot/base to get replacements for their decimated ranks.

The FW, or "Frozen Watch," Teams were designed to fulfill that need: Small, lightly equipped groups scattered around the country, who would wait out The War and the main awakenings; sleeping on until MP teams who needed replacements came along and revived them. Special volunteers were recruited from all ranks and branches of the Project and placed in FW Teams, their diversity ensuring a higher probability of fulfilling just about any teams needs. They came from RECON, MARS, Science, Service & Support: At least one member of each team was a Medic, but after that anything was good.

Due to their nature, the FW Teams were designed to operate light. It was assumed that another, already-awake team would call the FW Team up, and thus equip them with such items as weaponry, vehicles, etc. The FW Teams are all equipped with Basic Packs, but are not given any weapons; neither do they have their own resupply caches. All members of the team are aware of these facts.

As a last-ditch contingency plan, it is possible for the FW Teams to be awakened by a remote radio signal from Prime Base; normally, a team would just arrive on site and dig them up. To cover the contingency plan, emergency weapons are provided for the team (in locker #3) in the bolt hole.

THE BOLT HOLE

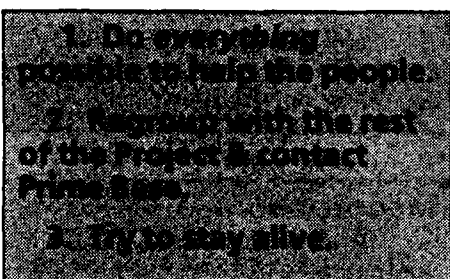
The players are in a much smaller version of the standard storage and freezing facility used by the MP. This one contains the team's freeze tubes and equipment lockers. Because it was expected that the team would remain in hibernation until another team dug them up, there is no periscope package in the FW hole.

There are only two exits: A personnel exit normally used for egress, and a back up emergency exit cofferdammed with sand to make it extremely hard to collapse or destroy. Both are designed to be blastproof and hard to detect by casual outside observation. The emergency exit must be cleared of sand before it can be used; the tools to do this are in Locker XI. Both exits rise vertically to within about 3 or more feet of the surface; this earth cover must be removed before breaking into the open air. Again, all members of the team are aware of these facts.

NORMAL PROCEDURES

Normally, the FW teams would lie dormant until an awake team needed personnel; this team would look through their **AutoNav** computer until they found a file noting the location of an "abandoned ash pit;" this was the cover story for the hidden replacement teams. Morrow Industries' engineers actually put a fake ash pit, filled the waste slurry, at the spot to mark it. The needy team would arrive, locate the entrance, and dig up the sleeping team. As can be seen in this scenario, this does not always happen as planned.

As far as orders go, the FW teams have none. In emergencies, they have to fall back on the MP Standard General Orders:



It is important to note that the personal safety of the team comes **THIRD** on the list of concerns for the PC's! The PD may wish to note this to the players when they starting out.

WHAT THEY DON'T KNOW WON'T HURT THEM

Frozen Watch Team FW-1 I(S) was frozen on 26 August 1987. They have no knowledge of the local area, nor of the location of any other MP team or facility. Their assigned mission is to wait in hibernation until another team arrives and calls them up. They have no equipment or supplies other than their Basic Packs and what equipment they can scavenge from the lockers in their bolt hole. They have no supply caches. The team members all trained together and are familiar with each other and all standard MP equipment.

Their bolt hole (so the team surmises) is simply a buried concrete box designed to shelter them during hibernation; they are supposed to abandon it after coming out of cold sleep.

In truth, this is not the case with Team FW-1 I(S). One of the members of the Council of Tomorrow thought that the Project should provide for certain emergencies, and push for the construction of Emergency Shelters in remote areas of the country - each shelter being a simple concrete shed with a basement, and beneath that a small MP cache of emergency supplies (tools, food, water, and power). A small number of these shelters were actually built before the War broke out. In the case of Team FW- 11 (S), however, they went a step further: They decided at the last moment that it would be a better idea to place a FW Team in the space beneath the basement of a shelter, so that a team looking for them would find not only the FW Team but also a shelter as well. This combination of FW Team & Shelter was not standard; more like an experiment undertaken during construction (hence the "(S)" or Special designation in the team's code assignment).

Basically, there is the team's bolt hole; above that is the shed basement, then the shed itself. (See FLOORPLANS XI and #2 for layout details.) Since this was a last minute idea, the gear for the shelter cache

was simply crammed into the bolt hole with the players! It was decided to fill in the basement to disguise the entrance to the bolt hole; in practice, it is assumed that the team will remove all of the dirt and use the area as a basement, with the bolt hole beneath it becoming a **sub-basement**.

THE PLOT

When the players finally go up the Personnel Exit and break through into the air, they will actually be in the 3' high "crawlspace" under the floor of the shed. It is pitch black, cold (45 degrees), and very windy. It sounds as if there is a thunderstorm nearby, but nothing can be seen. (The PD should play this strangeness up until the players either stand up or turn on a flashlight!) Also, they will hear some people moving about overhead - plus loud shouts, drunken cries, and the occasional scream of terror. If the team is even halfway bright, they will realize that something is going down upstairs, and it is not good.

Looking around the crawlspace with a flashlight will show few details: There are a few vent holes in the wall letting in the wind; there is only one exit from this place, and it seems to be a steel manhole cover opening right into the noise going on overhead. In the off chance that anyone wants to dig around the crawlspace, they will waste lots of time and effort to discover the following facts: The crawlspace is actually a basement under the shed, and it has (had) a 7' ceiling, meaning that there is a layer of dirt here 4' thick...around 3000 cubic feet of dirt, and there is no real place to put it.

A better choice might be to retreat and try the emergency exit, although removing all that sand will take some time. However, the emergency exit comes up outside the shelter and can be useful in planning an attack (see **FLOORPLAN #2** for details on location). Of course, teams are likely to try almost anything before thinking of the logical approach; it seems to be a hallmark of many players.

Attempts to *quietly* lift the manhole cover and peek around are best determined by the PD and how the players act.

THE ACTION

The shed has been temporarily occupied by Badges (see the MPGB, p. 50). They jumped a passing wagon earlier today and are busy enjoying the spoils they have captured, which include and women. 2 hours of the Badges' "attention" have left the 4 women captives in very bad shape. The Badges, having tired of them, are busy torturing their 'guests'. These people definitely need the intervention of the players.

As can be seen from the floorplans, the shed has one large doorway (to admit MP vehicles like the V-1 50) and 2 small windows, as well as a loft. 2 of the women are on the main floor, 1 is under the loft (near the doorway) and the last is in the loft. All are bound and have at least 1 Badge with them. There are a total of 9 Badges here, scattered around the shed; 1 is actually on the roof during the rainstorm. She wasn't having any fun, so they sent her to the roof to keep watch. This not too bad, since there is another band of Badges in the area, and they are expected to be by sometime during the night.

The window shutters and steel doors to the shelter rusted away years ago; the wind is blowing on in, and the crash of thunder and the darkness makes it easy for the players to figure a way to make their rescue. In this kind of weather, a successful MOVE SILENTLY roll can do wonders!

All of the Badges have weapons, although only 1 or 2 have their rifles/shotguns close at hand; the others are likely (65%) to have a pistol or revolver on them at all times. The girl on the roof has a shotgun with slug rounds, as well as a S&W M29. None of the Badges has any form of Body Armor.

The obvious matter is for the players to figure a way out of their bolt hole, and then figure out a plan to rescue the hostages; this may be difficult for a team

bottlenecked beneath the manhole cover. And assuming they pull this off successfully, they will have to deal with the immediate situation of the hostages they have freed: They need medical attention and shelter; it's 45 degrees inside and out, in the middle of a storm, and there is no telling if there are more of these Badge scum out there in the forest somewhere. Trying to make a stand in a concrete box in the middle of a dark and stormy night with wounded civilians who are in no shape to move is not exactly a great tactical exercise, although the players are about to try it one for size.

FROZEN WATCH BASIC LOAD (INDIVIDUAL) STANDARD ISSUE Wt. 18.69kg

- 1 pr Coveralls (AC = 7)
- 1 pr Boots (AC = 4)
- 1 Green Beret
- 1 Pocket Knife w/2 blades, can & bottle opener and screwdriver
- 1 MI CBR kit w/6 gas antidote loads
- 1 AN/PRC-68 Personal Communicator w/scrambler
- 1 Medkit
- 1 KCB-70 Knife/Bayonet
- 1 M 17A1 Protective Mask
- 1 Morrow Project ID Card

- 1 Basic Pack containing:
 - 1 1 Liter canteen w/cup
 - 1 5 Liter folding canteen
 - 3 Boxes matches (50 per box)
 - 1 Generator Flashlight
 - 1 Weapons cleaning kit
 - 1 pr Coveralls (AC = 7)
 - 1 Mess Kit
 - 1 Compass
 - 1 Toilet Kit
 - 1 Waterproof poncho
 - 1 Sleeping bag
 - 2 Sets underwear
 - 50m Nylon cord (50 kilogram breaking strength)
 - 1 Web belt w/ammunition pouches and holster
 - 14 Days rations

The Basic load is an issue of equipment that is common to all MP personnel. This equipment is stored in a locker that is part of the individual's freeze tube and is assigned to the particular person.

BOLT HOLE STANDARD EQUIPMENT

This bolt hole is not equipped with either a periscope or a CBR detector package. However, there are three equipment lockers mounted on the walls:

Locker #1 (Escape Tools)

- 4 Shovels, Folding
- 1 Axe, Two-handed
- 2 Picks
- 2 Crowbars

Locker #2 (Emergency Supplies)

- 1 Ration Pack
(feeds 6 people for 10 days)
- 1 Large Medkit
- 1 HP-35 Pistol w/3 loaded magazines

Locker #3 (Emergency Weapons)

- 2 M16A2 Rifles,
each w/2 loaded magazines
- 2 HP-35 Pistols,
each w/3 loaded magazines
- 1 CP-7 Binoculars/Laser Rangefinder

- Mounted on wall
(near antenna contact point)
- 1 AN/PRC-70 Backpack Communicator with scrambler

The PC's can operate all of this equipment without too much difficulty.

THE CRATES

All of the following items are packed in crates crammed into one corner of the bolt hole; the manifest the players discover is shown to the right:

Although all of the gear is marked and is MP standard issue, none of the team members knows why it is here in the hole with them! All of the gear is in perfect working order, although (with the exception of the Fusion Pack, wired to the bolt hole computer) none of the gear is activated, and none of the electrical gear's batteries are charged.

MANIFEST

1 Fusion Pack (activated when team wakes up)
 1 Drug Kit
 1 Surgical Kit
 4 Medkits
 2 CP-7 Binocular/Range finders
 1 AN/PRC-70 Backpack Communicator
 3 AN/PRC-68 Personal Communicators
 1 Pioneer Kit (Axe, Shovel, Prybar, Bow Saw, Sledgehammer)
 1 Shelter Kit (Tarps, Cord, Ropes, Firestarter)
 2 "Stokes" basket-style paramedic stretchers
 6 Cold Weather kits, assigned by name to team members
 4 ration Packs
 1 Crate, Water Purification Equipment (Individual & Team)
 - Several Drums, Drinking Water, various sizes

THE SHOTGUN SLUG ROUND

The slug round is an alternate load for a 12-gauge shotgun: Simply a gigantic butter, instead of the normal pellet loads usually fired from such weapons. The slug is pretty massive (nearly 20mm) but because of the loading and the fact it is fired from a shotgun, the round does less damage than a normal 20mm round, or even the smaller (but more powerful) SO HMC bullet.

NAME 12 gauge slug round
 CAL. .775 (19.6x70mm)
 E-FACTOR 25
 EFF. RANGE 150m
 MAX. RANGE 1000m

This round is not normally among those used by the project, which stuck with the 00 magnum buck as a standard load for it's unit. However, any captured slug rounds will work in MP 12 gauge shotguns.

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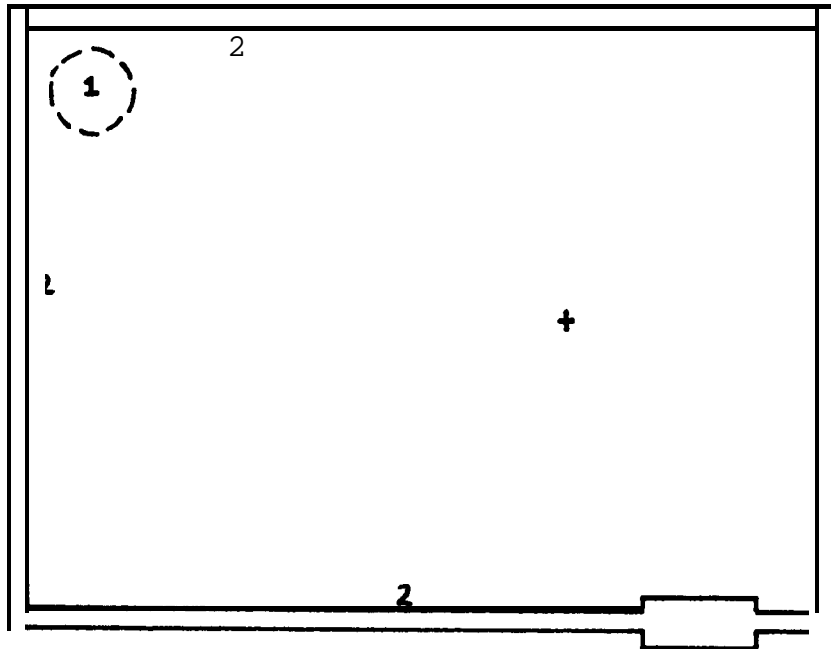
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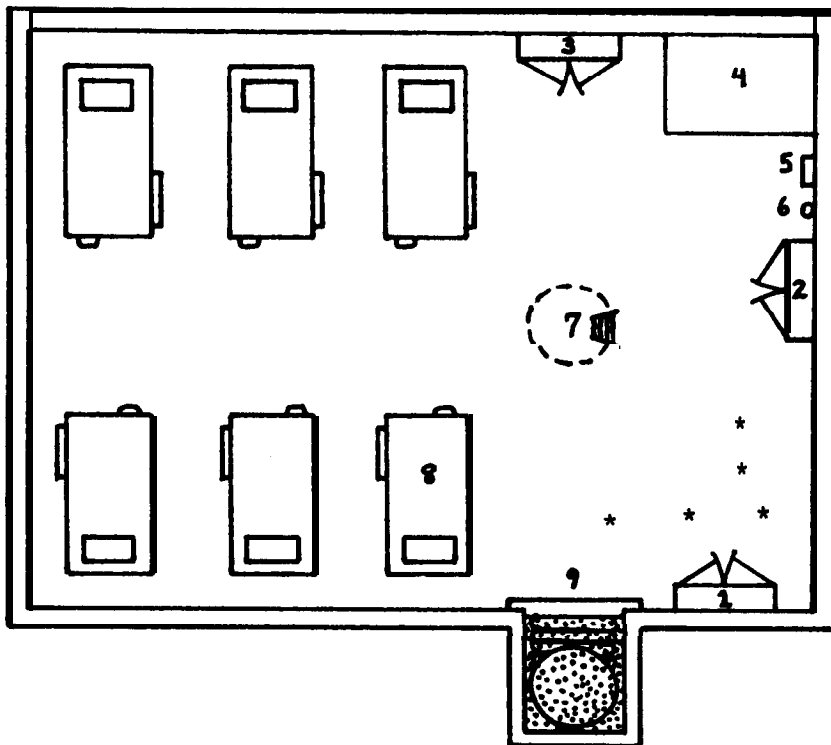
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'CRAWLSPACE'

- 1 Manhole above
- 2 Vent holes in walls (3)
- + **Bolthole** Exit point (buried:

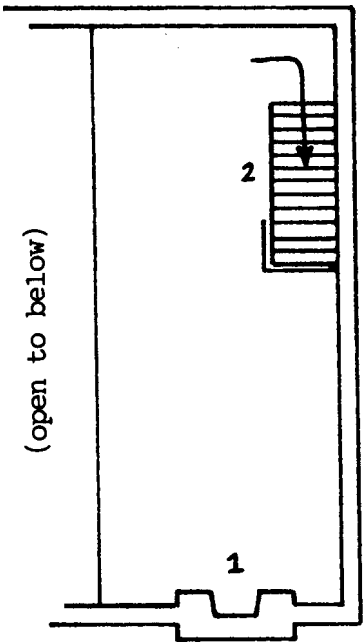
**BOLTHOLE**

- 1 Locker #1 (tools)
- 2 Locker #2 (supplies)
- 3 Locker #3 (weapons)
- 4 Computer
- 5 AN/PRC-70 Radio
- 6 Antenna Contact Point
- 7 Personnel Exit above
- 8 Freeze Tubes (6)
- 9 Emergency Exit, filled with sand
- * Crates

[Dimensions, Exterior]

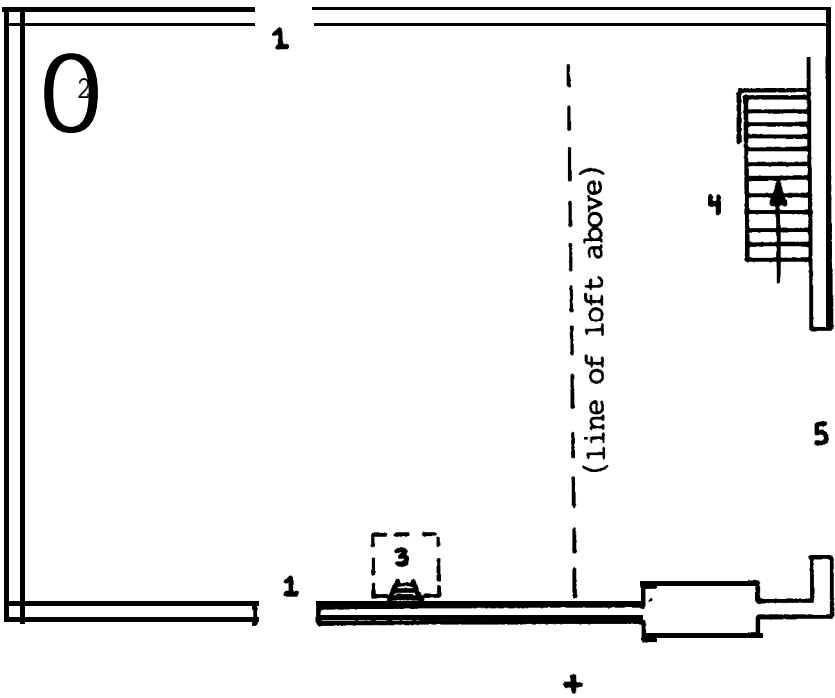
L = 35.2 ft (10.7 m)

w = 27.1 ft (8.2 m)



LOFT

- 1 Fireplace
- 2 Staircase DOWN



GROUND FLOOR

- 1 Windows (2)
- 2 Manhole cover
- 3 Roof Hatch above
- 4 Staircase UP
- 5 Open Doorway
- + Emergency Shaft Exit Point (buried)