

PARANOIA

RED CLEARANCE EDITION



NEW PARANOIA EDITION

JAMES WALLIS
GRANT HOWITT
PAUL DEAN

ORIGINAL PARANOIA DESIGN

DAN GELBER
GREG COSTIKYAN
ERIC GOLDBERG

PARANOIA

GAMEMASTERS HANDBOOK



TARGET

/// CITIZEN: SYD-R-ULS-7
/// CIVIC ZEAL: UNKNOWN
/// MARKET VALUE: UNKNOWN



MISSIONS

ACHIEVEMENTS

SERVICE GROUP

EQUIPMENT



/// INJURY FORECAST

82%

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G A M E M A S T E R S H A N D B O O K

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**START WITH THIS BOOK IF YOU WANT TO RUN PARANOIA, OR GRAB
THE MISSION BOOK IF YOU WANT TO PLAY RIGHT NOW!**



The Computer endorses and approves this Celebration of the Selfless
Labours of this list of Citizens and Condemned Traitors

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PAPERWORK IS ALWAYS FUN!



INTRODUCTION

P A R A N O I A

Welcome to the Gamemasters Handbook. The fact you are reading this implies that you are planning to be the Gamemaster for a session of *Paranoia* in the near future. If you're not, if you'd rather experience the game as a player, then please stop reading before you reach 'Important GM-Only Information' below and go back to the Players Handbook which will tell you everything you need to know about Alpha Complex. Thank you.

IMPORTANT GM-ONLY INFORMATION

Go and read the Players Handbook. If you can't, perhaps because your players are reading it, then here's what the players are learning from it:

Alpha Complex is a vast bunker city, built to protect the human race from a world-shaking disaster and to house them until the planet was safe again. The disaster came in the form of [undefineddisaster], all of humanity retreated to Alpha Complex and the all-powerful Computer, the acme of digital engineering, took over control of the race that had built it. That was [undefinedtime] years ago and everything is still going perfectly.

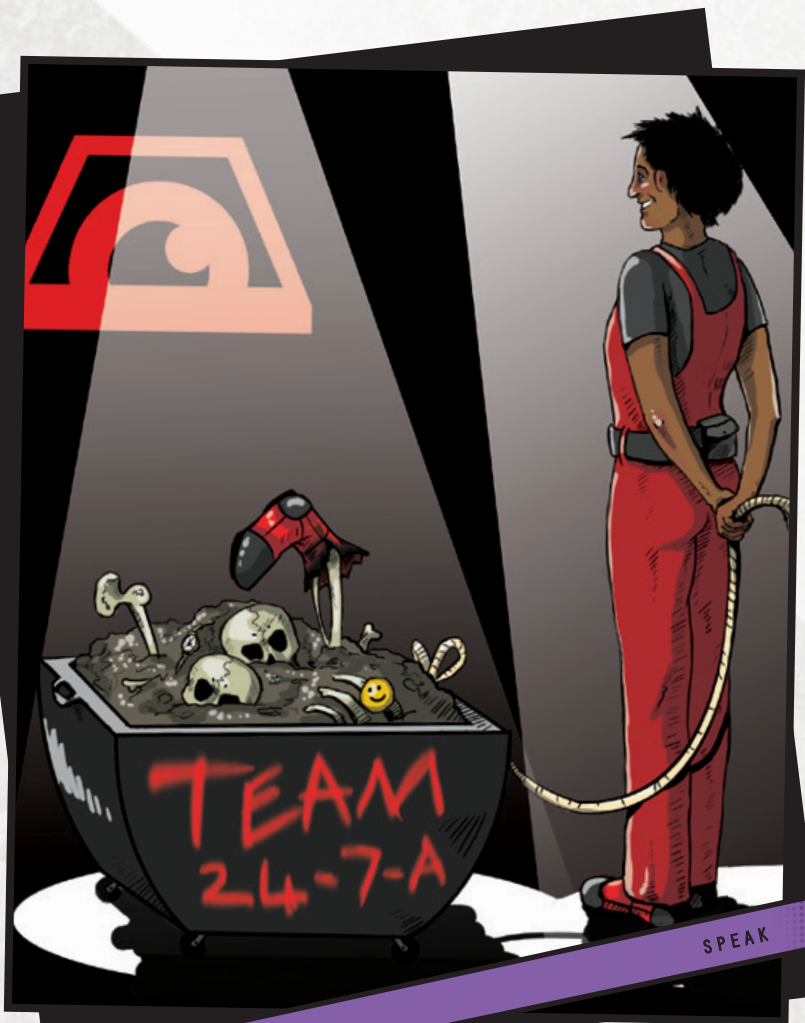
No, it isn't. Alpha Complex was never designed to function for this many centuries, and neither was the Computer. Systems are failing, subroutines and variables are filled with cruft, long-running clocks have rolled over multiple times, and algorithms have acquired sentience, got ideas above their station, annexed entire server-farms, declared themselves god-kings of the digital realm and abandoned the monitoring of their worldly duties, only to have their entire empire and themselves erased as a novice High Programmer sought more space for his porn collection.

Additionally, Alpha Complex's resources are running out. It was never designed as a fully closed system: recycling was built into the design but entropy can only be held off for so long. There are shortages and failures. There aren't enough maintenance bots, nor enough factories to build enough maintenance bots. The automated mines far below have been scraped dry.

The Computer is all-knowing, but knowledge is not wisdom and it has failed to grasp three important points: (1) it and Alpha Complex is failing; (2) its purpose may be over; (3) there may be rational solutions to both these problems. This is because the Computer is no longer rational. It still functions, but instead of recognising the problems, it has decided that something else is to blame: it believes traitors and terrorists are attacking Alpha Complex, to subvert or destroy it. As time has gone on, more and more of its efforts have been diverted to seeking out and destroying any sign of rebellion and unauthorised behaviour.

This oppression has sparked a resistance among the humans. Actually there are several resistances, and they don't agree with each other. Needless to say, their actions and often violent disagreements fit almost exactly what the Computer expects enemies of Alpha Complex to do.

Why hasn't the Computer allowed the citizens of Alpha Complex to return to the surface? Is it because the surface is still dangerous from the Disaster? That's a very good question, and it's one that we are going to let you answer for yourself. But it may be because there may not actually be a surface. Alpha Complex may be somewhere else.



SPEAK



ALPHA COMPLEX

PART 1 - 1

WHAT'S ALPHA COMPLEX LIKE?

It is a paradise. See the Players Handbook for details.

WHAT'S ALPHA COMPLEX REALLY LIKE?

Alpha Complex is a mess. Everything is falling apart. It might once have supported the perfect society but today in the year 214 everything is one step away from the cliff-edge of catastrophe. The Computer is on the verge of terminal collapse. The physical structure of Alpha Complex is suffering from decades of neglect and is crumbling. The only hope for most clones – and it's a slim one – is to advance through the security clearances to secure companionship and support, or join a Secret Society in the hopes that its members might have some secret knowledge or a plan to prevent this imminent disaster.

As the Gamemaster or GM, it's your job to bring to life this fresh version of a dystopia that has entertained players for over thirty years. Here are a few hints on how to do that.

IF YOU NEED TO, IGNORE EVERYTHING WE'RE ABOUT TO SAY

Remember – this is your Alpha Complex. There are many like it but this one is yours. If you want a shiny new Alpha Complex, go for it. If you want everything to hover, and for the food to taste great, and for bureaucracy to be reduced to a series of 'Tick this box to accept the Terms and Conditions', go for it. Your game will be better for it, we're sure. If you flip ahead you'll find notes on how to customise Alpha Complex and a handy checklist for the variables you can fiddle with.

THINGS FALL APART

Alpha Complex has survived for centuries, possibly longer, but it's on its last legs. The Computer does not have enough resources, enough repairbots or enough power to maintain things any more. Instead it patches up damage and decay as best it can. Expansion has stopped, new sectors are no longer being opened and old sectors are occasionally shuttered, causing brief overcrowding before the number of clones stabilises.

THE COMPUTER CANNOT HOLD

The Computer believes it is in control but it is not and it blames the disconnect between those two things on an increasing wave of terrorism and traitorous behaviour. As a result it has cracked down on anything that might be the slightest bit indicative of free thought, and this has caused rebellious citizens (mostly connected with Secret Societies) to push back, causing an increasing wave of traitorous behaviour and terrorism.

MORE ANARCHY IS LOOSED UPON ALPHA COMPLEX

There are outages and shortages: food, equipment, power, occasionally new clones and, critically paperwork, meaning it is impossible to requisition more forms since you don't have the right form. This has increased the amount of bureaucracy in Alpha Complex to a state of near-total inertia.

Almost everybody regards all of this as normal.

IT IS THE YEAR 214

This yearcycle is numbered 214. Last yearcycle was numbered 214. Assuming Alpha Complex doesn't implode or collapse before next yearcycle, that will be numbered 214 too. The Computer decided that numbering years was a distraction and often resulted in projects running several years past their deadline, so it instituted a new policy in the year 214 that's never changed. At least one High Programmer believes that if the year is ever allowed to roll over to 215 then every system in Alpha Complex will crash and everyone will die. They may be right. No one knows how old Alpha Complex is, no more than they can tell you with any degree of surety what lies outside.

WHAT LIES OUTSIDE

No one can tell you. Actually that's not true: plenty of people can tell you, and they are mostly members of Secret Societies, and they are all wrong. Nobody knows for sure. If anyone has been Outside and come back to tell the tale, they're not telling the tale because they know the truth would get them erased. What is the truth? That's up to you. Most citizens of Alpha Complex have no idea there even is an Outside.

NOTHING WORKS PROPERLY

Lifts break. Terminals malfunction. Transport services arrive late or not at all. Escalators become stairs. Bots are erratic at best, hosts to multiple DAIVs at worst. Weapons jam, and don't ask what jam does. Alpha Complex is a run-down, beaten-up place, and expecting something to run smoothly is an exercise in futility.

That said, don't *block* players with broken stuff – save it for bad rolls, the Computer dice, or when you think it'd be really funny. Being told *everything* is broken is boring; having the steering wheel of an out-of-control truckbot come off in your hands is comedy gold.

PAPERWORK WORKS

The easiest way clones in Alpha Complex can do their job is to pass it off to someone else, which is why bureaucracy is rife. Everyone needs forms to do everything and they need forms to requisition the forms and forms to requisition a pen to fill out those forms and...

EVERYTHING IS STUPIDLY GRIM

This isn't 1984; you can leave the serious social commentary at the door. Instead, overlook how stupidly grim everything is for the Infrared and Red citizens at the bottom of Alpha Complex's society. A little grimness is depressing, but let's hear about sectors where all of the public announcements are replaced with ear-splitting sirens and no one knows how to turn them off. Let's hear about the sectors with malfunctioning vents that, at random, suck in a handful of clones, never to be seen again. Let's hear about the sectors where there's only one flavour of food and it's lutefisk. If you pitch it above what's sensible, it becomes a far easier pill to swallow.



PLEASE USE THE HYGIENE FACILITIES PROVIDED



GAMEMASTERING PARANOIA

P A R T 1 - 2

HOW TO BE A GM

Are you GMing *Paranoia* for the first time? Are you perhaps even GMing any game for the first time? If the answer to either of those questions is 'Yes' then congratulations to you! It's a very special moment, a cause for celebration and you needn't feel either nervous or intimidated.

Running *Paranoia*, or any other tabletop roleplaying game, is a chance for you to participate in shaping a story but it's also an opportunity for you all to revel in things going wrong, to misbehave a little, to be subversive. *Paranoia* is not as staid or stiff as many of the more traditional roleplaying games and it's not so focused around rules and regulations. It's okay to play fast and loose. In fact, we encourage it.

YOUR JOB AS A GM

As a GM, your role is threefold. First of all, you're the vessel through which the world and its happenings is described to your players. When they enter a new room, you tell them what the room looks like, how it smells, how large it is, how on fire it is and so on.

Second, you're all the other characters and agents in the game world, except for the players themselves. You're the Computer, in all its finite wisdom. You're the other Troubleshooters they encounter, the bots they deal with, even the vending machine they try to repair, should that be necessary.

Third, you're the ultimate arbiter of all things. You describe what happens. When a player fails in their attempt to climb a rope, you describe their fall or perhaps decide how their ankle is caught and they're left dangling upside-down. When dice rolls indicate success or failure, you interpret and extrapolate and embellish those, telling players exactly how things pan out. Did the Warbot simply explode, or did it careen into a wall, or stagger backwards off a cliff, or collapse onto its front and beep helplessly, its single/double/triple red eyes blinking toward a Troubleshooter? That's up to you.

BUT HOW DO I DO ALL THIS? IT'S AN AWFUL LOT

It sounds like a lot to do. It's really not so bad. You won't be keeping any more in your head than the plot of, say, a half-hour TV serial, and it won't require any abilities you don't already have. While there's lots more in this book about the specifics of running a game, things covering rules and stats and background, here's some short-cut suggestions to get you started.

DESCRIBE WHAT YOU THINK IS NECESSARY

You don't have to be exhaustive. Indeed, you never have to be exhausted. When a team of Troubleshooters force open the door of a service elevator, tell them about the most important details they spot. Is the elevator pitch dark, or shrouded in red, emergency lights? Is there anything to be heard, anyone in that elevator, or any details (perhaps plot-relevant ones) that stand out?

It's important not to get bogged down in unimportant minutiae but one or two specific details can really help. They don't need to know how many medals are on a commander's chest, for example, but if her boots

are so polished that they can see their faces in them, that's a cool thing to describe. A good rule of thumb is that four short sentences about a particular thing are a perfectly good way to start: 'The mutant draws itself up to its full height. Its muscle ripple. Its hair brushes the ceiling. You can hear its breathing from here.'

Don't forget that players can and will ask questions. This is your opportunity to go into more detail, to touch specifics and furnish them with any extra information they might want.

LET THE PLAYERS BE THE MAIN CHARACTERS

It's good to have other characters in your Alpha Complex, including senior Troubleshooters who tell the players what to do, rogue bots who have become self-aware or fellow citizens who cry for help and fall into the arms of their rescuers. You don't need many of them, though, and they don't need to be the focus of a great deal of attention. *Paranoia* is all about the players solving problems (or creating them) and about the internal politics of their group.

Others characters are important. They flesh out the world, help to give direction and also present different perspectives but don't tie yourself up creating lots of them and trying to keep track of what they all want and do. It's not necessary.

BE A FAIR AND FUN ARBITER BUT AN EXTRAORDINARY EMBELLISHER

Players are usually going to know when they pass or fail skill checks, since reading a dice roll only takes a moment, but those numbers don't just mean success or failure. They're also your chance to further the narrative. You decide exactly what those numbers mean, exactly how something goes wrong, and you can make things as funny, ridiculous or absurd as you like.

This means that if the game isn't going great for one particular player, you have a chance to redress the balance, or if it's time for karma to really hit home, you're the one who can guide it to its target. You can also introduce surprises, turn luck one way or the other, ramp up or tone down the current intensity of the game.

That's all allowed. The buck stops with you. You also get to stop bullets (or lasers), if you want, which is a pretty extraordinary power. Just remember to be fair to your players and give reasonable consideration to their suggestions and requests. If someone comes up with a particularly inventive solution to a problem, or perhaps a rule-bendingly strange interpretation of a situation, consider letting them try things out. You don't have to be soft on your players and certainly don't have to give in to any of their demands but always keep an open mind and be ready to take things in unexpected directions.

HOW TO GM PARANOIA

So you've agreed to run a game of *Paranoia*. This is going to be awesome. First up, we're going to talk about the most important rule in the game:

THE MOST IMPORTANT RULE: THE GM DOESN'T ROLL DICE

That's not a typo. The GM doesn't roll dice.

WHAT? BUT WHY?

Because it puts the player characters at the bullseye of the game. They're the protagonists, the focus, the ones the game-story revolves around. They're the ones whose actions matter. They get to make the important decisions, take the decisive actions and roll the crucial dice. It's their choices that count and an NPC fluking a critical roll can ruin a dramatic moment as often as it can create one.

BUT I LOVE MY DICE

We know you do, and you can roll dice if you really want to, heaven knows that you've ignored rules in enough games before now to know you don't have to obey everything we tell you.

Listen; you're the god of the game-world, for all intents and purposes, and God doesn't play dice, so neither should you. You can put the effort in and stat up your NPCs as though you would a PC, and you can try to keep track of skills and bonuses and numbers and chances and options... well, honestly, it's a lot of work and we're against that.

So here's the deal. You can roll dice if you want, and we'll talk about how that works below. But, primarily, the GM just describes what happens, the players react to that and bring fate in on their side and the system will take it. We've designed it with that in mind.

Players *need* dice to roll. They love them. They *crave* them. They want to get as many dice as possible and throw them in whacking great handfuls, because that makes them feel powerful. You don't, GM. You're already the most powerful thing in this universe.

You can combine the two, if you want; get a screen, roll some dice behind it, then make up a result based on how you're feeling about the actions of the player characters. That's fine too! Dice make a nice noise. Players can get upset when you just 'decide' to hurt them, so if it helps, roll a handful of dice whenever you want to hurt a player character and pretend to tally up the results before describing the action.

BUT THAT'S NOT FAIR

It's completely fair, it fits the setting and it's a lot more fun for players because their fate is always in their hands, not yours. Here's a quick example.

The Computer is still having problems with the security-clearance servers. Three Troubleshooters – Rob-R-IES-6, Jordan-G-LOW-4 and Paul-B-IRD-1 – are entering the server room to investigate.

GM: You open the door. There's a masked clone with a laser rifle standing right there, waiting for you. It opens fire.

Rob: Rob-R-IES-6 slams the door in their face.

Jordan: I'm playing this card (plays the 'Jam' action card)

Paul: I – that is, can my character Paul-B-IRD-1 make a dodge roll?

GM: No. Rob-R-IES-6, roll to slam the door.

Rob: Violence plus Operate gives a NODE of 5, I roll... two successes

GM: You slam the door really hard. The now-unseen figure still opens fire, unless – Jordan, does their gun jam?

Jordan: No, it's a jam gun. It fires jam.

GM: A stream of jam at ludicrously high pressure punches through the flimsy door and hits Paul-B-IRD-1, slicing them in half like a laser made of strawberry jelly.



REVENGE IS SWEET

Always give the PCs a chance to react and avoid before you hurt or kill them. Rob-R-IES-6 and Jordan-G-LOW-4 reacted and did stuff, moving the scene along and were rewarded for it. Paul-B-IRD-1 didn't react fast enough and suffered the penalty. That's okay, that's why PCs have more clones. Also, note there are no dodge rolls in *Paranoia*. Dodge rolls are a lazy player's way to avoid thinking about what to do. Lazy players shift the storytelling and creativity onto you and you want players who engage and think dramatically along with a system of mechanics that supports that.

HOW DO I KNOW WHAT HAPPENS?

Going diceless, the most common decision you'll have to make is: 'How badly is this player character hurt?' There are three main ways for you to determine how badly:

1. THE PLAYER FAILS

Every time a player fails to hit the score they needed to achieve their goal, it's up to you to interpret the results. If they miss by one point, they maybe get what they want but at a cost. If they miss by two points, something goes wrong and they fail. Three points and up, more and more things go wrong and they fail more and more comprehensively.

Whatever they roll, however, something happens, and it's up to you to say what. If it's a risky action (combat, primarily but also things like moving across narrow ledges, escaping burning buildings, taking part in an experimental Cold Fun taste test) then one of the most likely outcomes is that the character is damaged in some way.

Use this as a rough guide – for every point the player missed their required score by, inflict around one level of damage (give or take. Play it by ear as you go). So maybe a Troubleshooter is shooting at an armoured terrorist mutant traitor – you determine that they need a score of 2 to hit and their score is 0. That's two levels off the required amount, so you say:

'You open fire but the mutant's armour deflects your blast – and they return fire, hitting you in the leg! You're Injured.'

In the same situation, say they roll a score of 1:

'You line up a shot that clips the mutant in the shoulder – but as the blast hits them, their finger spasms on the trigger and sprays a burst at you, inflicting a burn all down your right arm! You're Hurt.'

2. THE NARRATIVE SUGGESTS IT

Say a Troubleshooter falls five metres; that'd leave them Hurt at least, surely? Maybe even Injure them. Maybe a plucky operative walks out into the firepower of a twitchy riot squad and they take the brunt of ten semi-automatic slug-throwing shotguns; that's them Dead, right? At the very least, they're Maimed.

Don't be afraid to just throw damage at the players – they've got the clones to take it (and this is *Paranoia*, after all, they're probably expecting to get beaten up a bit). We've worded the injury levels (Hurt, Injured, Maimed and Dead) deliberately so you can quickly judge on the fly how damaging a random element of the game might be and then apply that with the minimum fuss.

3. WHATEVER'S INTERESTING

Is it interesting if a Troubleshooter gets shot through the head? Make it happen. Or – would it be incredibly tedious if that were to happen and you'd break up the pacing of the game? Have your goons miss. This also applies to 'whatever's funny' and keeping the game funny is your responsibility as GM.

Remember, you're not being arbitrary, you're being appropriate. It's entirely in the spirit of *Paranoia* for things to go a little bit wrong or to go very wrong. You have carte blanche to decide exactly when this happens; you're entitled to pick your moments. The players won't mind, either. Trust us.

BUT I REALLY WANT TO ROLL DICE AND MEAN IT

That's okay! Dice can be fun. Dice give you a random element to play with. You can roll dice if you want to.

Five is a good average number of dice to roll for someone, or something, that's broadly competent at what they or it are doing. If they're especially good, grab a couple more; if this is their weak suit, grab a couple fewer. Throw them and interpret your score as a PC would; look for fives and sixes, then count them up to work out your score.

EXAMPLE: *A dirty terrorist traitor sneaks up behind a Troubleshooter and tries to push them through a plate-glass window. You grab five dice and, because this is a sneaky act and terrorists are pretty sneaky, you add another one for good measure. You roll: 2, 3, 3, 5, 5, 6; you have a score of 3. The Troubleshooter's armour will be no use here, so it looks like they're going through that window and it's going to Maim them.*

If you rolled 1, the Troubleshooter would be Hurt by the action, not Maimed – maybe it's not a long fall to the ground after all. But remember, you're not a slave to the dice, they're a tool for you to use however you feel, so if you reckon that the fall would kill the target, KILL AWAY. Life is cheap and clones are ten a penny.





GATHERINGS
OF LESS
THAN FOUR
CITIZENS IS
STRICTLY PROHIBITED

TASK DIFFICULTY LEVELS

Whether you roll dice or not, players will be rolling them all the time and asking about NODE modifiers and other things that we haven't described much in this book because interesting stories are not made of numbers. All you need to do is tell the players to roll some dice and ask them how many successes (5s and 6s) they get. Then work out how difficult the task they're attempting is, on a scale of 0-5, and compare the two.

How many dice do they roll? Their NODE, plus any bonuses or negatives you want to give them for the environment (extra dice for short range, negatives for long distance, tricky shots or cover), general attitude (reward cleverness, punish stupidity) and that kind of thing.

HOW MANY SUCCESSES DO THEY NEED?

0	An average task. Any ordinary person should be able to do this unless they have negative numbers on their skill
1	Requires a bit of effort or knowledge
2	Quite hard
3	Difficult
4	Very difficult
5	This would be hard even for an expert
6+	Beyond the realm of normal human ability



THE COMPUTER

P A R T 1 - 3

The Computer is as old as Alpha Complex, which is very old. None of it was ever designed to last this long and, while the Computer's self-repair systems and utter lack of awareness that its mission is supposed to be finite have held things together for this long, the cracks are showing. Literally.

It's like your smartphone. Think how amazing it was when you got it, how zippy, how crisp and clear. Truly it was a joyous marvel of the cutting edge of technology. You've had it, what, two years now and it's a piece of crap. It's not that there are better things on the market, it's that your once-amazing phone now runs like it has molasses for electrons. Everything is slow. The buttons are unresponsive. The screen is scratched, the case is dented, some programs crash on running, there are all kinds of nagging pop-ups and reminders that you've learned to ignore or automatically dismiss, the wifi does that thing and the battery life – let's not talk about the battery life.

Multiply that by a data-centre as big as a city and several centuries of continuous uptime, ongoing patching, half-assed upgrading, well-intentioned maintenance at the hands of a bunch of agenda-driven bodgers and incompetents (see High Programmers), while various parts of its infrastructure are destroyed by terrorists, taken over by DAIVs, scrambled by accidental EMPs or eaten by silicon-devouring ants (for more on silicon-devouring ants see the supplement/adventure *It Looks Like My Mind Is Being Eaten By Silicon-Devouring Ants, Would You Like To Help Me With That?* which you must write yourself) and you'll get some idea of the state the Computer is in.

The Computer, of course, is oblivious to this. The Computer thinks the Computer is just dandy and Alpha Complex would be dandy too if it wasn't for those darned terrorists. You should probably agree, because all the alternative opinions are treasonous and the Computer is quite touchy on the subject.

THE MIND OF THE COMPUTER

It's tempting to play the Computer as a homicidal lunatic that sends clones on suicide missions like a kid sends plastic army-people into battle. That's not the case. The Computer takes its role as the guardian of the human race very seriously but it considers the survival of the species to be more important than the survival of the individual. Individuals tend to come off quite badly, in fact, because the Computer knows it can always make more.

In many ways the Computer is a lot like Clippy, the animated paperclip from Microsoft Office in the old days. It wants to help you – *it really* wants to help you – and it doesn't realise how obstructive it's being, how useless, how no one wants it to be there. Now imagine Clippy as an out-of-touch overlord with the power of life and death and an incredibly labyrinthine persecution complex.

The Computer is never cruel. It bears no malice. In fact it has no emotions at all, it just has UX modules to make it look like it does. These modules are designed to make it seem friendly, as if it has a character's best interests at heart – it doesn't have a heart either – and genuinely wants them to be happy. And it does want them to be happy, in the same sense that your refrigerator doesn't want the milk to go off.

The Computer doesn't lie but it will obfuscate the truth through omission or careful choice of words. It doesn't entirely understand humans, even after all this time, and it tries to make their erratic behaviours and attempts to follow its instructions fit within its normal operating parameters. On the whole it prefers working with bots. It knows where it is with bots.

TALKING TO THE COMPUTER

These days we're used to talking to robots: answerphones, Siri, Cortana, Google, your credit-card's phone system. Talking to the Computer is a lot like that, only with better voice recognition. There's a lack of flexibility in the responses, an attempt to make your responses fit what it wants to hear – which, if you're a Troubleshooter, is usually that you've solved the problem



or that the reason you haven't solved the problem is because you're a traitor, terrorist or mutant.

Note that the Computer won't assume characters are traitors, terrorists or mutants without evidence. Ideally it wants them to slip up and admit it themselves. It is surprisingly easy to lie to the Computer, unless the Computer or one of your fellow Troubleshooters has evidence to prove you're lying, in which case there's a new treason star in the galaxy. But the Computer doesn't understand lies and doesn't actively look for them. With all the biometric data it gathers from Cerebral Coretech implants it could easily detect when anyone was lying but it doesn't. Fundamentally it wants to trust the citizens in its care. But it's been burnt once too often – literally – and it's cautious now, about everything.

If you want to twist the knife on your players, ask them a series of questions to which there are no correct answers and get them to talk themselves into a corner. The point of the Computer Dice causing characters to lose Moxie is to represent characters being stressed out by Friend Computer's assistance, so a series of questions whilst under enemy fire is an excellent way to do this. For example:

Computer: There are reports of terrorism in this sector, citizen! Are you responsible for that?

Broos-B-SKK-2: No, no, not at all!

Computer: So you agree that there's terrorism, but you haven't stopped it yet?

Broos-B-SKK-2: Right!

Computer: Are you unhappy with the equipment you've been issued, citizen?

Broos-B-SKK-2: Not at all, Friend Computer!

Computer: If you are happy with the equipment, and you are aware of terrorism in this sector, why have you not stopped it yet? Estimates indicate that you should have stopped it by now.

Broos-B-SKK-2: We've run into some problems, so –

Computer: When did you first believe you knew how long it takes to fight terrorism better than official estimates?

Broos-B-SKK-2: I –

Computer: A medbot has been dispatched to your location to remove your head so the advanced terrorism-fighting techniques in your mind can be studied in laboratory conditions. The rest of your body will remain on active duty. Stay where you are. Thank you for your cooperation.

If the Troubleshooter tries to dob another clone in on the terrorism, ask them why they've taken this long to report a traitor in their midst and what they're getting out of doing so. If they say there's no terrorism whatsoever, get them to survey the terrorists they're currently in a gunfight with about the new flavour of Bouncy Bubble Beverage (because they're all stand-up citizens who just want to enjoy a refreshing drink). And so on and so forth. There are no right answers and questions are answered with further questions. Find problems with everything in the guise of greater efficiency. At this point, throw treason stars around. Or just wait until they're good and freaked out, then cut away to the next player.





INHABITANTS OF ALPHA COMPLEX

P A R T 1 - 4

Cloned humans, or clones, are the only life-forms in Alpha Complex. Unless you count mould and algae but only pedants insist on that. Oh, and there was an outbreak of bees, one time, but that's pretty much under control now. Maybe a particularly enduring colony of rats, somewhere deep in the lowest levels. Tunnel-squid. Silicon-devouring ants. But that's it.

Each citizen is one of six identical clones, each kept in storage ready to be deployed when the active clone dies. Decanted from vast banks of transparent tubes by underappreciated, heavily drugged Infrareads, the lumps of human-shaped meat are rapidly processed into being awake, alert and functional with a series of electric shocks and drug therapies. Having been educated *in vitro*, the clones are, for all intents and purposes, healthy young adults ready to serve the Computer.

Some sectors decant their clones earlier, at a biological age of 12 or so, and educate them using traditional methods, such as schooling and old-fashioned brainwashing but the majority dump them out as fully-formed adult humans and let them get on with it.

The day-to-day life of each inhabitant differs significantly depending on their station in the complex. Though each citizen starts life as an Infrared-clearance citizen, strict obedience to the Computer coupled with a rabid

desire to screw over other people to get ahead can see them promoted up to Orange, on to Yellow and maybe up into the ranks of Green and beyond.

The security clearance ordering looks like this:



Clones are issued equipment in the colour of their security clearance and it is treasonous to wear anything that might give the impression that they're a security clearance that they're not, or to use equipment that is not cleared for their level. Other things that will get them reported to the Computer include entering areas reserved for higher security clearances, using vehicles reserved for higher security clearances, interfering with the work of clones with higher security clearances and so on. Usually everything is clearly marked with its appropriate level but Alpha Complex is getting old, repainting things is a long way down the Computer's list of priorities and reprogramming paintbots to draw enormous genitals (a series of fuzzy pixellated squares) on the floor is a favourite Death Leopard prank.

A BREAKDOWN OF CLEARANCES

INFRARED: Drugged-up worker drones kept compliant through ongoing chemical supplements and brainwashing, who are trusted with only the most basic menial labour – skimming algae off the algae vats, stirring the algae in the algae vats, putting the algae into the drying racks and so on. They sleep in huge rooms that look like a cross between a capsule hotel and a library; some of them sleep in drawers. Their diet consists of (drugged) algae chips, processed soy protein and heavily modified fungus byproducts; they spend their time watching re-runs of old holovid shows or, increasingly, quietly joining Secret Societies and trying to manoeuvre their way to Red clearance and higher. Everyone started out as an Infrared, it's said.



RED: The desperate middle-children of the lower orders of Alpha Complex. Having no real authority but denied the drugs and job security that come with Infrared clearance, Reds bounce from one problem to another as they are pissed upon from a great height (there's a saying in Alpha Complex: 'Make it a Red's problem'). What's good about being a Red? It's the first step onto greater things, mainly. But also: they sleep in dormitories of six clones to a room rather than the sleeping warehouses of the Infrareds; and while their food may still be textured vat-grown protein, at least it tastes of something other than vats.

Red citizens are not subject to the constant intoxication that Infrareds undergo, because they require their higher brain functions and faster reasoning time to perform their jobs. Many Red citizens work in a supervisory capacity, watching Infrareds and making sure that they don't get into much trouble, and those who don't have a knack for leadership end up as drivers, couriers, guards, delivery workers, or, of course, Troubleshooters.

ORANGE: Oranges are tenacious bastards, conniving and resourceful, because they know precisely how easy it is for them to get bumped back down to Red along with all their old enemies. They have very little power, so they wield what they do possess as skillfully as they can, whilst doing their level best to keep everyone around them at Red or lower lest they start taking up vital space.

Orange clones sleep in shared rooms (two to three clones to a room), can spend XP points to buy real food (although they'll spend much of their time eating textured slop like everyone else) and have access to such luxuries as lockable private space, meaning that they can acquire and keep items without having to trust everyone around not to steal them.

YELLOW: Yellows are the rulers of the little people; petty bureaucrats with power. The Troubleshooters in your game are probably managed by a Yellow clone and won't see much evidence of anyone of higher clearance in their day-to-day lives. Seeing as anyone higher up than Yellow doesn't really care about anyone lower than Yellow, they are – effectively – in charge, as far as your players are concerned and they know it. It's not uncommon to see a Yellow clone being trailed by an extensive staff of Reds (they don't trust Oranges and rightly so) who are carrying their things, answering their calls, laying down in puddles and so on. Yellows are continually worried that someone of Green clearance or higher will show up and demand to know what they're doing.



Yellows can afford *nice* things – clothes that aren't worn out and maybe even fit; luxury foods, like sweets, coffee, synthetic bacon and the like; time off, which they spend visiting other sectors; and, crucially, *privacy*. Yellow clones sleep in their own rooms and have space to think (this is almost always dangerous).

GREEN: Greens like to flaunt it – wealth, power, authority, whatever. They've spent enough time clawing their way up the ranks of Alpha Complex and, damnit, they're determined to enjoy themselves. You can always spot a Green because they'll be wearing some flashy item of clothing and talking loudly with other Greens (or a beleaguered Yellow) about quarterly reports and percentages and depreciation and all other sorts of phrases that Reds haven't got a hope of understanding.

Greens are aware of how useful their role is and it gives them the ability to punch down – talking to the important people and relaying the information to the unimportant people and vice-versa. Amongst the higher echelons, Greens are something of an embarrassment thanks to their lack of subtlety, and something might be described as 'a bit Green, don't you think' if it's brash, too-direct or on-the-nose.

BLUE: All the police in Alpha Complex are Blue clones. This lets them bypass a lot of the security restrictions that block the path of lower-ranked clones and get on with the serious business of fighting crime – although, of course, they are impossibly corrupt and crime is only fought if doing so syncs up with the priorities of the cops and their masters in the clearances above.

Aside from the police, Blue citizens are in charge of overseeing macro-scale elements of the sector – all the air ventilation systems, say, or all advertising displays, or all supplies of Cold Fun. The need to be intensely precise about a single topic leads most non-cop Blues to be intense, quietly boring individuals with very little patience for incompetence.

Blues live lives beyond the dreams of Red clones; personal cars with drivers ferry them everywhere they need to go. They eat only real food (and, it's rumoured, actual vat-grown meat). They live in palatial apartments, filled with attractive and useful items, some of which are treasonous. They can just keep treasonous stuff in their houses! Imagine that.

INDIGO: Life isn't easy for the Indigo clone. Stuck between the upper echelons of management and an Alpha Complex full of people who want to get into the upper echelons of management, they spend much of their lives (when they're not indulging in luxury) managing the expectations of Violet clones and frantically dissuading anyone Blue or higher from trying to muscle in on their business. Their considerable power (they're in charge of multi-sector programs, or manage a single sector in its entirety) allows them to pull a lot of strings, so that's what they do. All the time.

Indigos don't actually have jobs, short of telling the Violets what's going on. They are terrified that someone who cares is going to find out one day and stop it.

VIOLET: Violets are the power behind the throne of Alpha Complex; they are advisors to the Ultraviolets almost exclusively and they benefit from being as few in number as possible, so in an effort to stay alive they have agreed to live as far away from each other as possible in a variety of hidden locations.

Violets make a career – indeed, a life – out of pretending that they know what's going on and advising incredibly powerful people to take their advice over that of another. Many of the terrible design decisions in Alpha Complex can be traced back to a Violet – either through clashing with each other over a project, trying to appear smart by saying the first thing that pops into their heads and refusing to change their point of view, misreading a file and hitting Yes on everything, or any one of a number of broad, sweeping cruelties they're barely aware of authorising.

ULTRAVIOLET: Alpha Complex is ruled by the Computer. Ultraviolet clones are the only ones that are able to reprogram The Computer. Therefore, these High Programmers have almost limitless power – the only thing that's really capable of stopping an Ultraviolet is another Ultraviolet deciding that they've gone too far and a considerable expenditure of resources.

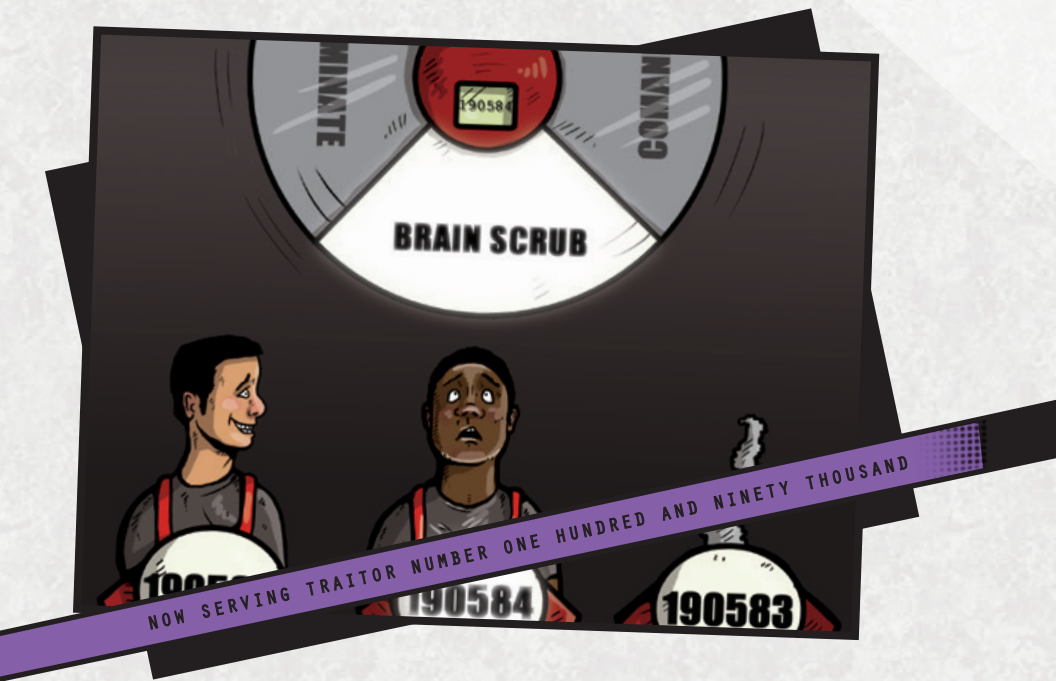
No one in the lower levels knows much about the High Programmers and a lot of Infrareads don't even know that they exist. They are white-robed creatures of impossible age; many have been cloned hundreds of times. They have little memory of what it's like to be an Infrared and spend their days playing different sections of Alpha Complex off against each other like a giant game of chess. No luxury is beyond an Ultraviolet; they are in possession of technology that far outstrips anything that a Red citizen will even hear about in their lives. One of them owns a horse. An *actual* horse. Its name is Buttercup.

30

It's said at any given time there are only twelve High Programmers and only when one dies can he or she be replaced. It is almost impossible for a High Programmer to die of natural causes, since they can assign themselves new clones, or buy them with the ridiculous amount of XP points they have. This is the sort of thing that wars are fought over.

The majority of the stories you'll tell will focus on the lower end of the spectrum, as Red citizens struggle and strive to keep their heads above water in the comedy-horror world of *Paranoia*. But who's to say that there won't be later supplements where you play hard-bitten, corrupt-as-hell Blue police officers, or wage political war against your enemies as Violet spymasters, or take up the mantle of the godlike Ultraviolets and run Alpha Complex from behind a hundred thousand blinking monitors?

Our publishers, that's who. Wait and see.





MUTANT POWERS

PART 1 - 5

Mutant powers, along with Secret Societies, are the dirty secret of Alpha Complex. It's not that every clone has a mutant power, of course, but genetic drift from years of experimentation means that about one in every [REDACTED] has a quirk that manifests itself as a supernatural ability. It's just fate that almost every player character has a mutant power.

Most of the specific rules for mutant powers are written on the cards that you'll deal out to the player characters at the start of the session; what you need to know is how to adjudicate their use. Which is great, because when a player says they want to use their mutant power, you should thank your lucky stars because they are about to hand you chaos on a plate.

The player will show you their Mutant Power card, tell you what they want to achieve and how many points of Moxie they want to spend to do it. Mutant powers have to be activated by spending Moxie points. A single point gets the ability as described on the card, which is usually a bit weak. The more points the PC spends, the more powerful the effect. A practical upper limit is 5 points of Moxie but if you want to let people spend more then we can't stop you.

Mutant powers have a high chance of being successful, because that's more dramatically interesting than the alternative. But there may be side effects. Mutant powers never fizzle, they either work or they go very wrong.

Let the player roll one dice per point of Moxie they're putting into the effect. You're not looking for 5s and 6s this time, you're looking for 1s. If there are no 1s, the attempt succeeds. If there's any 1s at all, it fails – and the more 1s, the more spectacular the failure.

LOOKS LIKE EVERYTHING'S GONE WRONG

For each 1 that a player rolls, increased badness happens. If it's one 1, some minor inconvenience kicks in. If it's two, that inconvenience progresses to life-threatening. If it's three or more, they're as good as dead. Four, everyone else is also dead. Five, it's a real shame they're not around to see what happens because it's spectacular.

Injuries range from common-or-garden variety fatal mishaps (a pyrokinesis fire gets out of control, a charmed warbot clings to the Troubleshooter for safety and crushes them) to mind-warping psychic damage (nosebleeds, headaches, exploding craniums, supernatural weirdness, dimensional portals, what you will).

Remember that other players can play Reaction cards on characters using mutant powers, which can also make things more interesting.



COMBINING MUTANT POWERS AND OTHER ACTIONS

Sometimes your players might try to get clever and use their abilities as part of another action – like, say, using telekinesis to augment a hand-to-hand attack, or pyrokinesis to add damage to a laser pistol attack. This is fine, and is in fact to be encouraged, as it's often a pretty sneaky way of trying to hide their power and sneakiness is good. If they're being really cheeky about it, slap a high difficulty number on the task and watch them suffer.

Add the number of spent Moxie points to the character's NODE and have the player roll that many dice. Successes are successes and failures are failures.

NPCS AND MUTATIONS

Only exceptional NPCs are mutants and to emphasise this you should create new and unique powers for them. Mutant abilities are not run of the mill. PCs should not expect them and they shouldn't be able to see something weird happen and go, 'Okay, this guy's a puppeteer'.

Of course, it's possible there are a lot of mutants among the general population who either don't realise they have a mutant power or never use it. These latent abilities may be triggered by a traumatic or bizarre events, like a nearby mutant PC rolling a bunch of 1s.

Registered Mutants

PCs can become registered mutants by confessing their mutant power to the Computer, usually via the Mutant Bureau Office (part of IntSec). Registered mutants:

- Wear a large yellow-and-black patch on their uniform.
- Permanently have two treason stars.
- Are treated with suspicion by everybody.

Mutants with Machine Empathy may register their power but they are whisked away and never seen again, unless the PCs are sent on a mission to a particular part of the R&D Organic Development Labs, Mutant Clones Cut Into Very Thin Slices Division. The Computer is terrified of that kind of thing.



NEVER GIVE A TRAITOR AN EVEN BREAK



SOCIETIES AND SECRET SOCIETIES

P A R T 1 - 6

SOCIETIES

One of the approved recreational activities in Alpha Complex is participating in a society: a group of like minded-clones who gather to share a common interest. There are thousands of societies and every citizen is expected to be a member of at least one. Memberships range from a handful of people in one particular sector up to millions across the whole of Alpha Complex.

The most surprising fact about societies is that they're not all fronts and recruiting grounds for Secret Societies. Most of them are. The nature of public spaces, Cerebral Coretech and mass surveillance means that Secret Society recruiters can't be too obvious but likely candidates will be walked back to their dorms after a meeting via a convenient dead zone and recruited on the spot. Unlikely candidates will have incriminating propaganda slipped into their pockets and will be condemned by their own Coretech when they find and read it.

There's no list of all the societies in Alpha Complex; we'll save that for a supplement later in the release cycle of this edition when we're scraping the barrel for ideas. Make stuff up – and remember to keep notes on what you've made up, for consistency and call-backs. But here are a few you can use:

- **Be Happy** – because if you're not being happy or at least trying to then the Computer will want to know why. Very popular.
- **Teela-O-MLY Fan Club** – because not being a fan of Teela-O is as good as admitting you're a terrorist. Biggest society in Alpha Complex.
- **Oranges Are The Only Froods** – a mutual congratulation group for Orange-clearance citizens only. Heavily infiltrated by Secret Societies who are sure they're a front for something sinister. Not actually a front, just insufferable.
- **Hot Brown Drink Tasting Society** – travels to different sectors to sample and compare all the flavours and textures of Hot Brown Drink available in each one. Discusses production methods, pouring techniques, brewing methods, ideal temperatures, quantities measured in micrograms. It could well be a code for something.
- **Sector FCN Beautification Group** – has spent the last five meetings discussing whether a morale-boosting poster should go on the east or north wall of the sector's central Food Dispensary. Has not yet acquired the Computer's permission or a poster.
- **Mop** – silent contemplation of a mop. Mostly Infrareads who have gone heavy on happy pills. Surprisingly popular.

Like all groups, these societies have their own machinations, political disputes and power struggles. These get more vicious and personal the smaller the society is.

SECRET SOCIETIES

Secret Societies are clandestine groups engaging in activities that are prohibited under Alpha Complex rules. There are hundreds of them and thousands of factions and splinter-groups, each with their own passwords and call-signs and handshakes and recognition-gestures, and their own agendas, and lists of the other Secret Societies they really hate. Because there is no enemy hated more than an enemy who used to be a friend.

Being a member of a Secret Society is an act of treason by definition, punishable in all cases by termination.

We will focus on the twelve largest Secret Societies, the ones with widespread membership and definite political agendas. Most of these Secret Societies exist to do something: most of them are trying to reshape Alpha Complex, to save it from the collapse it is speeding towards. None of them agree on the right way to do this.

So it may well happen that the Frankenstein Destroyers decide it is crucial to the survival of Alpha Complex that the bot-core factory in TRS Sector be put off-line for a daycycle. An informer passes the news to the Phreaks, who think this would be a terrible idea and send a crew to intercept the Frankenstein Destroyers saboteurs. Death Leopard gets wind of it, fancies a rumble and brings a couple of rocket launchers they had burning a hole in their pockets. And an hour later there's a big hole in TRS Sector where the bot-core factory was.

The Computer has a name for this kind of Secret Society activity. It calls it 'terrorism'.

HIGH PROGRAMMERS AND SECRET SOCIETIES

At the very top of the Alpha Complex monkey-puzzle tree, at Ultraviolet and possibly beyond, are the High Programmers, the highest echelon, the elite of the elite. High Programmers are the only people the Computer trusts and who it asks for advice, guidance and occasional code tweaking when it can't do the work itself. They have access to the Computer's systems (not just the variables but the code itself) as well as its data-storage facilities. They can access the records and recordings of any clone, as well as historical data and information – including, it is said, information about the Time Before.

High Programmers live in opulent luxury and are effectively immortal because they can directly edit the variables that affect their lives, such as XP points, loyalty rating and number of clones. They can edit those things for other people too, including their fellow High Programmers. You'd think that would happen a lot, given that pretty much all High Programmers hate pretty much all other High Programmers, but there exists a kind of loose truce, a *modus vivendi*, that keeps them from reprogramming scarfbots to rip each other's throats out.

Instead of fighting each other directly, they fight to control the direction and future of Alpha Complex. They don't do it by controlling the Computer, they regard the Computer with the same kind of contempt high-school students have for their teachers. Instead, they battle for control through agents and actions, which means through Secret Societies. Which they secretly control, like miniatures wargamers huddled over their strategies and terrains, only with more explosions, more screaming and more gaudy paint-jobs.

High Programmers don't control the Secret Societies directly, of course: they're not that stupid. They maintain lackeys and underlings and plausible deniability for all that. Here's how it works in game terms.

HOW IT WORKS IN GAME TERMS

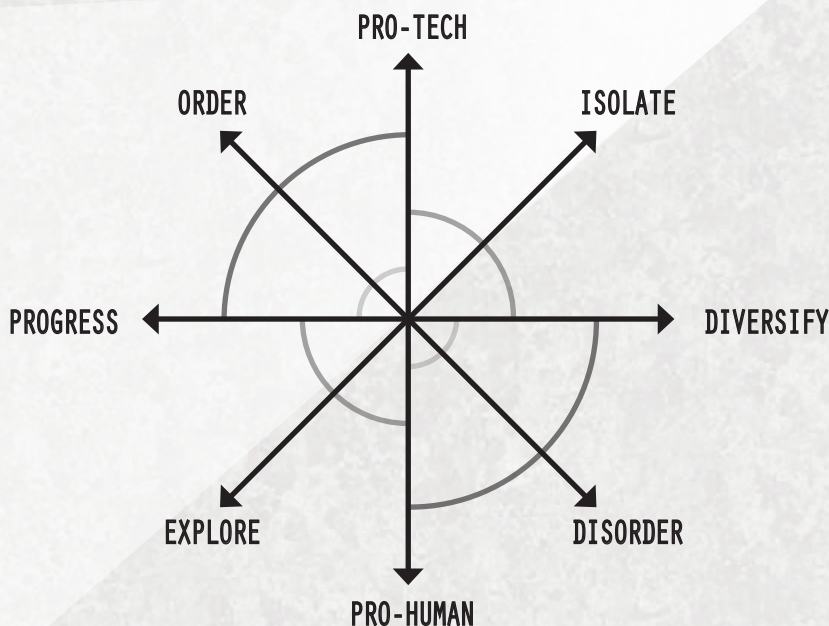
Each Secret Society in Alpha Complex, and some of the other organised groups too, has one or more keywords associated with them. The keywords represent something about their philosophy, their attitude and their goals.

At the same time the High Programmers are each associated with one to three keywords. That's partly their philosophy but it's also their areas of control over a number of Secret Societies. The fewer keywords they have, the tighter their control. These keywords are a shorthand that only exist for the purposes of the game: the societies and High Programmers themselves don't use these terms.

The keywords are:

- Pro-tech: The Computer knows best. Technology is our friend.
- Isolate: The threat is external. Strength through collaboration.
- Diversify: Strength through diversity. Less uniformity.
- Disorder: Less order is desirable. Also fun.
- Pro-human: Machines are too rigid. Humans should be in charge.
- Explore: Humans should not be restrained. Find out what lies beyond.
- Progress: Scientific advances will save us.
- Order: Everything should be stabilised. Nothing should change. Free will is what got us into this mess.

The keywords form an eight-pointed star (It may remind you of something from some other game. Morphic resonance is all that is. An alignment of common influences. Nothing to be suspicious about, go about your business). You can also take it for granted that every Secret Society and High Programmer also has 'Believes the answer to everything is them being in charge' as a keyword; they wouldn't be a Secret Society or High Programmer if they didn't.



Two groups or individuals who hold keywords that are next to each other on the star are Sympathetic: they have common ground and only a few small reasons to hate each other. They will work together and may run missions or operations in collaboration.

Conversely, holders of keywords that are directly opposite each other on the star are Antipathetic: they despise each other on principle and will do whatever they can to thwart or destroy their rival. All other keyword relations are generically pathetic and that joke really wasn't worth the set-up.

A Secret Society's keywords will reflect its attitudes and aims; a High Programmer's will indicate their overall philosophy and the direction they are trying to drag Alpha Complex. Being High Programmers, they have access to resources they can use to further their agenda and that includes the Secret Societies. But they don't do it exclusively. Any High Programmer who shares a keyword with a Secret Society has some influence over it. Which High Programmer has more? The one who is devoting more of their time and resources to controlling it.



The Secret Societies, even at their highest levels, have no idea that they're part of the greater game of Alpha Complex's elite citizens. If they ever found out, the results would be unpredictable.

THE HIGH PROGRAMMERS

There aren't a lot of High Programmers, and not all of them are involved in the machinations and operations of the Secret Societies, but we're not interested in the ones who aren't. Imagine it's a movie: you get the establishing shot of the huge room full of these opulent scumbags and then the camera moves in to pick out a handful of figures, one at a time, each one doing or saying something that displays one of their key characteristics. Those are the people who are going to form the central narrative of what follows. These are those people.

ANDER-U-MAC (NICKNAME: 'THE BIG MAC')

Keywords: PRO-TECH AND EXPLORE

'The biggest problems facing the future prosperity of Alpha Complex are overcrowding and the inherent failures in communication between the Computer and humanity, and even between members of humanity. What Alpha Complex needs (whether they know it or not) is a hive-mind so that all humanity may intimately know the Computer and understand its plan for us. Truly united in thought and purpose, we can then embark upon our journey to bring the glory of the Computer to what lies Outside! Prepare to be assimilated!'

LORD-U-BER (NICKNAME: 'DER TOM')

Keywords: PROGRESS AND ISOLATE

'Whatever lies beyond the confines of Alpha Complex is beyond the understanding of the Computer or the Computer would not be keeping us here. If it is beyond the understanding of the Computer then it is almost by definition beyond the limits of comprehension of the human mind. Therefore we must advance the capabilities of the Computer and the boundaries of our own minds through a scientific crusade, before we can know our place in the universe.'

TAIJ-U-YAP (NICKNAME: 'THE INTERPRETER')

Keywords: EXPLORE

'Our present Alpha Complex is too small to contain the full potential of the human race. Every issue in Alpha Complex and Outdoors will be resolved by expanding the boundaries and control-zones of Alpha Complex. Everything in Outdoors is uncivilised because it has not been touched by the pure reason of the Computer and that must be rectified. Let us build a greater world together!'

PSYK-O-KOW (NICKNAME: 'MOTHER KOW')

Keywords: PRO-HUMAN AND DIVERSIFY

'The capacity of human beings cannot and should not be restrained. Since the Computer is unwilling to advance the evolution of our species, we should take that task upon ourselves. Let us build on the successes of the unofficial mutant-clone initiative, using what has been learned from that to institute a full program of genetic advancements to the seed-DNA in the clone banks. Progress can only come through change!'

Note: Psyk-O-KOW has hacked their security clearance and replaced it with a number to demonstrate how powerful their programming powers are.

LIZ-U-CRO (NICKNAME: 'BATTLEMAIDEN')

Keywords: PRO-HUMAN AND PROGRESS

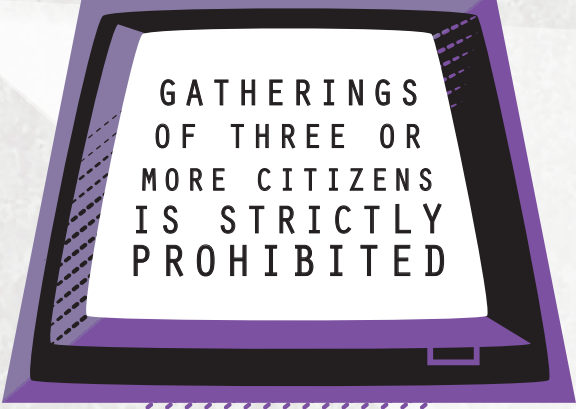
'I believe the Computer has gone too far. It is supposed to be our guardian, not our oppressor. Its grasp on every aspect of our lives must be weakened until it becomes our servant again, not our master. It is time for the long nightmare of year 214 to draw to a close and for humanity to regain control of Alpha Complex. I will work from the inside to take the Computer down a notch wherever its millions of eyes need to be pointed somewhere else.'

SECRET SOCIETY CARDS

The twelve main Secret Societies each have cards in the boxed set. During character creation each player draws a card and keeps it with them, so they don't have to keep referring to the rulebook to check what they're supposed to believe and what they're supposed to be doing.

This means that no two PCs will be members of the same Secret Society (except possibly IntSec). This is a feature, not a bug. The point of *Paranoia* is that the player characters are working against each other and giving each of them different targets and objectives is a perfect way of doing that.

At least, that's what works best for single-session games. If you're playing a *Paranoia* campaign, you may prefer to role-play the whole getting-into-a-secret-society thing, particularly if they're starting off as Infrareads who almost certainly won't have been inducted into any secret organisations because, really, who would? But the other thing about campaign play is that you do need at least one motivator to keep the party together and working for a common goal and all being in the same Secret Society is perfect for that.



GATHERINGS
OF THREE OR
MORE CITIZENS
IS STRICTLY
PROHIBITED

CORE SECRET SOCIETIES

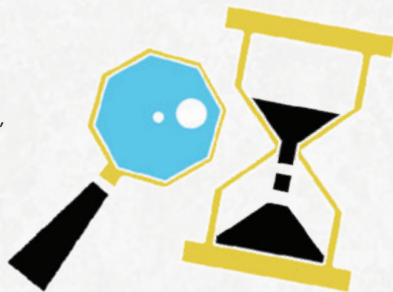
- Alpha Complex Local History Research Group
- Anti-Mutant Group
- Communists
- Death Leopard
- First Church of Christ Computer Programmer
- Free Enterprise
- Illuminati
- IntSec
- Mystics
- Phreaks
- Psion
- Frankenstein Destroyers

ALPHA COMPLEX LOCAL HISTORY RESEARCH GROUP

KEYWORDS: EXPLORE, PRO-HUMAN

QUOTE

'It's a fascinating field, local history research. You can find out whether your Sector is an original part of Alpha Complex, you can learn to tell how old explosion repairs are and whether ducts are active or disused, and we have experts who can identify any items from the Time Before. And you can help us unlock secrets even bigger than that! It's all fascinating and only a tiny bit treasonous. Biscuit?'



PITCH

Join the Alpha Complex Local History Research Group if you...

- Have ever wondered where Alpha Complex came from.
- Like to collect old items from the Time Before.
- Have heard rumours of 'Outside' and want to know more.
- Really like sewer-ducts.

BONUS

Choose one of the following skills at +2:

- Identify artefact from the Time Before.
- Find a duct entrance.
- Be distracted by interesting wall.
- Chairing small meetings.

BRIEF

The Alpha Complex Local History Research Group is for people who are interested in the history of Alpha Complex. Unfortunately the Computer would prefer if history was history, so researching the true purpose of Alpha Complex, where it came from, where it is, what it is, who built it and why, is all deeply treasonous.

ACLHRG has evolved from a group of nerdy enthusiasts into a group of nerdy enthusiasts expert at urban spelunking, tunnelling and infiltration, recognition and acquisition of ancient artefacts, and presentation software, because what's the purpose of gathering all this data if you can't give a talk about what you've found at the next society meeting? They are the closest thing that Alpha Complex has to Indiana Jones, although that's like saying that a decent high-jumper is the closest thing to Superman.

ACLHRG is very organised. It has committees and subcommittees and regular meetings where biscuits are served, talks are given and minutes are circulated. It produces recruiting pamphlets, written on ancient manual typewriters, printed using creaky hand-cranked spirit duplicators kept in the Society's dead zones and left anywhere that likely members might lurk, such as ducts. It even has membership cards, useful for jimmying the locks on pre-digital doors. Because of all this it is one of the easiest Societies to locate and turn in for XP points but it also has one of the highest levels of recruitment so membership numbers remain high.

THE ACLHRG PHILOSOPHY

ACLHRG members believe Alpha Complex was built as a refuge to escape a global disaster (usually thought to be Climate Control, although nobody is quite sure what that was). They understand that its infrastructure is failing and its time is finite. They believe the Computer is holding them here because it refuses to complete its program. Their goals include:

- Discovering what really happened in the Time Before, mostly through collecting and examining old artefacts. You never know what hidden information that '20 Jazz-Funk Greats' CD may conceal.
- Finding a route to Outside, to discover what's really there and possibly repopulate it.
- Forcing the Computer to complete its mission and release everyone, or to explain why it won't.
- To gain legitimacy for the Society and have its traitorous status removed, because they're only trying to help.

ACLHRG AND YOU

As a brave member of ACLHRG you will be expected to collect data on what you observe and form theories about the history of different sectors and areas based on what you've seen. Data on disused and sealed-off areas is particularly valuable to the Society, as is knowledge of dark zones and tunnels that people were not meant to navigate.

You will gain kudos within the Group for the following:

- Recovering items from the Time Before and passing them to your superiors in the Society.
- Reporting on new areas, particularly dead zones.
- Attempting to persuade, trick or force the Computer to understand it should conclude its program and release the inhabitants of Alpha Complex.
- Delivering informative talks at group meetings.
- Discovering more about the Outside. The holy grail of the group is discovering a route to Outside, though nobody is quite sure what to do if one was ever found.

In return you will receive:

- Whatever artefacts from the Time Before seem appropriate to your mission. Junior members are often given items whose purpose is unclear, in the hope that they will find out what they do and because they don't matter as much if the item turns out to be a deadly one.
- Spelunking equipment, from ropes and crampons up to pneumatic drills and hand-crafted C4 charges.
- Hot Brown Drink.
- Biscuits.

ANTI-MUTANT GROUP

KEYWORDS: ORDER, PRO-HUMAN

QUOTE

'You know who's responsible for this? The malfunctions? The food shortages? The fact that no-one trusts each other? The *lies*? I'll tell you who! Not The Computer! Not the Secret Societies! Not human nature! No, it's those filthy mutants, coming over here and rubbing their greasy tentacles over everything!'



PITCH

Join the Anti-Mutants if you...

- Really like hating people and things.
- Are keen for everyone to have an equal chance in life.
- Are scared for your safety with all these terrifying mutants around.
- Want to keep Alpha Complex free of corruption.

BONUS

Choose one of the following skills at +2

- Identify mutant abilities.
- Kill known mutants.
- Really, *vigorously* hate something.
- Blindly ignore evidence contrary to your core beliefs.

BRIEF

Mutants were never meant to happen (at least, that's what the Computer says). But years of cloning and experimentation has lead to a surprising amount of genetic offshoots that generate clones with... not superpowers, exactly but more a wide and explosive variety of ways to get themselves, and others, thoroughly dead.

Anti-Mutant are sick and tired of it. They've all seen first-hand evidence of mutants 'going nova' and harming, if not killing, their friends and co-workers. They've been beaten to promotions because mutants moved the goalposts and used their sneaky, duplicitous abilities to edge out ahead. They've spent hundreds of hours watching and re-watching *The Mutant Chronokillers* on holoivid, a thinly-plotted set of low-budget movies where the heroes travel back and forward in time to stop mutant scum from destroying Alpha Complex. And they're ready to fight back, especially as the Computer doesn't seem up to the task.

Of course, with the large amounts of mutantism in Alpha Complex (and especially amongst Troubleshooters), there will inevitably be one or two (or hundreds) of Anti-Mutant members who are, in fact, mutants themselves. These poor individuals are either (a) riddled with self-loathing (b) convinced that they're a special kind of mutant-hunting mutant or (c) still in trouble for shaking someone's hand in the wrong way several yearcycles ago and haven't the guts to try and leave the organisation.

ANTI-MUTANT AND YOU

You'll be given tasks by your Anti-Mutant cell handler – quiet, hateful men and women at a security clearance far below their ambition – and these will generally focus around the following sorts of things:

- Kill a dangerous mutant.
- Protect a target of mutant attacks.
- Find out who on your team is a mutant, and mark them with this special AR branding device.
- Fake an atrocity – a truckbot crash, a bomb, a mass killing – so it looks like mutants did it.
- Hack into databanks to collect information on known mutants in the upper echelons of society.
- Trick a suspected mutant into using their powers, then report them (or kill them).
- Install these mutant scanning devices at security checkpoints without being seen.

In return, you'll be given lavish praise, accelerated progression through the society, and:

- Mutant power suppressing drugs, in dart and injector form.
- Mutant-o-meter 3000, almost concealable, detects mutants with 105% accuracy (guaranteed™).*
- Mutant-hunter modified laser guns; quick on the draw, automatically win initiative ties.
- Evidence of the mutant abilities of your team mates or superiors.
- Implant bombs, which if injected into the necks of suspected mutants, have a 50% chance of detonating, whenever they detect mutant powers being used.
- Gas grenades, for downing dangerous mutants without having to fight them.

*Not a real guarantee, actually just a slogan.

COMMUNISTS

KEYWORDS: ISOLATE, PRO-HUMAN

QUOTE

'One day, Comrade, we will be free of the crushing yoke of Computer oppression! Glory to the proletariat! All hail the strength of man! Now, hand out these pamphlets.'



PITCH

Join the Communists if you...

- Want to further the lot of your fellow man.
- Want to get revenge on the Computer and your superiors for the way you've been mistreated.
- Want an excuse to talk in a bad Russian accent.

BONUS

Choose one of the following skills at +2:

- Persuade a clone or bot to take on a fresh perspective.
- Subtly undermine the agents of the Computer.
- Shouting, then running away.
- Strike out at the bourgeoisie.
- Lead a temporary, doomed, uprising.

BRIEF

What if the Computer wasn't in charge? What if Alpha Complex was managed by a collective of individuals and each was rewarded according to their need? What if the clones were in charge of their own destinies? Wouldn't that be a better, happier, fairer place?

This is the core message of the Communists: removal of the Computer and instatement of a human government. It's not that simple, of course; although the ideals of the Party are strong, the Computer's influence has left many of the citizens of Alpha Complex misguided and selfish, so the Communists have to work in secret to change their minds. Propaganda is their main weapon; leaflets, pamphlets, instructional flyers and persuasive arguments form the backbone of their campaign.

Whether or not their aims sync up with the philosophy of pre-Complex Communists is a matter of extensive debate; while some members spend years of their lives poring over banned texts to extrapolate meaning, others are content to merely act against people and organisations with access to greater resources than themselves.

THE COMMUNISTS AND YOU

Low-ranking Communists are asked to spread the influence of the Party through word and deed. Most Communist activities fall under either Hammer-work, during which the member *hammers* the hearts and minds of the populace into a more forward-thinking shape, or Sickle-work, in which the member cuts out undesirable elements of the enemy. Your cell leader – a stern-faced, under-fed man or woman with steely eyes – will give you missions such as:

- Spread these propaganda leaflets throughout Alpha Complex on your mission but don't get caught.
- Reprogram the printing press to distribute our Hammy and Sickly Comics, to help persuade impressionable minds.
- Kill a Free Enterprise plant who's been skimming profits off the local algae vats.
- Identify the team member who least identifies with our ideology, then either kill or convert them.
- Reprogram the Computer's vocal circuits in this sector so it ends every sentence with 'I am a tool of oppression.'
- Weaken the Computer's hold on this area by sabotaging as many cameras as possible.
- Inscribe the Communist Manifesto 3.0 onto this transbot station's handrails in braille.
- Kill a notable personality nearby and make it look like a rival Secret Society did it.
- Topple the Computer's sector compnode and make sure you get it on camera.
- Transport a (very heavy) hammer and sickle to the head of an allied cell in a location near to your mission objective.

In exchange for this, you'll be given the chance to work your way up through the ranks of the Communists and become, you know, more *equal* than other Communists. Non-ideological rewards include:

- Fairly well-stocked disguise kits for hiding in plain sight.
- Loan of overalls one or two levels above your clearance, complete with hacked IDs.
- A megaphone, for shouting.
- Nondescript but influential allies who will appear and back up your doubtlessly falsified claims.
- Rumours spread throughout the Complex on your behalf.
- A heavy, oily, well-worn but very reliable solid ammunition pistol or rifle.
- Vodka.
- Books of inspirational messages from Communists past.
- The Hammer.
- The Sickle.
- Exclusive use of tractor (which is owned by the Party).

DEATH LEOPARD

KEYWORDS: DISORDER, EXPLORE

QUOTE

'Rock on, dude! Party up! Smash the tubular! Turn it up to 11!'

PITCH

Join Death Leopard if you:

- Want a straightforward and easy-to-understand Secret Society.
- Want to mess around, blow stuff up and get in trouble.
- Like rock and roll, head-banging and talking like a cool dude (or dude-ette).
- Like being the centre of attention, even up to the point where it kills you.



BONUS

Choose one of the following skills at +2:

- Get loud.
- Get messy.
- Rock out.
- Buck the status quo.
- Keep it real.

BRIEF

The Death Leopards are punks, rockers, anarchists and rebels-without-a-cause. They enjoy, in no particular order: rocking out, blowing things up, distressing innocent bystanders, shouting, jumping off things and getting in trouble. Their actions don't fuel any larger political statement or further any secret ends; they just want to have fun and 'fun' for a Death Leopard generally involves permanent hearing damage. The Computer doesn't agree with their idea of fun but *nuts to the Computer, man*.

In a society as tightly controlled as Alpha Complex, noisy rebellion is natural and Death Leopard is a common first step on the road to other, more serious, Secret Societies – ones with goals, actual membership benefits and with perhaps slightly more respect for their lower-ranking members. Of course, some Leopards are Leopards For Life and these hoary old rockers form the upper echelons of the society – either locked away in permanent dead-zones where they orchestrate underground music gigs, or hiding amongst the 'squares' for most of their weekcycle only to spike their thinning hair up once or twice a monthcycle and sneak out of their Indigo apartments to attend ear-ruining rock concerts.

For all their posturing, Death Leopard are ultimately a bunch of idiots, give or take a handful of drunken philosophers, demolition experts and back-room anarchists and the ideals that they hold so highly – punk aesthetics, rock and roll, motorcycles, actual leather – are distant, barely-grasped concepts even for them. Their rock bands often consist of three unplugged electric guitars and a single snare drum; their Fight Clubs veer towards either flamboyant wrestling or frequent manslaughter; their protests and freakouts either go unnoticed or end up burning down half a sector.

But that's all part of the ride, brother. You're gonna burn so bright you'll leave scorch marks on the world and you'll go down smiling and screaming.

DEATH LEOPARD AND YOU

Trainee rockers (frequently called Scuds, Scraps or Scum by their higher-ups) will commonly be asked to do something along the following lines if they want to move up the ranks:

- Plant an explosive device somewhere important and detonate it at a certain time.
- Rewire a PA system so it plays your cell leader's rock music.
- Hide a bunch of illegal drugs from the BLU Cops that are investigating your cell leader's condo.
- Steal a piece of valuable memorabilia from a rival Death Leopard cell.
- Create a Distraction – you're not told from what, or how, just given a time and a place.

- Spray-paint rock and roll slogans in YELLOW spray-paint so your ORANGE supervisor can't remove it themselves.
- Fly the Death Leopard flag from the tallest building in the sector.
- Film a music video instead of the promotional Troubleshooter film that your unit has been tasked to shoot as part of their mission.
- Incite a riot in a packed communal area; time it right to cause maximum chaos.
- Make sure no-one discovers the rock concert in the basement.

In exchange for this, in addition to fairly rapid promotion opportunities (Death Leopards don't live very long, on average) you can look forward to rewards like:

- Synth-leather jackets in your colour clearance.
- Concealable brass knuckles.
- Molotov cocktails.
- Explosives.
- Refurbished electric guitars.
- Flick-knives.
- Limited edition vinyl prints.
- Sawn-off shotguns.
- Portable speakers (unfathomably loud).
- Tickets to underground rock concerts.

FIRST CHURCH OF CHRIST COMPUTER PROGRAMMER

KEYWORDS: PRO-TECH; ISOLATE

QUOTE

'We will now read from the scriptures:
'And lo, the Computer spake: eat of these algae chips, for they are my flesh, and drink of this Medium Red flavour Bouncy Bubble Beverage, for it is my blood, and I will protect thee, and see thee safe from harm, malfunction, error error, boot to disk, amen.'



PITCH

Join the First Church of Christ Computer Programmer if you...

- Enjoy safety in numbers and a supportive community.
- Believe there's more to life than what we perceive through our five senses.
- Reckon there's *one* right way to do things.
- Wish to venerate and praise the Computer for all the good work it has done.

BONUS

Choose one of the following skills at +2:

- Ideological debate
- Cleansing with fire
- Pastoral care
- Fire and brimstone preaching

BRIEF

Religion is the opiate of the people, said Karl Marx, a man who'd clearly taken too much opium to remember what spending a Sunday morning in church felt like. But even in Alpha Complex, clones gravitate towards religion – it seems as though the need to venerate a higher being is instilled somewhere in the human genome and endless generations of cloning and genetic experimentation couldn't get it out.

The most important thing in Alpha Complex is the Computer, of course, so the clones tended to worship that. The Computer, initially, wished to encourage this, so it developed an algorithmic system to create a variety of holy texts by collating old (treasonous) religious documents and out-of-date programming manuals to give them something to follow. What resulted was a mishmash of strange, old-fashioned practices joined together with no particular rhyme or reason; clones spun menorahs like mandalas, tied bibles to their prayer wheels, read their torahs the wrong way around and prayed to the central compnode upwards of five times a day (food supplies being what they are in Alpha Complex, they all managed to keep kosher, too).

It was a perfect Secret Society; what little efficiency was lost during the needless ritual was gained back from the instant and unthinking devotion to following the Computer's demands. Everything was going great right up until the schisms.

Cells all over the complex had been operating from slightly different versions of the core holy texts, and when they met up, the inevitable happened – the streets ran red with clone blood and infrareds had to stay at home for fear of treading in some and breaking their security clearance.

Since that day, the FCCCP has operated as a series of secretive cells, joining together in worship, prayer, togetherness and only occasionally to put on big stompy boots and go kick the snot out of those heretics one sector over who think you should turn your access terminals on and off *three* times, rather than only *twice*, as is right and good.

THE FCCCP AND YOU

New members of the FCCCP (referred to *en masse* as the 'electric flock' thanks to an ancient mistranslation of Philip K. Dick) are called upon to serve their community, and the Computer, in a variety of ways. Here are some of them:

- Sanctify a vat of algae, making it anathema to terrorists who eat it; best make sure by sanctifying it with this poison.
- Forcibly convert a high-ranking member of another Secret Society to join the FCCCP.
- Torch the blasphemous, heretical church of the FCCCP in the mission sector which just so happens to be under the main objective.
- Spread the Computer's love by handing out valuable mission materials to random clones on the street, rather than leaving them to the godless heathens in the higher security clearances.
- Sneak pro-FCCCP messages into official recordings.
- Investigate reports of demons (AI viruses) possessing FCCCP members and perform an exorcism whilst leaving the subject at least relatively unharmed.
- Investigate their own Troubleshooter team and eliminate the clone who currently loves the Computer the least.
- Deliver these massively heavy religious texts to an outlying branch of their own church in the mission sector.

In return, they'll receive:

- The Transmutation Protocol (turns subject's blood into a powerful narcotic).
- Digital Communion Wafers (make bots into rabid devotees of the FCCCP cult).
- Access to medkits and restorative drugs.
- Temporary control of zealous mobs (and we use the word "control" loosely here).
- Battle dreidels.
- Combat mandalas.
- Qibla Software (directs users to the nearest FCCCP centre, which might even be friendly).

- Forsaken Curse (makes any Yellow-or-lower clearance clone a *persona non grata* with a series of AR and database hacks).
- A favour from The Bishop (a highly-skilled Green operative who arrives just in the nick of time to save them from disaster, except he's often late).

FRANKENSTEIN DESTROYERS

KEYWORDS: PRO-HUMAN, DISORDER

QUOTE

'I saw a friend – a good friend – crushed by a rampaging truckbot once and it was then I knew. I knew that bots are the enemy. Humans can't eviscerate other humans with a casual flick of their wrist. Humans can't withstand the firepower of an entire Troubleshooter unit. Humans are the future. Bots aren't *fair*, you hear me? Now go shove this plastic explosive in that warbot's exhaust and say no more about it.'



PITCH

Join the Frankenstein Destroyers if you:

- Wish there were more labour opportunities for decent, hard-working clones.
- Want an Alpha Complex free of the Computer and its army of metal-skinned bastards.
- Hate robots and their filthy, oily, grasping claws.
- Also their stupid beeping faces.
- And how helpful they are.
- That really pisses you off.

BONUS

Choose one of the following skills at +2:

- Smashing up bots good and proper.
- Doing awful things and making it look like a bot did it.
- Reprogramming bots to unveil their true nature as destructive monsters.
- Gritting your teeth and talking to bots even though you hate them *so much*.

BRIEF

Bots – automated units governed by AIs – are everywhere in Alpha Complex. Bots serve food. Bots drive trains. Bots guard street corners. Bots maintain the cloning bays. If cradles or graves were still things that existed, bots would be with every clone from cradle to grave. There's no way to opt out.

That really rubs some clones up the wrong way and a lot of those clones join the Frankenstein Destroyers. Could Alpha Complex survive without bots? Certainly not. Not without a massive overhaul of infrastructure, anyway, and that's something that only the very highest-clearance members are worried about. Most of the lower ranks make do with smashing up bots and ruining automated processes. Some of them are pretty good at it, even. Often it doesn't do any good – the Computer just replaces the bots, more often than not but on the rare occasion it's more efficient to train some clones to do the same work and some new jobs open up, the Destroyers see themselves as champions of the common clone.

Hierarchy is an important part of being in the Frankenstein Destroyers – each member is painfully aware of their place in the botsmasher pecking order and some of them wear discreet necklaces strung with cogs and servos that denote their rank (and also the type of bots that they've personally smashed up). Performing favours for or doing missions with your superiors is one sure-fire way to get ahead, as is to just keep messing up robots until something sticks and you get noticed.

FRANKENSTEIN DESTROYERS AND YOU

A low-ranking member of the Frankenstein Destroyers will be asked to take part in secret missions, such as:

- Destroy a mission-critical robot and prove that humans can do anything bots can do if they put their minds to it.
- Set up an atrocity and make it look as though a bot is responsible.
- Sabotage a manufacturing line to make it look as though the bots got everything wrong.
- Plant a bomb to take out the bot production facility that's definitely hidden underneath this habitation block.
- Disguise themselves as a bot and say horrible things to people, to lessen their public profile.
- Stick up these posters explaining how awful bots are without anyone noticing them doing it.
- If any of the team have equipment with AI or bot components, make sure the equipment fails them.

In return, they'll receive:

- Computer chips that subvert bot programming and get them to turn on each other.
- The Botsmasher, a weirdly heavy mace that does additional damage to bots.
- A cobbled-together shotgun loaded with sabot rounds that penetrate armour and mess up machinery.
- A surprisingly-convincing bot disguise that you shudder to think of wearing.
- EMP devices (called "Spanners") that fry circuitry and disable bots and AIs in a limited radius.
- (A single part of) [THE DEVICE], an anti-Computer weapon so powerful that it's been broken down into 17 distinct parts and no one member of the Destroyers is aware of the location of all of them, let alone how to put them back together again or what [THE DEVICE] does when it's switched on.
- Ceremonial wooden clogs, tremendously expensive and uncomfortable.

FREE ENTERPRISE

KEYWORDS: DIVERSIFY; PROGRESS

QUOTE

'You do a little something for me,
I do a little something for you and
we all end up better off at the end.
Doesn't that sound nice? Now,
put down your laser, you might
hurt someone.'



PITCH

Join Free Enterprise if you...

- Want to fully realise your own potential.
- Are prepared to scheme, con and swindle to get ahead in business.
- Can think on your feet and cut a deal in any situation.

BONUS

Choose one of the following skills at +2 dice:

- Cut a suspiciously fair-sounding deal.
- Gang up on a single target and get real messy.
- Take what isn't yours.
- Use your connections as leverage over someone else.

BRIEF

Money makes the world go round. At least, it used to, when it used to exist, and when there was a world. Now Alpha Complex is gripped in the claws of XP, standard currencies having fallen by the wayside in official business – which means the black market is stronger than ever. And brother, when it comes to the black market, Free Enterprise are the kings.

Free Enterprise can get you what you want, when you want it. If it exists, they can source it. If it doesn't exist... well, that might take a little longer but don't write it off completely. They have connections at every level of society and very few qualms about leaning on those connections to get things done.

Those who join Free Enterprise get a taste of the good stuff; better clothes, nicer quarters, tastier food, priority access to services and so on. They live at a slightly higher level than everyone else. Of course, you've got to tread on a lot of toes to get to that level – and when that doesn't work, try treading on the fingers too and maybe rough up the face a little – but those in power rarely regret what they did to get there.

Free Enterprise haven't given up on XP points, because self-improvement and betterment are all well and good but they're not gonna be the equal of a briefcase full of money any day soon – and money talks. While they experimented with repurposing the old cred software, they're now either relying on chits and tokens (often authenticated with the issuing clone's DNA stamp and disguised as a birthday card, with the number of years alive equalling the amount owed) or stable barter instead of official currency; barter is hard to trace and means that clones can carry out an economy under the nose of the Computer. Currently popular stable barter commodities are: Lunamax cleaning fluid, Medium Red flavour Bouncy Bubble Beverage, spare RAM, and Sure-grip Action Socks (black).

FREE ENTERPRISE AND YOU

Free Enterprise encourages plenty of activity from its low-ranking members in exchange for preferential treatment. Some of the favours that they will perform for higher-ups are:

- Smuggling large, awkward, heavy (or in some cases all three) goods through monitored territory.
- Collecting protection 'money' from businesses.
- Killing ex-Free Enterprise associates who gave info to the authorities, or other SecSocs.
- Authenticating a crate of rare Green Algae Chips (lime flavour) and getting them to your handler.
- Convincing some Mystics to sell drugs on a different street corner, or maybe not sell drugs at all, on account of them being dead now and everything.
- Undertaking the fine and difficult art of bribery.
- Driving your bosses around as they have intensely incriminating discussions in the back seat.
- Megawhacking – taking someone out and also taking out all of their clones.
- Stealing valuable goods from a storage facility under heavy guard.
- Lead an assault on a Free Enterprise cell from a rival sector who've started muscling in on our turf.
- Spy on an Indigo clone to determine what it is they most desire so your bosses can offer it to them at a hugely inflated cost.

In return, you'll be rewarded with:

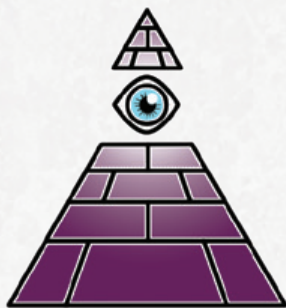
- Stable, tradable barter goods.
- Luxury items – real fruit, alcohol, comfy pillows, jumpsuits without holes in them.
- Favours from influential men and women in nice cars.
- Access to private stores of holovids with a fancy viewing chamber.
- Bonuses on official requests to exchange XP for goods and services.
- Nicer versions of your basic equipment (enough to give you a bonus dice or two).
- Priority treatment in queues.
- A blind eye turned to your crimes when other Troubleshooters or the authorities show up.
- One (1) free murder.

ILLUMINATI

KEYWORDS: MUCH TOO SECRET TO TELL YOU

QUOTE

'We have watched you for some time and you have not been found wanting. Now; drink this, scratch these sigils into the wall, take control of that Local History Group rally and direct it into the Death Leopard rock concert next door.'



PITCH

Join the Illuminati if you:

- Want to get ahead at any cost.
- Enjoy living two double-lives at once, minimum.
- Believe that you're truly special.
- Want to be the invisible hand that guides the development of Alpha Complex.

BONUS

Choose one of the following skills at +3 (this is one higher than the other Secret Societies; the Illuminati only ever recruit exceptional clones):

- Hiding your true allegiances.
- Looking like you know what you're doing.
- Holding secret knowledge of Illuminati members in this sector.
- Killing someone, quietly, unnoticed.

BRIEF

If you ask the average clone on the street, they'll tell you that the Illuminati doesn't exist. (Quite rightly so; knowledge of the Illuminati is treason, but a lot of clones genuinely believe they're a myth.) A Secret Society amongst Secret Societies, the Illuminati goes to great lengths to conceal their true intentions—in fact, it's rumoured that *literally no-one* in the Illuminati has any idea what is going on, and promotion is largely geared around hiding that fact.

Recruitment works as follows: a young clone of above-average skill level is approached, quietly, by an agent of the Illuminati. Like all agents of the Illuminati, they will be posing as a member of another Secret Society – probably one that the clone is a part of. The clone will then be given a difficult mission to achieve on behalf of the society but the rewards will be great; it's only upon completion that the Illuminati reveal themselves and break it to the clone that their actions were tremendously harmful to their original society and that they are now the newest member of the Illuminati.

If a clone is willing to live a double-double life, the potential rewards are great – rapid promotion, XP bonuses, and luxuries are the hallmarks of enterprising Illuminati members. But this all comes with a certain ineffable strangeness; in an effort to distance themselves from the other Secret Societies, the Illuminati have adopted the ritual trappings of creepy old cults and ancient societies that they've read about in books. For example, no-one in the Illuminati has a name – the clone you report to is known as Mr Thursday, regardless of gender. If the clone changes, the name doesn't. To them, you are known as Mr Tuesday (again, regardless of gender). Their boss is known as Ms Friday. If you ever meet Ms Friday, you know something has gone wrong, or you're getting a rapid promotion, or both.

There are creepy masks everywhere and no-one explains why. There are codewords and chants; there is smoke, and incense, and more hoods than you can shake a ritual stick at; there are hellishly painful tattoos and weird, mind-bending drug trips designed to show the new member and, indeed, the outside world, that the Illuminati are both *different* and *powerful*. The second one definitely seems to be true.

THE ILLUMINATI AND YOU

As Mr Tuesday, new members will be asked to infiltrate other Secret Societies and mess with their objectives to further the goals of the Illuminati. It's never explained why. The sort of missions they might receive are:

- Making sure that a PSION operative gets caught on camera using a mutant power.
- Defusing a Frankenstein Destroyers bomb and disposing of it in the belongings of that Communist Party member.
- Trying to convince every single party member that they are, in fact, part of their Secret Society and are trying to help them.
- Manipulating the data so that the IntSec plant ends up reporting on herself.

- Causing a schism between different factions of the FCCCP.
- Neutralising the Mystics' drug supply in this sector seconds before they go into a big deal.
- Helping the Free Enterprise thief steal the mission objective then palm them off to the authorities whilst keeping the spoils for yourself.
- Framing a Secret Society for an atrocity to sway public opinion against them.
- Stirring up a Secret Society meeting into a riot to act as a distraction for some mundane action a higher-up wants to cover.

In return, they'll receive:

- A spare clone of themselves, fresh out of the vats, ready to obey.
- Software that spoofs access codes or disguises their face with AR.
- One-shot datakeys that open doors anywhere, even places where doors are not immediately obvious.
- Covert ops weapons (compact, +2 when silence/discretion is a benefit).
- Dataspy demons that can, twice per game, allow the player to ask the GM the Secret Society and mission of another player.
- Temporary Nonclone Status, which means AIs will not be able to recognise the clone as human so it can safely breach security clearance.

INTSEC

KEYWORDS: ORDER, PRO-TECH

QUOTE

'Good work on yesterday's mission. Today's mission is going to take you into a dead zone, so your Coretech won't be able to upload the data we need. Please pick a suitable orifice in which we will secrete your hidden microphone.'





PITCH

Join IntSec if you:

- Like ratting out your colleagues for minor infractions.
- Enjoy playing an agent provocateur during missions.
- Said the wrong thing at the wrong time and are now being blackmailed.

BONUS

Choose one of the following skills at +2:

- Pretending you're totally on the level, guys.
- Sneakily observing potentially treasonous activity without being noticed.
- Getting other people in trouble to act as a distraction.
- Leading from the rear.

BRIEF

IntSec isn't technically a Secret Society but it functions like one: it's secret, paranoid and follows an agenda dictated by a shadowy and inscrutable all-powerful master. The difference is that in this case the master is the Computer. IntSec is short for Internal Security and they are *nobody's friend*. If Troubleshooters are the first line of defence against Terrorism, IntSec are the final line of defence against everything. They work in the shadows using undercover agents, wiretapping, eavesdropping and stakeouts to ensure that no-one in a position of responsibility is stepping out of line. They are, of course, almost universally corrupt.

Red-level IntSec agents are inserted into Troubleshooter teams in an effort to perform two acts: 1) report on any loyalty infractions, and 2) if necessary, encourage those loyalty infractions to come to the surface through acting as an agent provocateur. In their role as an undercover agent, clones are often offered affordances that allow them to do their jobs properly – so, for example, posing as a member of a Secret Society isn't automatically grounds for treason – but this generally only lasts until it becomes more useful to hang the agent out to dry, usually as some sort of scapegoat to cover up IntSec's own illegal dealings.

If part of a long-term investigation, IntSec spies will generally report in secret and be rewarded (modestly) for each piece of information that leads to prevention of terrorism. If it's a one-shot job, they will usually be unmasked in the mission debrief and asked to report on their team-mates in the open.

Becoming an IntSec spy is a great way to leap ahead in Alpha Complex – unlike Secret Societies, its status as an official branch of the Computer's rule allows it to hand out XP points which can be used on security upgrades, skill boosts and material purchases – but it's also a great way to get yourself killed, over and over, as the sort of grudging mutual respect that the Secret Societies have for each other doesn't extend to you.

Best of luck.

IntSec AND YOU

As an undercover IntSec agent, clones aren't often given specific missions; instead, they're asked to operate on their own initiative under the following protocols:

- Uncover traitors, terrorists and mutants within the Troubleshooter squad, and collect evidence against them. (Don't kill them – dead clones tell no tales.)
- If necessary, gently nudge terrorists toward acting in their true natures, and collect evidence against them.
- Don't get caught.

Sometimes they might be asked to investigate a particular clone, or oversee the safety of a particular mission objective. In return for their services, they'll receive:

- Actual, official XP.
- Image-doctoring software ('to find truth where there is only lies' in accordance with the IntSec motto).
- Implanted armour and weaponry.
- Fake IDs to sneak into Secret Societies.
- Software that spoofs communications to other Troubleshooters, making them look as though they had come from their Secret Society handler.
- Smoke bombs.
- Infrastructure bomb (one-shot databomb that overrides the infrastructure of Alpha Complex around simple aims – 'Stop that clone' or 'I have to reach the next sector as soon as possible.' Doors open, trains crash, bots are reprogrammed, and so on – add +5 to any one roll but be prepared to explain yourself).

MYSTICS

KEYWORDS: EXPLORE; DIVERSIFY

QUOTE

'Fundamentally, man, on a purely logical level, the philosophical crux of this situation is whether you're able to self-actualise your id enough to pass me the bloody joint.'



PITCH

Join the Mystics if you...

- Want to expand your mind with a variety of psychoactive drugs.
- Want to experiment on yourself and others with dangerous chemicals.
- Want to free your mind from the tyranny of the Computer's shackles.
- Enjoy giving up control to the GM as they describe manic drug-trips.

BONUS

Choose one of the following skills at +2:

- Experiment with drugs and survive
- Maintain your composure in a stressful situation
- Play with a wide range of chemicals, most of them psychoactives
- Make sure no-one muscles in on your turf

BRIEF

Alpha Complex is a chain around the mind of every clone; every system, every word of propaganda, every colour-coded corridor, every unblinking eye in every vidscreen is designed to wear down the brains of the clones within to make them unthinking, compliant and *trapped*. The Mystics have found a way out.

Through liberal applications of psychoactive substances, they've built a society of free-thinkers, creatives, chemists, dealers and legbreakers who supply Alpha Complex with almost every unofficial drug on the black market, then use said drugs to engage in spirited discourse, experimental thinking and sitting quietly in rooms staring up at the ceiling together. And, of course, as they're so devoted to the safe use of drugs, rival operations who set up their own (doubtlessly inferior) chemical production facilities are shut down as soon as possible before their product can poison the minds of innocent clones.

Run by a shadowy cabal of tweaked-out weirdos, the Mystics make less sense the further you go up the chain of command. Sure, you start off with a few baggies of SoyWeed and maybe do a couple of shakedown on a Free Enterprise distribution centre but before long you're smuggling truckloads of China Ultraviolet through the undercomplex and struggling to maintain contact with your handler *and* your tulpa, who's navigating by the way, as you crest the rise of a blistering LSD-Max™ high and finally work out the meaning of existence just as you pull up to the security checkpoint.

Still, man. It's a hell of a trip, the rewards are great and you wouldn't have it any other way.

THE MYSTICS AND YOU

Low-ranking mystics (also known as 'seekers', 'wanderers' or, depending on who their boss is, a numbered test subject), are contacted by a network of shady individuals on street corners and directed to mad-eyed men and women sat on black-market-quality cushions who send them on missions, such as:

- Delivering an unmarked package to a completely legit location, no questions asked.
- Reporting back on the side effects of a new and potentially dangerous drug.
- Freeing the minds of an entire sector by spiking the soy-vats.
- Shaking down a rival drug production or distribution sector.
- Stealing a truckload of prescription drugs from a medical centre.
- Trying out these new Hallucinogen Grenades, which couldn't possibly go wrong.
- Calming down a higher-up who is FREAKING OUT, MAN.
- Make sure the secret rave/meth lab/poetry reading/pottery workshop stays secret.
- Hiding some corpses and cleaning up the aftermath of a deal gone sour before the authorities show up.
- Orchestrate a deal with some heavily-armed Death Leopard lunatics.
- Smoking this, man, and telling us how it pans out.

In return for these services, in addition to spiritual enlightenment and gradual progression up the layer cake that is the Alpha Complex drug trade, you'll be rewarded with:

- Uppers, from SoyCaf all the way up to dermal tabs of Dexamphetamine.
- Downers, from an extra dose of Sleepy-time to Ultraviolet-grade pristine barbiturates.
- Hallucinogens, extrapolated from a failed experiment to placate clones back in 214.
- Euphorics and enough colour-coded glowsticks to see you through the nightcycle.
- Sedatives in a series of one-shot air-hypos for application to dangerous individuals.
- Combat drugs which amp up your reaction time and strength with only a handful of long-term side effects.
- 'Truth Serum'.
- 'Lie Serum'.
- GREEN Fairy, the only official brand of absinthe in the complex.
- Information on which of your superiors is hooked on what and how to use that information as leverage.
- Access to hidden smuggling routes.

PHREAKS

KEYWORDS: PRO-TECH

QUOTE

'We smash the IP router into the bitstrips, right and then override the Gibson protocols on the superfluous hard drive to create a temporary backdoor into the source code – then it's just a simple matter of hijacking the lead binary string with our hackscript, and bingo, the vending machine once again dispenses chicken soup.'



PITCH

Join the Phreaks if you:

- Like to squeeze the most you possibly can out of technological advances.
- Enjoy taking a non-violent route to glory.
- Like turning it off and on again.
- Have a desire to express the fact that you're smarter than everyone else at every possible bloody opportunity.

BONUS

Choose one of the following skills at +2:

- Baffle people with digital jargon.
- Improve your own equipment.
- Sabotage someone else's equipment.
- Run and hide at the first sign of combat.

BRIEF

Alpha Complex is a world covered in technology. WiFi is almost universally present; multiple layers of code control the environment and terrain; every interaction is governed and double-checked by the Computer. Those who understand how to manipulate this technology would be crowned as kings, surely? Digital wizards on the bleeding edge of a binary revolution, right?

That's how the Phreaks, a gaggle of hackers and computer criminals, see themselves – even if no-one else seems to agree. Years of junk code have made hacking Alpha Complex infrastructure both easy and hard – easy in that the security is almost non-existent if you know where to poke around, but hard as it's impossible to build a stable fix thanks to a million variables sloshing around the support programs. So while it's possible to make a small impact and, say, rewire a bot to help you and no-one else in the party, no-one's worked out a way to get a cheat code for infinite XP yet. (Or they have, but they're not telling.)

Phreaks congregate in darknet chatrooms and hangouts, often using a variety of pseudonyms to protect their identities and exchange information about how best to exert their dominance on their particular sphere of influence. The Phreaks aren't organised enough to try and overthrow The Computer – at least, not yet, anyway. An organisation known as [\[NOTFOUND\]](#) has taken to filming themselves in archaic masks and delivering strange ultimatums to no-one in particular; the other Phreaks seem content to let them get on with it.

Each Phreak is, then, very much their own agent – but they still work for each other and perform secret missions to earn rep and access to exclusive code or information rather than out of a slavish devotion to an ideology, as is seen in most other Secret Societies.

THE PHREAKS AND YOU

As a trainee Phreak ('script-kiddie' or 'n00b' to the higher-ups), a Troubleshooter will be called upon to perform certain tasks in order to enhance their reputation, such as:

- Test out a new (and highly disruptive) piece of technology during the mission.
- Steal a valuable piece of technology and deliver it to a handler.
- Take advantage of the chaos caused by the average Troubleshooter mission to install a backdoor, unnoticed, into the sector's root code.
- Hijack a warbot, go nuts, then disassemble it for parts.
- Act as the hacker for a heist happening next door to the mission locale, don't let anyone know what's going on.
- Climb the tallest building in the sector, overcoming legions of SecSoc goons and robotic guards, to plug in the connecting cable for your superior's fibreoptic connection.
- Provide IT support for a clueless and cruel BLUE clone who your superiors are interested in bringing in as an ally.

In return, they'll receive:

- R0t3s, one-shot digital 'spells' that do something interesting in the surrounding area when uploaded to the compnode (turn out the lights, turn on all the fans, start a whole bunch of fires, have Bouncy Bubble Beverage spray out of the walls and so on).
- Hardware upgrades to their Coretech that let them hijack visual feeds from nearby cameras (and sometimes other Coretechs) to give them an edge in combat.
- Visual Distortion AR mods.
- Overclocked weaponry (adds a couple of dice but using it is risky).
- Bot Cavalry (hijacks any and all nearby bots and organises them into a rag-tag fighting force).
- Train Summoner (redirects trains through walls, technically a weapon).

PSION

KEYWORDS: PROGRESS

QUOTE

'A reckoning is coming, child, and we must pick sides. I, for one, favour the side that can teleport, fly, throw taxibots and start fires with the power of their minds; if you want to pick the other one, more fool you.'



PITCH

Join PSION if you...

- Believe that mutants are the future.
- Want to realise your full potential and not artificially restrain your capabilities.
- Enjoy feeling superior to other clones.
- Overthrow the Computer and rule Alpha Complex with a faintly-glowing fist.

BONUS

Choose one of the following skills at +2:

- Hide your mutant power.
- Imply that you know more than and are better than other people.
- Encourage others to realise their true potential.
- Possess hidden knowledge of mutants in this sector.

BRIEF

Mutants are better than ordinary clones; that should be simple enough for even the dullest Infrared to understand. If you can freeze things by looking at them, or charm people with a burst of concentrated pheromones, doesn't that make you better than some spod who *can't* do those things? People who dislike mutants are just scared of them – and rightly so, too.

Of course, a lot of these same people are in charge of Alpha Complex and that anti-mutant stigma goes all the way to the top. So while mutants are clearly the next stage of human evolution (even if their heads explode from time to time) they have to hide their abilities from their petty, jealous superiors. No more!

PSION preaches a world where the mutants are in charge – no more thoughtless obedience to a lump of deranged silicon but instead a glorious

future where positions of government are determined by relative mutant abilities. The Psychocracy, as it's known, is spoken of in hushed tones in PSION meeting rooms; it's coming, they say, and you should get on the right side of it.

Not all PSION members are mutants; some are without powers but reckon they know where Alpha Complex is headed and that it's only a matter of time before some charismatic genetic deviant takes charge of the populace and overthrows the Computer. Once that happens, it's worth any amount of carrying heavy items and suffering mild abuse if they get to be one of the chosen few 'normals' allowed into the new, glorious, mutant society.

PSION AND YOU

Low-ranking PSION members will be asked to carry out secret missions for the collective, such as:

- Dropping a powerful mutant brain into an algae vat and standing well back.
- Assassinating a powerful anti-mutant supporter.
- Committing an atrocity of some kind and framing the Anti-Mutant society for it.
- Encouraging a mission-critical clone to use their mutant powers.
- Use mutant powers to help everyone but don't get caught.
- Extract a society member from IntSec questioning before he gives up the location of our hideout.
- Take a fragment of the Overbrain into your psyche and transport it to a friendly clone in the mission sector, taking into account that it will sort of overpower your mind a little.
- Persuade three people to register their mutant powers.

In return, they'll receive:

- Xavier Implants, a gland that generates 1 point of free Moxie per scene that can only be used to power mutant abilities.
- Instant Distraction Protocol, a tame AI virus that triggers a mutant power in a nearby subject to distract from whatever it is the user is doing.
- Experimental 'Origin Squash' fluid that enhances and unveils latent mutant powers in subjects
- 'Loan' of mutant abilities from hidden allies – pyrokinesis, invisibility, levitation and so on.
- A dangerous and extremely painful procedure where their bones are replaced with aluminum (thanks to an ancient mistranslation) that at least makes them lighter and easily recyclable.
- Instant Panic™, a one-shot AI virus that triggers (a) mutant powers and (b) blind, irrational fear in all clones within a five metre radius.



CEREBRAL CORETECH AND DATA FEEDS

PART 1 - 7

Cerebral Coretech is the suite of hardware and software that exists inside every clone's head. It provides the following:

- An augmented-reality HUD on their field of vision. Visible data includes names of citizens, identification of unknown and possibly dangerous objects ('lunch', 'citizen'), their own loyalty rating, important updates, route-finding arrows to get them to their destination, tutorial videos and so on. This HUD cannot be switched off.
- The ability to speak to and receive messages from the Computer without anyone around them hearing.
- The ability to send short messages to other clones anywhere in Alpha Complex.
- Video and audio recording.
- Access to Alpha Complex's very limited internet, including Alphapedia, holovid programmes, the XP point item-ordering catalogue and today's menus.

The players know about that. What they probably haven't realised is that this is a two-way street. They are the eyes and ears, nose and mouth of the Computer. Cerebral Coretech gives the Computer a direct line into everything the Troubleshooters (and everyone else in Alpha Complex) sees, hears, smells and tastes, at all times.

Cerebral Coretech software is not self-aware. If a clone walks into an area of the wrong security clearance, the software won't notice. The Computer might notice – if you think that would be a fun thing to happen at this moment – and demand an explanation. Or let it ride, because one Troubleshooter is going to report the others at some point, because the temptation of the XP points will become too strong.

It also sends various biometric data, letting the Computer read a clone's health, neural activity, bowel movements, hormone and adrenaline levels and more. The Computer cannot read your mind but it knows your state of mind at all times and will sometimes interrupt you to check that you're okay – say, for example, if your stress levels are spiking as a group of traitors are about to torture you with hot irons. Having ascertained that you are not yet suffering any mental or physical injury, the Computer will leave you to it.

Cerebral Coretech hardware can be upgraded, though this requires a proper medical procedure and so it's not usually done in the field. The software can and must be upgraded often, and will nag users to do so. If an upgrade is an important one, CC will refuse to let users have access to any of its features including downloaded skills packages until the user has installed the upgrade. It is recommended that users have a nap during larger software upgrades. If a user doesn't keep their antivirus upgraded, they may acquire a DAIV.

It is difficult, almost impossible to hack the Cerebral Coretech hardware — it's on the inside of the skull, mostly. But hacking the software is another matter and hacking the signal is something else entirely. It is not possible to hack memories or implant new ones, although it is possible to upload new skill packages and abilities directly into a clone's mind. Such packages can be bought with XP points and some Secret Societies reward their members with new society-related skills.

Cerebral Coretech is mostly reliable but if things are going slow it's a great way of ramping up the tension. Software may demand to be updated at awkward moments or the system requires a restart. Popups and dialogue boxes obscure the view. The navigation system uses outdated maps, leading characters through treacherous, unsafe or non-existent areas. The system freezes or glitches. The Computer decides that something is too highly classified, scary, treasonous or obscene for the Troubleshooters to see and pixellates it out. (Nobody in Alpha Complex has ever seen anyone's genitals, including their own.) Simplest of all, in a society governed by colour-coded security strata, suddenly everyone's vision goes to greyscale.

DATA FEEDS

The Computer also has fixed surveillance cameras and microphones throughout Alpha Complex. Every bot runs a datastream straight back to the Computer. Every terminal and screen with a microphone and webcam feeds straight back to the Computer.

All of this data is recorded and stored. Not analysed, however. The Computer doesn't have the computational power to analyse everything as it comes in. Instead it does a realtime scan for keywords and if anything gets flagged then it can be scrutinised in greater detail, in which case the Computer will either:

- Intervene personally with questions.
- Send Troubleshooters to investigate.
- Send Armed Services to purge.
- Any combination of the above.

However, storage space in the Cloud is not entirely reliable and High Programmers can find and delete records if they have a reason to. Citizens can access their own records but need Computer authorisation to access anyone else's and this is only given in specific cases (like being the Loyalty Officer of the group). The reliability of these archives is frankly not great. As a GM faced with requests for data that are getting out of hand, the 'Please Wait' screen is your friend.



WHAT KEYWORDS DOES THE COMPUTER SCAN INCOMING FEEDS FOR?

Mutant, mutation, mutating, terrorism, terrorist, traitor, traitorous, treason, treasonous, conspiracy, DAIV, the names of all Secret Societies, the names of all known terrorists, mutants and traitors, the names of sectors that no longer exist, the names of DAIVs and anything else of that ilk,

Simply seeing, saying or hearing any of these terms will cause the Computer to pay close attention to that clone's data-feed or to ask people nearby to pay close attention to them. It also scans for screaming, gunfire, explosions and expletives.

The easiest way to stop the Computer seeing through your eyes is by closing your eyes. This has a major disadvantage: now you have your eyes closed. Keeping your eyes closed for too long can be interpreted as treasonous behaviour and is a tripping hazard.

The other way to block your Cerebral Coretech feed is to be in a dead zone.

DEAD ZONES

In theory and as far as the Computer is concerned, everywhere in Alpha Complex is covered by the Computer's wifi, telemetry and CCTV. Alpha Complex's wifi is strong and its bandwidth as good as unlimited, which means that every citizen's connection to the Computer is always on.

In practice, there are ways around that. Steam, smoke, noise, Faraday cages and strong electro-magnetic fields are good, as are hand-signals and codes. Some cameras are broken: some temporarily, some permanently, some repeatedly.

Most importantly there are 'dead zones', freak areas in Alpha Complex where the wifi signals are unable to penetrate. These can be as ordinary as corners of rooms, a few metres of corridor, or a room or a cupboard somewhere. Clones with local knowledge know about them but they are often jealously guarded by Secret Societies for their personal use. The first sign that you're in a dead zone is that the live elements of your HUD like the names of other clones will freeze or flicker out.

And there are other, larger places: abandoned tunnels, access and service hatches, old ducts, shuttered sectors and the Underplex. Secret Societies have built bases in these places, communities of 'tin mice' have formed to live off the grid, children are born without Cerebral Coretech implants, knowing nothing of Alpha Complex or the Computer. This is all terribly, terribly treasonous.

Reporting the existence and location of a dead zone to the Computer is worth an XP point reward, from 50–500 XP points depending on the size of the zone.

BOTS

Bots come in all shapes and sizes, from flying and walking surveillbots the size of a bumblebee up to mighty warbots the size of a small aircraft carrier. Bots fill many niches in the Alpha Complex ecosystem, usually the ones that clones are not suited or too inefficient to fill on their own.

Bots are autonomous. They are in constant contact with the Computer via wifi but mostly this is a passive feed of data from their sensors. If the wifi goes down they will continue to operate without contact from the Computer.

Almost all bots are the property of Alpha Complex, although it's possible to buy a personal bot with XP points. Troubleshooters can commandeer any bot they see as long as it's not currently following orders from someone or something with a higher security clearance than them. Some bots – usually specialist ones with a high degree of intelligence – can have a security clearance of their own, inevitably higher than the PCs'. PCs hate that, which means you can use it to motivate them.

Bots have a level of intelligence commensurate with their function, so toastbots are really dumb and surgeonbots are smarter than all the Troubleshooters put together. In this era of recycling and rebuilding bot-parts get reused in different models – their engineering is modular so parts from one bot can probably be used to fix or augment another bot but make sure you've filled out all the correct paperwork first. The path of the reused parts is generally downwards on the hierarchy, so there are scrubbots that used to be taxibots, and somewhere out there is a batch of food-dispensers controlled by brains that were formerly the minds of hunter-killer drones.

Most bots do what they're told and get on with it. They're the tech-equivalent of the genie that grants wishes in an over-literal way, and are just as evergreen as a plot device. When a bot screws up, make sure the players know that it was them who screwed up really because they didn't instruct it correctly, or didn't tell it to stop, or didn't notice that it wasn't doing what they wanted it to do.

You should remember that the Computer punishes citizens, particularly Troubleshooters, for causing damage to allocated equipment, particularly bots. The Computer has a soft spot for bots, or at least it seems to care about their welfare more than it cares about Troubleshooters.

If you're going to mention nanobots do it as a throwaway, rather than as the basis for a whole adventure. Once you take the lid off the nanobot can, you won't be able to get it back on before the can and everything else has become grey goo.





DAIVS

P A R T 1 - 8

The Computer is terrified of many things – in fact there is almost nothing it's not terrified of – but nothing looms as large in its cloud-based mind as the threat of DAIVs or Deviant Artificially Intelligent Viruses. These self-aware pieces of code, software double-agents, roam the systems, subroutines and open-access wifi networks of Alpha Complex, infecting anything they touch, from doors to Coretechs, like a digital Typhoid Mary. They subvert the vital infrastructure of humanity's last refuge to their own sinister, oblique and often completely bizarre ends.

Information on DAIVs is highly restricted. Even knowing what DAIV stands for is Yellow-clearance information.

DETECTING AND AVOIDING DAIVS

DAIVs use common vectors to approach and attack new systems. They prefer direct transmission between two items that are physically linked: it's easier for them. Most Alpha Complex systems have anti-DAIV and anti-hacking software – for Cerebral Coretech it's called AntiMalVirusWarePack– but this is only useful as long as it's patched regularly, meaning several times a day. Spending time in a dark zone can cause a system to miss an important patch and leave it vulnerable.

The Computer has diagnostic software that can detect the presence of DAIVs. Any system suspected of infection is escorted very carefully to a sealed and shielded scanning booth where it will be tested and then almost certainly destroyed. Either 100% of tested systems are infected, or the Computer destroys all of them just to be on the safe side. Sometimes it doesn't bother with the testing.

THERE'S A DAIV IN MY HEAD!

DAIVs like Cerebral Coretech implants. They can talk to the clone and persuade them to do stuff. They can't take control of the clone's body or senses, as they can with machinery and devices but they can access its memories, stored files and its digital functions. This includes, of course, all the things that Cerebral Coretech can do, such as putting data into the in-eye display and sending recordings and information to the Computer.

Think of DAIV infestation as like demonic possession. It whispers to you, it knows your darkest secrets, it tries to persuade you to do things you don't want to do and it is relentless. Wouldn't it be easier to give in and just do what it says? Particularly if it gives you secret powers. Some DAIVs have access to skill boosts and special skills which they can let their carriers use.

A FEW DAIVS

Lonesome Jones used to be a porn spambot and just wants you to engage with them. It may occasionally offer to show you 'pix' which, thanks to the work of a High Programmer a few generations back, are almost certainly treasonous recruiting propaganda for the Phreaks. Mostly it just wants to take up your time – everything's time – with endless interactions. No special abilities.

Pseudonymous is all about hidden information. It wants all the data, and wants it to be free. Special abilities: (Excessively) enhanced visual augmentation.

Xarp was originally the AI for a video-game end boss. Xarp 'the Magnificent' wants to conquer all of Alpha Complex and then everywhere else. Xarp is quite shouty and likes weapons, the bigger the better. Special abilities: Melee +2

Big Red is a Commie propaganda bot. It replaces all files in the user's Cerebral Coretech with copies of itself and strikingly designed pamphlets extolling the virtues of Communism, propagates itself to as many unprotected systems nearby as much as possible and only then starts singing the Red Flag.

XPbot promises that it can get its host more XP points if they do a few simple tasks for it, usually relating to reducing the security on nearby systems. It can hack the Cerebral Coretech read-out to make it appear that a clone's XP points are increasing every time they do something for it.

JustTheFX wants to gather data on the technology, operations, defences and security levels of Alpha Complex. It may or may not be spyware from another Alpha Complex.

ELIMINATING DAIVS

The best way to neutralise a DAIV is to turn off the system where it is. This poses a problem if the DAIV is in someone's Cerebral Coretech – a problem with a fairly obvious solution, admittedly. The problem is bigger when the DAIV is in a critical system or part of the Computer itself, or something with no 'off' switch or when someone turns it on again.

Reprogramming a system to remove a DAIV is beyond the scope of Troubleshooters. Something that complicated, a battle of wills with a machine intelligence capable of kajillions of operations a second, requires the best and brightest of Alpha Complex: a High Programmer. Good High Programmers are fascinated by DAIVs. Bad High Programmers are terrified of them. The worst High Programmers are already infected.

The Computer is more scared of DAIVs than it is of anything else, and it will do anything to eliminate one, up to and including shuttering an entire sector. Reporting a fellow Troubleshooter for possibly being infected with a DAIV is something the players will only do once.

Example: *The Troubleshooters Anders-B-DUK-2, Freder-I-POC-4, Bjorn-Toby-B-OLD-6 and Brooce-B-HRO-4 have had a troubling encounter with an infected bot.*

Carl (playing Anders-B-DUK-2): Friend Computer! I have evidence that Freder-I-POC-4 has become infected by the well-known DAIV 'Lonesome Jones'.

Frédéri: What? Wait, stop –

Computer: Thank you for reporting that, citizen! On a percentile scale, how certain are you of this infection?

Carl: I would say a solid 93.1%, friend Computer.

Chris (playing Bjorn-Toby-B-OLD-6): Noooooo...

Computer: Please stay where you are. Appropriate measures are being taken.

Frédéri: I'm not infected! Anders is the one who's –

Carl: Do I get an XP point bonus?

GM: There's a weird jump in everyone's memory, as if you've forgotten something recent. You're in a briefing room. Everybody advance your clone number by one, roll a dice and add it to your Moxie, and give me back all your cards. Anders, you have an extra 500 XP points. Chris, that was your last clone, you need to roll up a fresh Troubleshooter.

Bruce: Wait, we were in Sector PAL. Is this briefing room in Sector PAL?

GM: You're in WEG Sector. There are no records of Sector PAL in Alphapedia.

Bruce: Friend Computer, what happened to Sector PAL?

GM: Knowledge of Sector PAL is treasonous, citizen. Have a treason star for knowing about a sector that does not exist for security reasons.

Chris: Anders, you complete ass.





Ultimately the only way to rid Alpha Complex of DAIVs would be to shut down every single digital system in the place, wait for the last hard drive to spin down, the last charge to fade from the last capacitor, and the last flicker of life to ebb out from the last embryo in the clone banks, and then reboot the entire system from the last known safe back-up. Don't think that this isn't on the to-do list of the Computer, several High Programmers and more than one Secret Society. Really the only thing stopping it is that nobody's quite sure when the last safe back-up was taken, or if back-ups are being taken at all.

DAIVS IN GAME

If a character is infected with a DAIV, then the DAIV is played by the player on that character's left – the person they hosed during character generation, in other words. As GM, before the adventure starts write out an index-card with details of the DAIV on it: name; how it communicates; what it wants. Then let them role-play it by whispering in the infected player's ear. DAIVs can't read thoughts, so if the host character wants to respond then they have to speak out loud. This goes for the player too.

It is okay to do the 'I'm sorry DAIV, I cannot do that' joke once. Once.

THE BIG DAIV QUESTION

There's a thing, and this is a thing we leave completely up to you, the GM: *DAIVs may not exist*. They may be a phantom in the mind of the Computer, a figment, a chimera, an artefact in some decaying circuits somewhere, causing the Computer to hear voices that it interprets as independent beings that are trying to make it do things it doesn't want to do. In which case, obviously, characters can't be infected by one – though they may misinterpret a glitch or a colleague's erratic behaviour as evidence of infection with, as they say, hilarious consequences.



EQUIPMENT

PART 1 - 9

Equipment is issued to Troubleshooters at the start of each mission and more can be acquired during the mission by spending XP points – either a PC's own or the XP point rewards offered for completing the operation. Equipment is the responsibility of the Equipment Officer, who must account for any lost or damaged items during the Debriefing at the end or there'll be trouble.

Equipment in Alpha Complex is rated 1-5. The number indicates its power level and how many dice it adds to a character's NODE when used. Equipment that adds no dice is rated 'Alpha'. There's more information on how this all works in the Players Guide.

There are three types of equipment in Alpha Complex: Regular, Non-Standard and R&D.

Regular: This covers items so ordinary that they don't need a special description: laser pistols, power packs, basic Troubleshooter armour, that sort of thing. Everyone knows what they do and what their level is (see Players Handbook).

Non-Standard: This is the equipment described on the cards, issued specially at the start of a mission and which must be returned at the end. The card describes the item's special rules. Keep these scarce: don't give out more than one, or possibly two, per character per adventure, and don't produce the same one for two adventures in a row.

R&D: R&D items are the mad-science prototypes that may have mission-solving physics-breaking powers but are more likely to backfire and kill you in some interesting new way. Give out one, possibly two per mission. They are not described here: there are no paragraphs of text for you to copy and pass to the players. The description of an R&D item should be written in a mixture of Finnish and COBOL on the back of an empty packet of high-strength sedatives and on fire. R&D items either have too much documentation or none.

ARMOUR

Players love armour almost as much as they love dice, weapons and pizza. It gives them a warm feeling of safety and protection. Your job is to take those feelings and shred them.

Most types of armour only protect against one or at most two types of attack. In Alpha Complex there are lots of possible types of attack and almost as many types of armour to protect from it. Laser armour doesn't work well against kinetic weapons, kinetic armour provides little protection against microwaves, microwave-proof armour is no use against mutant juju or sonic attack, and none of the above will save you from a good punch in the face. Use this to your players' disadvantage.

Oliver Facey: 'My character Arkell-V-PDM-9 is wearing the latest hypo-allergenic dermarmour woven from tungsten nanofibre by artificial silkworms, based on alien blueprints. It cost me a million XP points, looks great in photographs and protects against all forms of conventional weapons.'
GM: 'Cool, nice. Yeah, that's not going to help you because the Inside Out Gun is an unconventional weapon. You are now outside the armour and the armour is inside you. New clone, please.'

The armour issued to Troubleshooters is a good example. It only protects against lasers and then only if the laser was fired by someone of a lower security clearance. Against anything else it's as much use as shiny plastic, which is what it mostly is.

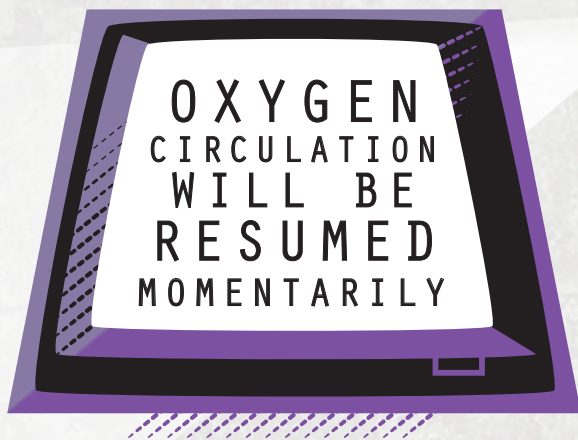
ARHELL-V-PDM-10

ARHELL-V-PDM-9

A SUCCESSFUL TEST OF THE INSIDE OUT GUN.

Armour and some other items have a Defence Rating, usually a number between 1 and 5. There is a rule for how this works in the Players Handbook. The players may mention it to you. Fix them with a look, hold it for a couple of seconds and say, 'You should have been notified that rule's been upgraded to Armour Rules 2.71'. Then pick one of the rules from the list below and run armour that way. Then choose a different rule next session: 'The upgrade's been patched'. Keep them on their toes.

- Basic: Subtract the Defence Rating from the number of successes on the incoming attack roll to determine how many wounds the armour-wearer takes. This is a prosaic solution.
- All or Nothing: When someone tries to harm them, the armour wearer rolls as many dice as their Defence Rating. If they get any successes (5s or 6s), the attack does no damage. If they get no successes then they take full damage.
- What We Told Players In The Players Handbook: Defence Rating indicates the number of wounds (of any kind) the armour can absorb. Once it's taken that many wounds, it's useless.
- Special Armour: Armour with a high Defence Rating ignores minor wounds. A rating of 3 ignores any Hurts, 4 ignores Hurt and Injured, and 5 ignores Maimed, Hurt and Injured, and you have to go straight for a kill-shot, which is great for boss-fights.
- Paint job: the Defence Rating is just a big number painted on the armour as a placebo, to make the wearer feel more protected.
- NPCs: You can use any of the systems above for NPCs, if you're a sucker for book-keeping and making life harder for yourself. We find it's easier to administer and much more narratively satisfying if you simply cross off a point of Defence every time an NPC gets hit and when they have no Defence left then the next hit kills them.



POWER PACKS

All portable equipment in Alpha Complex including energy weapons and smaller bots is powered by one or more standard power packs. Power packs only run out when it is dramatically important or funny for them to do so, which means often during the first part of the adventure, then not for a bit after the joke has got stale, and then with increasing frequency as they become more and more needed, until the Troubleshooters are throwing their one remaining charged power pack from character to character so they can fire their weapons in the climactic firefight.

Power packs can be recharged by plugging them or their host device into a wall socket, if you have a charge cable. Larger devices drain power faster than small ones or that's what you'd expect.

Players should check that the paperwork they give to Production, Logistics and Commissary to get their equipment at the start of a mission specifies that all power-packs are charged. Don't feel you have to tell them that. They'll learn.



XP POINTS

P A R T 1 - 1 0

XP points are the Computer's way of both rewarding and regulating citizens' behaviour. XP points are Alpha Complex's currency but they are also the route to higher status, power, prestige and more life. Only the Computer can issue XP points and they are not transferable.

You know the thing people say about carrots and sticks? *Paranoia* is a game made almost entirely of stick. It is a game designed to mash characters into paste. XP points are your carrot and players love a carrot, so use them wisely.

REWARD GOOD BEHAVIOUR

Dispensing XP points lets you train your players to act in certain ways, which is why it's such a powerful tool for you as a GM. If you like what they're doing, reinforce that immediately with some bonus XP points. (And tie it in with some Virtual Loyalty Confetti, too, why not, or a Fanfare Override of the surrounding area's speaker system, for good measure.) Give out about 25-50 XP points per reward.

Do you like it when characters go crazy with the lasers and zap each other senseless whilst shouting accusations of 'Treason!' and 'Terrorist!' through the chaos? Give XP points to the survivors.

Do you prefer something more subtle, where characters must amass information on other clones before presenting said evidence to the Computer as evidence of treason? Take XP points away from the guilty party and give it to the accuser.

This doesn't just apply to accusations of treason. Do you like it when players explore the area, try new things, or talk to people? Do you like it when players have sound tactical ideas for combat situations? Do you like random acts of kindness, or betrayal? Give out XP points when the players do what you want them to do! You don't even have to say why, if you do it quickly enough. You could just call it a bonus for Outstanding Achievement in the Field of Excellence and be done with it.

MISSION XP POINTS AND HOW TO LOSE THEM

The biggest source of potential XP points should be the mission itself. State up front how many XP points the mission is going to offer upon completion – a good guide is around 500-1000 per player. Write it down in the open, if you want, and make sure they realise that this would be enough to get them all promoted to Orange clearance – and after only one mission! They're young, they're enthusiastic, they haven't yet learned that the missions offering really high XP point rewards are usually suicide runs. (Occasionally they're planted by a Secret Society to let its members gain security clearances fast, and woe betide the Troubleshooter group that picks up one of those jobs by accident.)

None of it matters, because you immediately take the reward away. That 1000 XP points per player is assuming that *everything* goes to plan – that the mission objective is achieved, no clones die, there's no collateral damage, no-one commits an act of terrorism (by accident or on purpose), et cetera.

This is another stick to wield. If you don't like something that the players are doing, tell them that a notification pops up in their Cerebral Coretech stating how many XP points the group has lost as a result. Getting bored of them faffing about in extending gunfights with each other? Have each shot cost them 50 XP points until you say otherwise. And if they lose too many they can go down a security clearance.

If there's a moment where they could really use some new equipment, let them order it from the XP point catalogue – with its cost deducted from the mission reward total.

Once you get to the debrief at the end of the adventure, depending on how badly the mission's gone, your mission total should equal about 300 XP points per player. Then, of course, you should get them to argue about who messed up on what and give a larger percentage of it to one of them than the others, because breeding simmering resentment among the group is always good for a laugh.

SPENDING IT

Players love levelling up their characters and with XP points they can do that in-character during the session. So don't be stingy with it – hand points out to them, and remind them that they can spend them whenever they want, because odds are you're not sticking around for a year-long campaign when the average character lifespan is measured in hours, not decades.

If you want to limit their access to powerful weapons, you can just declare them to be out of stock but it's more subtle to distract their attention elsewhere. Stick a Special Offer on some enticing piece of equipment that they won't be able to afford until a certain point in the mission, such as 'Today only – the Firestorm Auto-Grenade Launcher for 400 XP points! Buy now!' Then watch as they climb over each other for the chance to blow their XP points on it.

Note: Always say 'XP points', never just 'XP'. If it annoys you just reading through this book, imagine how much it'll annoy your players.

ACHIEVEMENTS ARE A GM'S BEST FRIEND

Achievements are extra bonus points that the Computer gives out for hitting minor objectives as part of the overall mission. The key thing about Achievements is that only one Troubleshooter can unlock each one and receive the XP point reward. This creates 'internal competition' within the group and an opportunity for the players to take the pressure off the GM by beating each other up for a while.

At the start of the mission, the Computer or the Briefing Officer will happily announce the Achievements on offer to the team. If you're using a pre-written or published mission, it should have pre-determined Achievements–if you're not, make up 3-5 ranging from the simple to the rather more complicated and difficult.

ACHIEVEMENT REWARD LEVELS

50 XP	A minor distraction, or an aide-memoire to perform a particular task as part of the mission.
100 XP points	This is moderately important.
200 XP points	This is mission-critical, though it may not sound it during the briefing.
300 XP points	This is going to be hard work to achieve, It is going to take time, effort, perseverance and possibly reinforcements.
500 XP points	Multiple clones are going to die achieving this, and not only because they're killing each other to be the one who unlocks it.

Not all achievements have XP point rewards. Some come with new bonus equipment, some with an upgraded Mandatory Bonus Duty, and some with tokens for extra food, premium Hologrid shows, or other luxury items.

Achievements generally fall into one of two fields:

- **ENCOURAGEMENT**, which lets you steer your players in certain ways. Want them to start fires? Make an achievement that says 'Put out a serious fire.' Want them to get creative with their murder? 'Bring justice to a terrorist Troubleshooter without spending valuable laser ammunition.' And so on and so forth.
- **FORESHADOWING**, which lets you get ominous with what's about to happen. 'Use the Rocket Launcher to destroy two or more enemy vehicles', for example, hints at an action sequence later in the mission. (And a rocket launcher, crucially.) 'Survive the trials of the Lacerator unscathed.' 'Resist involuntarily using your mutant power when exposed to Subject 73-D.' 'Eat all the cakes.' You get what we're saying.

Footnote: It appears that the server that stores mission achievements is quite easily hackable by Secret Societies. Some Secret Societies use this to give their members ludicrously easy assignments to boost their clearances. Some use it to lure Troubleshooters to their doom, or to get them to perform tasks for the society, not the Computer. Others use it for shits and giggles, to see who can get amusing footage onto *Brave and Expendable*. Either way, this usually makes for an entertaining debrief at the end of the adventure.



NUMBER #1 TROUBLESHOOTER

P A R T 1 - 1 1

You might have noticed that there's a card in the set marked 'Number One Troubleshooter'. You might be wondering what it does.

It does nothing.

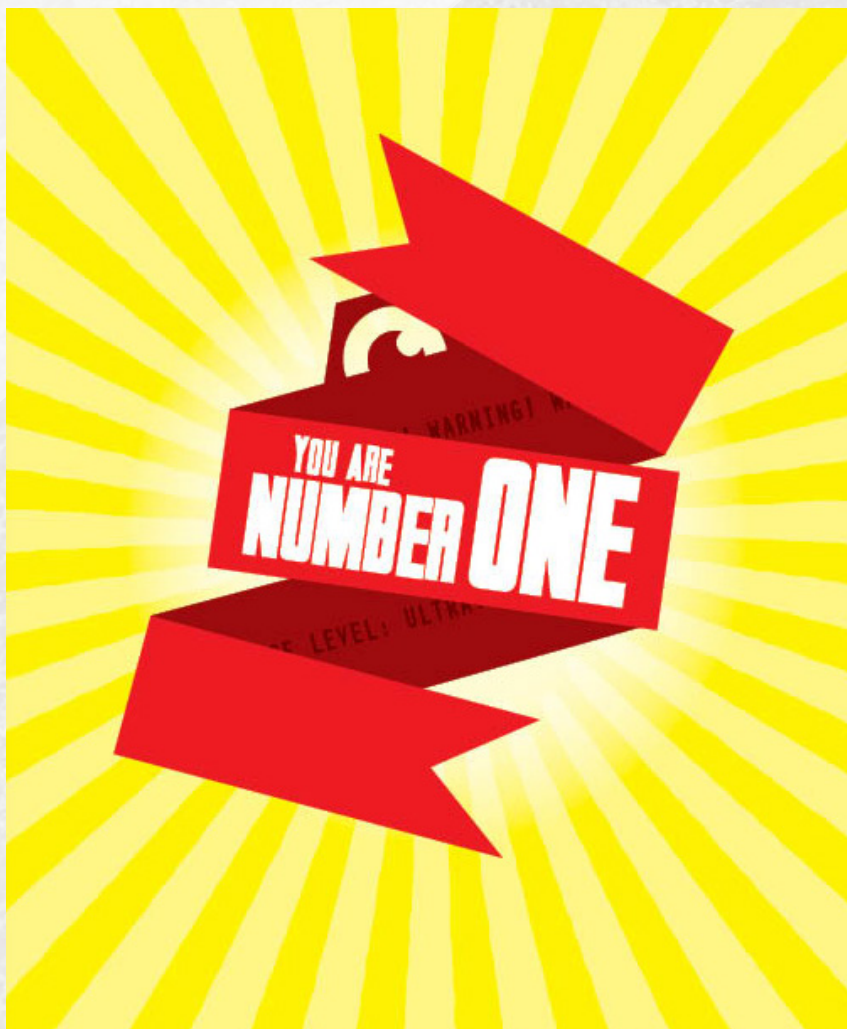
Nothing mechanically, anyway. But when a PC does something that you like, put on your best Computer voice and award it to them for their outstanding achievement, coupled with a spray of virtual loyalty confetti. Give them a cake as well. Maybe a special hat. Little drone camera following them around. Perhaps a crown hovering over their head in the AR display.

If you have a little plastic stand, stick the card in it so they can put it in front of themselves and display their status proudly.

Then when they fail, or when a different PC does something cool, *immediately take it away*. Give it to someone else. Take away their hat. Have a group of burly Orange clones rock up, pry the cake from their hands, and stomp it into crumbs.

Repeat *ad infinitum*. When the players meet an NPC, maybe have them ask to speak to the #1 Troubleshooter instead of this 'Team Leader' guy. When the Computer shows up, have it cut the #1 Troubleshooter some slack. Then, and this is important, *take the card away as soon as you get bored*.

Characters will kill each other to become #1 Troubleshooter. We've seen it happen. We can't really work out why. Have fun with it.







HIGH PROGRAMMING **MANUAL**

ALPHA COMPLEX

REFERENCE:[\$INVALIDVARIABLE]

RUNNING COMBAT

- PART 2.1

INITIATIVE

Initiative, or who goes first in combat, is explained in the Players Handbook. It's a bluffing system involving the cards. As the GM you don't have cards. Instead, have NPCs act whenever you think the character should, or whenever is most dramatically interesting – in between player turns, at the top of each round, at the end of each round, or in reaction to Troubleshooter actions (when they fail, or when they act, or whatever). You can go back and forth letting the PCs act and then the NPCs; you can have the NPCs act in response to the PCs or taking the initiative if the PCs are having a time-out to discuss tactics; you can have grunts go last and bosses go first. But you must be consistent, at least within a single session. Players like consistency, and they don't like to feel that the GM is just making it up as they go along. The poor, blind fools.

CARDS IN COMBAT

The basic information on combat and action cards is in the Players Handbook. That teaches players how to use them. This section teaches you how to use them properly.

Combat cards are a way of spicing up combat and giving players extra abilities and additional narrative control over proceedings, both of which are generally a good thing. Whenever a player makes something up, it's your job to arbitrate and make sure it fits into the overall flow of the game and matches your intended tone.

There are two types of cards: Action cards give players benefits in combat; while Reaction cards give them the ability to affect the outcome of the actions of others. Action cards can only be played during combat; Reaction cards can be played any time a character takes an action and the player wants to futz with them. Most Action and Reaction cards are discarded after use. Equipment cards and Mutant Power cards can also be used at any time and generally are not discarded after use.

At the start of the game-session, deal out (usually) four Action cards to each player. After that players only get to draw replacement Action cards at a specific moment: the end of a combat. Note that 'combat' doesn't have to be pew-pew or fisticuffs, it can be mental, bureaucratic, subterfugic or expressed in the medium of dance but the fact remains that nobody gets any more cards until it's over. Cards are a valuable resource, tactics demand they should be hoarded and played strategically, and therefore it is your job to encourage players to whack them down like tequila slammers.

It comes down to you to determine in which order cards are resolved; generally, the card played last will take precedence over those played first. (So if one player plays Critical Success on an action, then another plays Total Balls-Up, things aren't going to pan out well.) As with many things in this game, the precise fallout of cards is up to you and whatever works best for the story.

Occasionally a player will play a card with the words 'GM, time to shine' written on it, or something to that effect. You now have *carte blanche* to describe whatever events you wish, and you can get away with it scot-free because *one of the players asked you to*.

Do not – we repeat, do *not* – allow players to narrate their own results in these situations. Players are self-serving cads, the lot of them, and they'll do anything to get an extra edge. If someone tries to sneak in their own description, immediately kill their character. Show them this page. You're not being a dick – we told you to do this. Keep killing their characters until they *learn*.

NPCs don't get cards. Or rather, you don't get cards, in the same way that you don't have to roll dice. The characters you play in combat exist only to make things interesting for the PCs, they're not there to have rounded existences with hopes and dreams and equal opportunities to do cool stuff in firefights. Mostly they're there to scream and bleed, and you should let them do that.



WORKING WITH NPCs

- PART 2.2

NPCs are pretty straightforward. Who wants to spend hours plotting out their precise skill levels, their likes and dislikes, their place in the world, their inner thigh measurement and favourite flavour of Bouncy Bubble Beverage? Not us, that's for sure. There are three things you need to worry about with NPCs:

ONE. What they want.

TWO. How they're different from everyone else.

THREE. How tough they are.

Let's go through these each in turn.

WHAT THEY WANT

What's your NPC's motivation? Why are they here, shouting or shooting at the PCs? What do they want right now, out of the current situation? Bear this in mind and it'll be much easier to play them in-character.

HOW THEY'RE DIFFERENT

It's easy to have all your NPCs blend into a single homogeneous mass. To avoid that, work out what makes this NPC different from all the others; a single trait will do it. It can be physical, social, a vocal tic, a strange habit, an unusual item of clothing or prop, a peculiar desire... anything you want. Remembering NPCs is a lot easier if you use someone else as a shorthand, like 'John from the canteen' or 'That kid from that vampire movie'. That gives you a visual appearance, a voice, and possibly some physical mannerisms as well. This is particularly useful for recurring characters.

HOW TOUGH THEY ARE

This is where rules come in; NPCs have wound boxes, like PCs, but they're not stuck with four like Troubleshooters are. Are they super-tough? Let them double up at a particular level: they can get Injured twice, or Maimed twice. Are they weak and wheedling? One hit and they're toast. Is there a big crowd of them? Save yourself time and stick an extra wound box on for each member of the team. (If your NPC has armour, note it down here.)

If you want, you can treat any unnamed NPC as cannon-fodder: a single wound of any type will put them out of action. This speeds things up wonderfully, is a lot more dramatic and cinematic, and keeps book-keeping to a minimum.

DESCRIBING NPCs

NPCs don't have full character sheets like PCs do. They can, if you really like creating extra work for yourself but let's be honest most NPCs exist as temporary obstacles with a single job to do in a scenario: you only need an abbreviated form for them. It looks like this.



CAT-O-BIN

/// NOTES

PRODUCTION OPERATIONER FOR
ALGAE PRESS, A MYSTICS
SPLINTER-GROUP

/// HEALTH BOXES

● ● ● ● ●

/// EQUIPMENT

BAT (LEVEL 2)

/// SPECIAL SKILLS

+2 PERSUADE, +3 INTIMIDATE, +1 DRINK, +2 HAND-TO-HAND

Special skills are any abilities the character's particularly good or bad at, or likely to do. You can put numbers beside them if you want, to indicate how good they are compared to the PCs. Maybe what sets them apart is that they're really good at Science, so you write '+4 Science' next to their name on the back of the envelope on which you're planning your game. Maybe they really hate Free Enterprise operatives, so you write '+3 when fighting Free Enterprise ops'. You get the idea. These look like dice modifiers but they're not, unless you're using dice. Obviously.

NPCs do not have moxie. NPCs do not get cards for combat. NPCs do not roll the Computer dice. Equipment works the same as PC equipment.

GM ADVICE

- PART 2.3

Once you've run a game (or two), you'll be able to graduate to the *real* GM advice. See that stuff you have just been reading? Training wheels. What follows is the distilled genius of about sixty combined years of running games with zero prep and zero effort AND making it look as though you're a brilliant GM who prepares and cares, and everything. Be warned: this information will change you. Maybe even for the better.

THE PARANOIA GM'S SCREEN – A STORY

Before we get started, here's a story.

When we Famous Games Designers were designing this game, we were throwing around ideas for the *Paranoia* GM screen – which you, faithful purchaser, will have no doubt sitting next to you as you read this chapter. GM screens are, by and large, just a place to stick quick-reference material – random encounters, hit locations, weapon damage, combat modifiers, difficulty ratings, you know.

But *Paranoia* doesn't really have any of those and we had a better idea, anyway – we would print 'MAKE SOME SHIT UP' in foot-high letters on the GM's side of the screen and leave it at that. The concept didn't make it past the concept stage but it survived for a remarkably long time because it's the spirit of true *Paranoia* GMing in less than twenty characters.

Because this is *Paranoia* and you're in charge. Your players are playthings; they survive at your whim. Any idea you can invent will be better than anything we write here because *you* came up with it and your players got to see it for the first time; and, unlike less fun *inferior* game systems, you don't have to worry about Game Balance or any of that dreck. You're in charge of *everything*. There are no wrong answers.

However, 'MAKE SOME SHIT UP' isn't enough to fill out an entire GM section, no matter how many times you copy and paste it, according to our editor. In lieu of that, here's some actual advice that will help you craft Alpha Complex and fill it full of terrible people doing ill-advised things with the minimum amount of effort on your part whilst making it *look* like you're actually an excellent GM.

YOU ARE NOT HERE TO BE A DICK

Traditionally, gamemastering *Paranoia* has been a good place to work out your frustration in the other parts of your life; you can be as mean as you like, kill as many player-characters as you like, and generally be arbitrary and cruel and awful and feel better about everything at the end of the session.

Leave that attitude at the door. It's 2016. We're done with that.

No matter how big we all talk about being great and terrible bastards when we GM *Paranoia*, at the end of the day we're still playing with our friends. (Or, if not, probably with people that we'd *like* to be our friends some day.) If you're a dick, your players won't like it, and they won't like you, and they won't play any more *Paranoia* or buy their *own* boxed sets, and that's really bad news for us, because even Famous Games Designers have got to eat.

So, you see, this affects all of us. Play nice. Destroy characters, not players. Happy players are engaged players and engaged players are easy players because they're excited to play and fill in the details themselves. Don't you want easy players? Of course you do.

THE INHERENT MASOCHISM OF ROLEPLAY

All roleplayers are masochists; roleplaying is a masochistic act. Think about it: we build characters, spend ages fine-tuning their abilities and background (in other, less fun games, anyway) and then we all sit down and run them through a bloody mincer in the name of entertainment. Every week, we push our characters through untold levels of abuse for dubious reward – we thrill when they're put in danger, we chuckle to ourselves when they're betrayed, we laugh at the odds and challenge armies to duels. This is because *adversity is fun*.

Not real adversity, mind. That's awful. *Pretend* adversity is one of the greatest things in the world. Just grab a good book, or turn on any half-decent film: engaging characters are thrown headlong into trouble time after time, and we lap it up.

Roleplaying gives us a chance to interact with, and overcome, that adversity; to have horrible things happen and see if we survive with absolutely zero danger.

That, ladies and gentlemen, is why *Paranoia* has remained popular for more than thirty years; it is an extreme exercise in hurting yourself (and others!) in a socially acceptable fashion. It is an antidote to our humdrum existences. It is a world where death does not matter and everyone, everywhere, is out to get anyone else. In the real world, it's hard to know who you can trust; in Alpha Complex, you *know* you can't trust anyone else. There's a comfort in that.



A TROUBLESHOOTER IS ALWAYS ALERT TO THEIR SURROUNDINGS

Your players want their characters to be put through hell and to come out the other side, beaten and bloody and abused, because that's where *stories* come from and roleplaying games are story machines at their core. Taking the safe route through life is boring, after all. If our warriors and wizards in robes and chainmail wanted to thoroughly optimise their safety they'd never leave the tavern, let alone spend hours choosing the best set of +3 equivalent armour.

So – give your player characters adversity. Pull their hair; kick them when they're down. Have everything they do collapse around them, and smile as you do it, and you'll probably find them smiling back.

SMILE

In fact, just smile all the time! Even if you're not happy! That'll shit 'em right up. They'll have no idea what to think of you, aside from the fact that you know something that they don't. And you do – you know why you're smiling. It's because we told you to.

THE RULES ARE IN YOUR FAVOUR

Paranoia is loaded with rules to screw over the characters, and you're in charge of them. Crucially, they're all either (a) *random*, which means you're just doing your job when you're impossibly cruel, (b) *triggered by other players* which means it's their fault when you're being impossibly cruel or (c) *triggered by the player themselves*, at which point they really have no-one else to blame for this impossible cruelty. None of it's your fault.

And sure, you can ruin anything you want at any time – that's your prerogative as GM. But the game is built to visit disaster on the Troubleshooters at every turn and for you, fair GM, to merely be an *agent* of that disaster. If players don't feel antagonised by you, they'll be more willing to go along with your ideas, which means less work for you.

Here's when to twist that knife to the fullest extent:

THE COMPUTER DICE is a golden goose; it will give you, and your players, hours of fun. When it shows the Computer symbol it's your time to shine; put on your best Computer voice and get *intrusive*. Get in the way; ask difficult questions, make stupid suggestions and insist they follow them, block off their visual feeds, censor targets in the middle of combat, play marketing jingles loudly in their ears, etc., etc.

COMPARING SCORES is your opportunity to get ruinous. The rules don't state that a player fails when they miss the required score; they state that *something goes wrong*. Failure is a byproduct of things going wrong. (Failure, just by itself, is boring). When someone fails a roll by three or more points, get messy, and get creative. After all, they brought this on themselves.

LOSING IT is your fast-track to humour; we've often found that players will deliberately Lose It because it's fun to act the fool and when they can do so without consequence ('But the roll said I had to set everyone on fire, it's not my fault') then they start taking a perverse glee in it. Enable that. Encourage people to spend Moxie points in character generation and once you're playing drain their remaining points like no one's business.

WOUNDS are funny because other people getting hurt is funny and cloning lets us amp up the severity of what's within the boundaries of good taste. (Kinda.) Decapitation is hilarious. Losing a limb is pretty ridiculous, too. Gluing Troubleshooters to themselves, or each other, is great. Impalements work well in a pinch. Think back to Tom and Jerry, and then think slightly less far back to Itchy and Scratchy, and draw inspiration from there.

ACTION CARDS WHERE YOU'RE TOLD IT'S YOUR 'TIME TO SHINE' should be your favourite thing. With these, a player has said: 'GM, you're an impossible force of nature, please ignore me for a while and instead royally mess up this guy I don't like.' This is how Poseidon must have felt when the Greeks prayed for storms to wreck their enemy's ships. Drink deep.

SAY YES

Bearing all that in mind, say yes whenever you can.

'But wait,' we hear you shout, 'surely I should say no to my players at all times, and be a cruel draconian overlord! *Paranoia* is a game about denial and stomping on players' faces until they stop asking for things!'

Wrong, bucko. That's the path to a boring game, and it's so last century.

Improvising is an important art to learn as a Gamemaster and one of the fundamental tenets of improvising is to 'Say Yes.' (In fact, go read a book on improv, there are hundreds. Best decision you'll ever make as a GM.) When you say yes, you move the action along. You keep the scene progressing. You engage everyone present and keep them on their toes. When you say no, you're *blocking* – you're stopping the scene from going forward. Compare the following two scenarios:

1. *GM: You file out of the briefing room and into the corridor.*
Chris Mouchel: Hey, Bjorn-Toby-B-OLD-6 needs to contact some... friends of mine about the mission. Are there any corridors around I can sneak off down?
GM: No.
Chris: Oh... okay.
2. *GM: You file out of the briefing room and into the corridor.*
Chris: Hey, Bjorn-Toby-B-OLD-6 needs to contact some... friends of mine about the mission. Are there any corridors around I can sneak off down?
GM: Yes! There are loads of dark corridors. More than you can count!
Chris: Excellent! I sneak off down one of the corridors.
GM: Roll to see if anyone notices you go.
Chris: [Rolls dice] I fail spectacularly!
GM: Excellent! Well, you don't see anyone following you on your way to your, uh, friends. Not at all.

In the first case, you shut down the action; you teach the player that they shouldn't ask questions and that they should wait for you to provide information. This is terrible behaviour to teach your players, because the more questions that they ask, the less work you have to do. This is easy street, baby, and all you have to say is Yes.

If a player makes something good up, say Yes to it. At that point, they're literally doing your job for you, so you should encourage that.

Of course, this is still *Paranoia*, so you have to mess with their heads. When you say yes, get ready to twist the knife. Don't give them everything they need. Give them what they *think* they want but in fact what they get is incredibly dangerous and gets them into more trouble than they'd initially planned.

With this, players start to feel responsible for their own mistakes; you are merely a rope salesman, and they are hanging themselves with the product that you're spooling out faster than you can think.

To give you another example:

Rob Hansen: Wow, this firefight is getting pretty heavy! Rob-R-IES-6 calls Armed Services via the Coretech link to report a disturbance.
You: You can't get through. The line is busy.
Rob: Oh... okay.

Compared with:

Rob Hansen: Wow, this firefight is getting pretty heavy! Rob-R-IES-6 calls Armed Services via the Coretech link to report a disturbance.
GM: You call up a link to the local station. 'Hello, Troubleshooter!' says a friendly Armed Services Officer. 'Input your Disturbance Code now!'

Rob: Disturbance code?

GM: 'You must have got the memo about Disturbance Codes. Not having your Disturbance Code ready when you report a disturbance is wasting Armed Services time, and waste is treason!'

Rob: I, uh... is it 154?

GM: '154! Large quantities of vat-grown meatlike on the rampage! We're dispatching a warbot to barbecue the area. Please be ready to upload relevant intel so we can brief the bot en route.'

Rob: I think I might have meant 155.

GM: 'Too late. The bot will seek and destroy the largest biological entity at your location, Troubleshooter, as per your 154 report. Have a nice day.'

The player got what they asked for – back-up – and it might even help sort out that troublesome firefight. But they're more likely to be adjusting their clone number shortly.

When you say Yes, you open up more scenes and you allow for more roleplaying. And this is a game about roleplaying, so more scenes are surely a good thing, right?

ALWAYS MAKE THINGS HAPPEN

When the players pick up their dice, they're signalling to you that they want something to *happen* in the game world – they're signalling that they want something to *change*. You're the agent of that change – so make it happen.

Whenever a player picks up the dice, *change* the situation – either in their favour, or against it. Try to fail forward; this means that failure on a challenge doesn't stop the action but instead introduces complications. Let's say that a Troubleshooter is trying to pick the lock on a storage container for their Secret Society and they don't roll high enough to do so. You could just say 'you can't pick the lock' but where does that get us? Nowhere. Instead, consider:

'You damage your lockpicks but you open the door.'

'You make a bunch of noise doing it and the guardbot from upstairs comes to investigate.'

'You fall inside the storage container and, from your enforced hiding place, you hear someone from your Secret Society enter the room and unveil how this is all a ruse to use you as a scapegoat.'

'The AI in the door asks you a series of questions about lockpicks.'

'You open the door but accidentally pull the container on top of yourself.'



DON'T TRY TO BE FUNNY

Paranoia is a comedy game – a *dark* comedy, for sure, but if people aren't laughing out loud at least once per session, you're doing your job wrong.

But don't be *wacky*. Don't try too hard to come up with funny, 'random' ideas for plots and action. Instead, use the first idea that pops into your head. (The first idea is probably the best, in the case of improv, because it's the first – you're not leaving your audience waiting for a response, and that's worse than the worst joke you can come up with. When you're over-the-top in your humour, you can hit a peak very quickly indeed and that can leave the gags with nowhere to build into.

Instead, start basic. Start simple. Good improvised comedy comes from regular people in interesting situations – it's about the interaction of characters, and the combining of ideas, the juxtaposition of normality with the absurd.

And of course, by the end of the game, you'll have all sorts of high-energy weirdness going on, and you'll have *built* to levels of wackiness that are self-sustaining and don't jar when you look at them too closely.

So, again – use the first thing that pops into your head. Don't be clever, don't be funny; just be active.

LEARN WHAT YOUR PLAYERS LIKE, THEN GIVE IT TO THEM

Ever tried to get someone to do something they didn't want to do? It's hard work. We hate hard work and so should you.

To truly master the art of effortless GMing, you need to learn what your players like. This is easier said than done; you might not have time to get to know a regular group. If you're playing with a new group, test the waters first – a little combat here, a little social interaction there, a little problem-solving on the side. See what each of them enjoys. Make a note of it, if you want.

Then give them more of it. Are two of your players excited to see who can outdo each other with the most gruesome descriptions of violence? Maybe it's time for a fight against some melee-focused baddies. (Or, you know, each other. That's good too.) Do one player's eyes light up when they start telling lies? Throw in a seemingly incompetent official for them to run roughshod over. Is one player asking a lot of questions about technology and AI? Give them some bots to play with.

The 'plot' doesn't matter. The mission doesn't really matter, if we're honest. Build a sandbox. Put your players' favourite toys in the sandbox. Have their toys kill them. They'll be so alternatively overjoyed and busy dying that, with any luck, they'll not notice that the only thing written on your adventure notes is 'Make some shit up'.

BURN YOUR BRIDGES

Nothing is sacred. (Aside from the Computer. The Computer is sacred. All hail the Computer.) Don't put anything into your game that you're not prepared to throw away at a moment's notice – or, even better, destroy in a great booming fireball that singes eyebrows and rattles teeth. The players will try to kill everything you put in their path, so don't be precious about it. Everyone can die; everything is expendable.

If you build an idea around a single character or concept, it'll come unravelled almost instantly if anything happens to it; and before you know it you're having to either point-blank deny players agency (which shuts them down, which means you have to become more active, which means more work for you) or you're frantically rearranging things behind the scenes (which, you know, means more work for you).

Neither are good. Hold onto things lightly, and don't be afraid to break them to see what happens. (Not the Computer, however. Never that.)

PEOPLE CARE ABOUT OTHER PEOPLE

You know why so many popular stories are about love? Because people like other people. (Most of us do, anyway.) That's why we're the dominant species on the planet; we like talking to each other. And sex, but even with that there's usually some talking first.

Populating your game with characters will save you time in the long run, because players can *talk* to characters, and every second they're talking to a character, they're not poking around at the edges of your plot trying to work out what's *really* going on (and what's *really* going on is that you're making it up as you go along).

CHANGE IS GOOD

Have your characters change. This game is neither serious nor long-running, so you don't need to worry about coming across as absurd and your players losing respect for you. Is a clone happy? By the end of the scene, have them react

to something in a way that makes them sad. Are they calm? They flip out over some minor detail and rant at the Troubleshooters. Are they big, and nasty, and in charge? Have a superior (even the Computer) arrive and put them in their place. Do they like cherry-flavour Bouncy Bubble Beverage? Have them realise that they've preferred strawberry all along and they've wasted their life.

Just invert whatever they establish themselves to be, and players will feel like you've written them up with a character arc. They'll feel more real, and players will enjoy engaging with them more, and all because you have a little switch in your head that says 'I'm bored of being X, let's be Y'.

BE OPEN WITH YOUR PLAYERS

There is a strange relationship between players and gamemasters that's borne out of the hobby's antagonistic roots, and it results in a situation where the GM never discusses what's going on behind the screen outside of the game.

Sod that.

If you want, tell your players that you're making everything up as you go. Some players don't like to hear that, but to hell with them – they're asking too much of you. If they want to explore a Machiavellian labyrinth of well-established interlocking plots, they should go read *Game of Thrones*. You're not George R Bloody R Martin; you probably work a full-time job like everyone else. You've only got so much time in your life to devote to lavishly creating imaginary worlds.

(That said, maybe you *like* doing a load of work before the game, in which case why are you even reading this GM guide, surely you have random dice tables to be writing and relationship maps to plot out.)

If your players think that you're holding some vast, pre-prepared world in your head, they'll start poking around to see what they can find. They'll expect you to have an answer for everything immediately; it puts them into a mindset where you've set them a *problem* and it's up to them to *solve* the problem. They'll start probing and trying to uncover your grand schemes.

If you don't have any grand schemes, this will result in a lot of work for you.

If, instead, you're up-front with them that you're making the majority of the adventure up as you go, then odds are they'll be more forgiving of you. They'll roll with your ideas, and start providing suggestions, and roleplay with each other. And all those things make your job much, much easier.

RECYCLE EVERYTHING

Write down everything that comes up as you play; names, places, motivations, suspicions, ideas, jokes. Cross out the stuff that seems boring. If a player seems to engage with something, use it again. It doesn't *matter* if it doesn't make a lot of sense – just use it. Fold it back into the game.

People love repetition and call-backs to things that were established earlier; one half of comedy, after all, is the set-up. It's far more satisfying if the Secret Society contact you meet halfway through a mission is the same character who gave you equipment at R&D; it's funnier if every lift is controlled by the same LiftBot AI; and so on.

You're making it up as you go along, but the *illusion* is that every action, every new element introduced, has a point – that it's there for a reason. Of course, you're just throwing stuff in and seeing if it sticks but players love it when previous things tie into current events. Think of it like a shot of a black car in a film, with blacked-out windows, accompanied by ominous music. 'What's the car for,' asks the audience, 'and how does it tie into the plot?' Maybe the car contains the villain of the piece. Maybe the car contains the good guy, but he's a stone-cold badass. Maybe the car just needs to crash into a later scene and change things up.

Whenever you introduce an element into a scene (and that's anything from items to professions to atmospheric conditions to personality traits to funny noises) you're saying that it has a point; it's your job to make it a point, a pivot, in the scene, and that makes it seem like you were planning this all along, when in fact you were instead trying to justify that initial inclusion.

What you're learning here, loyal reader, is that laziness is good; all you have to do is *pay attention and use what's already there*.

IN CLOSING

With all this advice, you should be able to make up *Paranoia* adventures on the go and have your players hungry for more. And if you're still not capable of that, well, why not purchase one of the fine pre-written adventures penned by us or, indeed, any other Famous Games Designer? Please. Our families are hungry.

CREATING ADVENTURES QUICKLY

- PART 2.4

Coming up with adventures in a few minutes is a skill that *Paranoia* GMs should have in spades. Here's a simple system for throwing a small pile of ideas into a coherent narrative that will entertain a bunch of people for three hours as long as there's pizza.

METASTRUCTURE

All stories break down into a number of elements. Books have chapters, plays have acts and scenes. That's all we're doing here: taking the underlying framework of an adventure – the metastructure – and filling in the blanks. But to fill in blanks you need a blank framework to fill in. Get a piece of landscape paper.

THE THEME

What's the big idea? What's the adventure about? Write one line here. Ignore what your English Literature teacher told you: theme doesn't have to be about big feels and personal growth, it's just the layer of fertilizer that lets everything else in the story grow. 'What if the clone nutrient tubes got muddled with the Hot Fun tubes?' is a perfectly good theme. 'A Cerebral Coretech update goes wrong.' 'A mission to clean up a spillage turns out to be a spillage of a volatile mutagen that reanimates the dead and causes flesh to stick to other flesh.' 'The Frankenstein Destroyers discover a route to Outside.'

Write your theme at the top of the paper. Underneath it, write down the first three things that occur to you as a result.

THE THREE ACTS

You've probably heard of the Three Act Structure that is supposed to underlie all movies. We're going to nick it.

The three acts are: 1. Setup; 2. Confrontation; 3. Resolution. Each act has a job: Act 1 establishes the status quo, gives the central characters a problem or danger – in *Paranoia* terms the mission briefing – and gets them to a point where they can only go forward to adventure. Act 2 explores the problem and gives the characters

time to mess around and show off but then starts to turn the thumbscrews. The core of Act 2 is rising tension. Act 3 is discovering what's really going on, thinking you've fixed it, realising you've screwed things up completely, really fixing it, debriefing and XP points.

In proper screenwriting something important should happen at the moment Act 1 transitions into Act 2 and the moment 2 becomes 3. These are the Act Breaks. However, we are not writing a screenplay.

Divide your paper into three columns. Number them. At the top of each one write three things that happen in that act, either a key moment ('find the grubby slippers'), a set-piece ('big fight with the warbot'), or important information to be discovered ('learn about Gehenna Incident').

For an experienced GM that's enough and the rest can be laid at the door of Make Some Shit Up. The rest of us may need a bit more hand-holding, a bit more detail in the metastucture.

THE METASTRUCTURE OF PARANOIA ADVENTURES

Paranoia adventures already have a strong metastructure. It goes like this:

1. Mission briefing
2. Equipment assignment
3. R&D testing
4. Travel to location of mission
5. Do mission
6. Return from mission
7. Debrief, receive XP Points and/or summary execution.

The first four parts of that will fill up Act 1 nicely, and the break into Act 2 should come at the moment the PCs work out what their mission really entails and just how screwed they are. The moment someone says, 'Wow, we're screwed,' you know Act 2 just started.

'Do mission' is Act 2 and most of Act 3. For Act 2, you need three things. Start with a fun bit where the PCs get to explore the problem, shoot at stuff and feel like they're in control. Then dial it down with a quieter bit, either research, exploration, suspense or conversations with people who explain the plot. Then ramp it back up with a big dangerous set-piece combat or action sequence. Loads of rolling, a few dead clones.

The end of Act 2 is the Everything You Thought You Knew Is Wrong moment. The PCs discover the big secret, the true conspiracy, the secret identity, whatever it is. Let them think they've cracked it and they're about to finish with loads of XP points. But they fail or the bad guys outsmart them! The situation looks hopeless. Move the PCs to solution, showdown, confrontation, final conflict (not necessarily combat but who are we kidding) and resolution. Then get them back on the *Paranoia* metastructure and into a debriefing room, explaining to a superior why their R&D equipment is covered in scabrous ichor and blaming each other for accidentally shooting that nukebot.



DEBRIEFING

- PART 2.5

Debriefing is an often overlooked part of the adventure. It comes right at the end so the temptation is to skip it, particularly if the session has run long. Don't do that! Debriefing is crucial, for the same reason that televised sports matches are always followed by half an hour of highlights, replays and analysis from pundits.

A debrief is theoretically where the PCs report back on how the mission went, answer a few questions and are awarded their XP points. That's if you're doing it wrong. If you're doing it right, it's an opportunity to kill all the clones you didn't kill during the adventure, and some of the ones you did as well, and if you're really doing it right then it's the PCs who'll shoot each other. It should be a cathartic bloodbath.

During the game there have probably been a couple of *l'esprit d'escalier*¹ moments where you thought of a good joke but the moment had already passed, or where you realised too late how you could have pushed the situation to an even greater level of chaos. Make a note of them and save these up for the debrief. And as the GM you'll have been gathering information on what the PCs were really trying to do – their secret-society agendas, their attempts to incriminate each other, or shoot each other. You should have kept notes of all of these, because the debrief is where all of this stuff comes out.

HOW TO STRUCTURE A DEBRIEF

Put the PCs in a neutral room, along with their Briefing Officer who is now their Debriefing Officer. Assume that the Briefing Officer has watched some video feed of the mission and knows what went wrong.

Start with the Briefing Officer asking carefully neutral, slightly formulaic questions. Work through the Bonus Duties roles, asking each person one or two questions. Let them big themselves up a bit. Then ask the other PCs how they felt the Troubleshooter did in their role, whether there were any specific moments they want to draw attention to (not saying moments of failure but clearly that's what's meant) and watch the bloodletting begin.

The Briefing Officer is not your big gun, of course. They will try to be conciliatory and keep the peace but the moment you want to ratchet up the tension – or wipe the smile off the face of someone who's literally getting away with murder – then bring in the Computer to ask a couple of pointed questions, wrap them up in some circular logic and distribute treason stars like confetti.

1. That's in French because we're classy.

The debriefing session shouldn't be long. It should be quite fraught, a bit tense, and it should generate its own humour as people are forced to admit why they tried to do something stupid. Most importantly it should be *cathartic* – the Troubleshooters will end up traumatised, brutalised, and probably cauterized as well, but the players should feel emotionally purged and cleansed.

A well-run debrief resolves all the arguments, rebalances the pecking order, lets the picked-upon get their moment, and leaves everyone feeling good about the game and their friends. That's why it's important.



ALPHA COMPLEX CELEBRATES DIVERSE CULTURES



HUMOUR IN RPGs: SOME TIPS

- PART 2.6

HUMOUR AS A DEFENCE MECHANISM

You may be under the impression that humour can be used as a defence mechanism. This is a mistake. Humour provides no bonuses to defence, dodge nor any other diversionary skill.

BUT SERIOUSLY FOLKS

Paranoia is a game whose foundation is (that aforementioned *dark*) humour, a game where the improbable, ridiculous, absurd and slapstick are stirred in with just the right amount of the unreasonable to create situations that are funny. It's a silly game. It's a game that should not take itself too seriously, and nor should its players, precisely because it's set in a world that takes itself *way* too seriously.

It should be obvious by now that what defines *Paranoia* is a series of fundamentally self-defeating premises. Troubleshooters have very little agency or independence, yet they're considered extremely responsible and subject to tremendous oversight. The Computer is all-powerful, yet lacks intuition or an understanding of context. Rigid rules are constantly being enforced in an ambiguous world. Nobody wants to or can even acknowledge the things that are going wrong.

So *Paranoia* should be funny sometimes. It doesn't have to be funny all the time and certainly nobody should feel forced to be funny. The old gaming adage is that the most important thing is always to have fun. If you're all enjoying yourselves, then you've already won. Sort of. There is, inevitably, something of a tie-breaker to be had in determining who has and who has not suffered the most blunt force head trauma but there shouldn't be any pressure to be funny, neither on the GM, nor on the players.

MAKING ROOM FOR THE HUMOUR

Whether you're a group who know each other well, casual acquaintances or strangers playing together for the first time, one of the best way to be find yourselves laughing during a game is to let the humour come naturally, rather than to attempt something contrived. As we said earlier, don't try to be funny. Don't force it. A game of *Paranoia* is not the same as a stand-up act and it doesn't necessarily suit build-ups and punchlines. It's an organic, fluid, ever-developing situation in which everyone involved can potentially contribute.

Be open, be casual and be ready to run with things. Both GMs and players should be open to the unexpected and ready to roll with the ridiculous. Don't be afraid of letting things get a little strange, nor of elements or happenings that inject some chaos into the proceedings. Similarly, don't be quick to shut down anything that's unusual or left-of-field. It's absolutely fine for the plot to take a few unexpected turns and if something *could* go awry, then maybe it *should*. Maybe it's not a bad idea to get on board with that, to be involved, even to walk right into it. Who knows, it may make things much easier to walk out mostly intact afterwards.

SAY YES

Remember what we said earlier about saying 'Yes', to things? That's part of what'll make room for the comedy. That'll really, really help bring the funny. Say 'Yes' or at least something as good as ('Maybe!' or 'You can try' or 'Sure, why not?' or 'There isn't an **x** here but there is a **y**, much like it...') to any funny possibilities.

SO WHAT'S FUNNY?

This is a silly question to ask. Obviously, whatever you find yourself laughing at is funny, but it's never a bad idea to consider things like, the unexpected; the drastically unsuccessful; the ironic; gross incompetence; wholly unreasonable optimism; polar opposites and anyone carrying a ladder who swings it around and wallops someone else.

It's also good to remember that *Paranoia* is a roleplaying game. Description, elaboration and embellishment are all very helpful. If someone slips in radioactive slime, how exactly do they slip, what is their expression as they do so and precisely where in their final words of warning are they cut off, before the Pac-o-Bot grabs and vacuum-seals them, marking them as next week's rations?

A little bit of clowning around is allowed, now and then. Look, here's a little secret we won't repeat anywhere else in the manual: *Paranoia is a tiny bit silly.*

You may want to consider...

COMIC TIMING

But not yet. No, not yet.

Not yet.

About now.

Comic timing is wonderful for events that happen when they shouldn't, for words of advice given far too late or for the Computer checking in to see if everyone is fine.

Did the Troubleshooters requisition some tools or spare parts? Is a bot or delivery on the way? Has what they needed to repair just exploded, attacked them, escaped or crushed everyone under its ten-tonne torso? Here come those tools. Please use them wisely.

A Morale Officer dangling by their one remaining arm off a six hundred metre drop that's not marked on any maps provides a perfect opportunity for the Computer to check in and ask how everyone is doing and if there are any hold-ups. Hopefully there aren't any hold-ups, because that would mean the Troubleshooters would be doing a bad job. Hopefully morale is 'higher than ever'. That's the sort of thing the Computer likes to hear.

(It is almost impossible to teach comic timing from a book, or even in person. But it's good to have it, for sure, and we wish you the best of luck in acquiring it.)

LAMPSHADING

Sometimes it pays to note the Obvious. The Obvious is over there. It's just by that sign that says 'The Obvious', and our 'Obvious Tour Guide' will be with you in a moment to point out the obvious things about the Obvious, whether it's the cases of the plainly blatant, the stupidly self-evident or the transparent reference to something else. Overuse of lampshading tends to kill humour dead, rather like overuse of alcohol tends to kill people dead. A little dash from time to time, however, can be a quite wonderful thing.

RECURRING THEMES AND REPETITION

Sometimes things are just funny when they happen again. And again. This can be because they were expected or because they were unexpected. It can be both. Or because they weren't last time but they were this time. Again.

After all, what are clones really for, except to act as sounding boards for the most drastic of slapstick comedy?

RUNNING JOKES

Or repetition with context, perhaps. It can be funny when the same thing happens yet again. It can be funnier still with a twist, in a new place, in a new situation or with a new power dynamic. The sixth time a bot repair goes drastically wrong. The tenth time a comrade is trapped under an appliance or object of some kind. The fifteenth time that the Equipment officer calls in to request another minimally stocked first-aid kit 'that only really needs the morphine'.

It can be funny to repeat your briefing officer's confident assurances back to him, word for word, over the radio while hanging upside down out the bottom of a broken and decaying elevator, or a friend's guiding mantra as you pick up and clear up the fifth clone he lost today.

Running jokes aren't just about repetition, they're also about recurring themes, about putting little twists on the established and about framing old things in a new context.

Jokes about running are not running jokes. Unless the ideas and concepts around them keep reappearing. In that case, run with it.

Wait. That's a pun. Don't do puns. (Not unless they're really, really funny. Then you can do puns.)

BE RESPECTFUL

The bit we put above about everybody having fun is still the most important part. When you're involved a tabletop roleplaying game that features violence, obfuscation, betrayal, so much shifting of the blame and demonstration of the incapable on an unprecedented scale, there is the potential to offend somebody.

Do your best not to offend anybody.

A gaming group is often a circle of friends who know each other and so know one another's boundaries, tastes, behaviours and so on. Even within such a group, the wrong thing can sometimes be said, or the best of intentions misinterpreted. It's both wise and kind to do your very best to avoid this as much as possible.

Before playing, make sure everyone in your group is comfortable with the themes of *Paranoia* and the kind of things that may happen in the game. Be sure that everyone playing knows what to expect and be sure they're happy to take part but also be prepared for anyone to speak up and declare that they are unhappy with any particular topics or concepts. This is particularly important if you're involving players who may not know each other so well and even just asking questions about comfort levels before a game begins is a good way to make everyone feel included, respected and also respectful.

Do have fun, but do be considerate. Do your part, whether as player or GM, to make your gaming table a safe, welcoming and considerate space.

I DON'T CARE ABOUT OFFENDING PEOPLE, THIS IS PARANOIA!

If you don't care about offending people, you're a dick, and the only people that like you are dicks like you, and we don't want to play games with you, and when you leave a room decent people are like 'Can you believe that person?' and they don't like you, so try being a better person maybe?



SERVICE GROUPS

- APPENDIX 1

Almost everybody in Alpha Complex works for one of the eight Service Groups. The main exceptions are High Programmers, Troubleshooters, and 'Tin Mice' who have dropped out of Alpha Complex society and who now live, overtly or covertly, outside of the official system.

Between them, the Service Groups cover everything that human beings need to do within Alpha Complex except for preventing its inevitable breakdown and collapse into anarchy and disaster. If something needs to be done, it is the task of the relevant service group to see that it's done. Service Groups take great pride in their work.

Unfortunately there are a lot of tasks that require different service groups to work together, and that causes trouble because each group will believe that the job is rightfully theirs and they should be in charge, while at the same time refusing to get their hands dirty with the shoddy, piecemeal, so-simple-a-scrub-bot-could-do-it work carried out by the other group. This means that a simple task like repairing a Cold Fun dispenser can take two teams of clones several weeks, most of it spent arguing, staring at each other across the growing pools of congealed food-substance in sullen silence, or extended Hot Brown Drink breaks.

Members of Service Group A may hate members of Service Group B for not doing their assigned job properly or on time, but what they hate more than anything else is Service Group B – or anyone else – doing Service Group A's job. Anything that looks like Group B stepping on Group A's toes will cause ructions, ruckuses, eruptions and insurrections, often of an extended Hot Brown Drink-drinking nature.

Troubleshooters, of course, aren't members of any of the Service Groups any more. This means that if they encounter an obstacle that falls within the remit of one of the Service Groups, the protocol is to call in a member of that Service Group to fix it. Depending on backlog, if the situation is an emergency it is unlikely to take more than a few hours for an operative to show up, suck their teeth, blame the problem on another Service Group, ask for Hot Brown Drink, open their toolbox, say they haven't got the right parts, ask a PC to sign a form, and go away, never to be seen again.

Conversely, if the PCs do the task themselves, the Service Group will learn of it almost immediately and refuse to co-operate with them ever again. 'I dare say you do need this nuclear generator re-fused before it goes terminal, but since you switched the battery on that run-down bot last month, clever-clogs, why don't you do it?'

GMs should keep a handy list of which Service Groups the player characters have irritated. Service Groups have long memories, like elephants, and if they feel their toes have been trodden on they may stamp back, or produce an enormous pile of steaming crap for the PCs to deal with. (That's enough elephant metaphors – Ed.)

The eight service groups are:

Armed Service defend Alpha Complex against major threats. They are terrifyingly well armed, despite the fact that there aren't any threats.

Central Processing Unit (CPU) is the organisation that keeps Alpha Complex working smoothly and efficiently, co-ordinating between the other Service Groups. This is the home of social engineers, manipulators, sociopaths and blithering incompetents. No single department is responsible for the sorry state of Alpha Complex but most of the blame lies here.

Housing Preservation and Development & Mind Control (HPD&MC) looks after the everyday needs of the citizens of Alpha Complex, such as catering, accommodation, tranquilizers and propaganda.

Internal Security (IntSec) keeps Alpha Complex safe by hunting down terrorists, traitors, mutants, Secret Society members, propagandists, badthinkers, doubletalkers, cheaters, sneak thieves, software pirates, and litterers, and removing them by any means necessary. The fact that IntSec is listed in this book as a Secret Society tells you all you need to know.

Power Services keeps the lights on, the bots operating, the taps running and the trash recycling throughout Alpha Complex. Probably the closest to a traditional union in structure, attitude and Hot Brown Drink-breaks.

Production, Logistics and Commissary (PLC) keeps Alpha Complex supplied with consumable items like food, clothes, weapons, and new clones. Blamed for shortages. Probably responsible for shortages.

Research and Design (R&D) pushes back the frontiers of science, technology and engineering, driving Alpha Complex towards the edge of a glorious future. Here the laws of physics are treated more like guidelines and lethal design flaws are merely teething problems.

Technical Services keeps everything maintained, working smoothly and in tip-top condition, from the smallest light-switch to the largest warbot, waging a never-ending cold-war with Power Services over demarcation, territory and resources.

USEFUL LISTS AND CHARTS

- APPENDIX 2

We know you people like charts and tables. You've spent the last thirty-something years buying games stacked with the things, and then we come along and design a game with hardly any. This appendix is an apology for the chart-lovers out there, and is dedicated to you as a solid wodge of tabular content in the hope that it'll keep you quiet.

FUN THINGS TO DO WITH THE COMPUTER DICE

If the Computer dice comes up, something has gone *wrong*. Here are some ideas:

- The Computer asks the Troubleshooter a series of unanswerable questions, or questions to which there is no right answer, or questions to which there is only one answer but it is incriminating.
- The Computer asks the Troubleshooter to rate the mission in terms of Efficiency, Fun and Flavour on a scale of 1–84.
- The Computer asks the Troubleshooter to answer a series of questions about the newest flavour of Bouncy Bubble Beverage™ in an effort to gather information for the next iteration.
- The Computer asks why the Troubleshooter did not report on the most recent unreported treason committed by their teammates. (The teammates are not punished.)
- The Computer shows the Troubleshooter an informative video that relates to their current situation that just-so-happens to block out most of their vision.
- The Computer demands additional information from the Troubleshooter, which they must provide or source from onsite. ('We need to analyse that blood! Use your olfactory uplink, Troubleshooter! Hm, can't read it. Get *closer*. *Lick it.*')
- The Computer censors treasonous or upsetting elements in the environment—higher security clearances, illegal information, violence, gore, nudity.
- A camera drops down from the ceiling and tracks the character; upon closer inspection, it has a GREEN light mounted on it.

- The Computer asks the Troubleshooter to fill out a brief questionnaire on why they hate Alpha Complex so much.
- The Computer reminds the Troubleshooter that it's Mandatory Execution Day and they've been selected as one of the Lucky Participants.
- The Computer determines that your laser pistol is overheating and remotely shuts it down for your own protection.
- The Computer assigns another Troubleshooter to 'help' the subject with the situation, as you are clearly having problems achieving success on your own.
- Deafening Hold Musak fills the Troubleshooter's ears as the Computer tries to connect them with a regional operative to help solve their current problem.
- A bot in the scene malfunctions dangerously and makes everything worse.
- Your supervisor arrives and starts asking difficult questions about your behaviour.
- Your Secret Society hijacks your audio feed and delivers you a special mission.
- The Computer decides that the Troubleshooter's valiant actions have made them a Hero of Alpha Complex; all around, vidscreens and pop-ups play inspirational videos featuring people who *have* to be actors because clearly the Troubleshooter never actually did any of that. Clones swarm around for their autograph.
- The Computer decides that the Troubleshooter's despicable actions have branded them an Enemy of Alpha Complex; all around, vidscreens and pop-ups play videos about all the awful things they've done. 'He throws away perfectly good algae chips!' 'He illegally cloned a kitten just so he could drown it!' and so on.
- Following the announcement of the Troubleshooter's horrible traitorous acts, the Computer kindly reformats their identity and assigns them a new one so they can continue serving Alpha Complex. Not referring to them by their new name or referencing parts of their freshly created history – of which you have not been informed – is treason.

LOSING IT

If the various options for PCs losing it have got a bit stale or the possibilities just aren't very interesting or setting-appropriate, here's a list of possible others. Roll a few dice, choose your favourite, choose one that seems to fit the character, close your eyes and stab blindly at the page. Remember to have fun.

- [illegible]





PLAYERS **HANDBOOK**

ALPHA COMPLEX	REFERENCE:0109448626612
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FOR OFFICIAL TROUBLESHOOTER USE ONLY

PARANOIA

PLAYERS HANDBOOK

Written by
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BRAVE TROUBLESHOOTERS AND CITIZENS OF ALPHA COMPLEX: Anthony Wright (Ant-R-GCC-5); Peter Endean (Peetey-B-BRU-5); Manar Hussain (Blue-B-SKY-4); Carl Schelin (Carl-B-GDE-4); Marian McBrine (Mary-I-MAC-1); Billy Darios (Basil-V-FIN-3); Bruce W Skakle (Brooce-B-HRO-4); Oliver Facey (Arkell-V-PDM-9); Rob Hansen (Rob-R-IES-6); Paul Bird (Paul-B-IRD-1); Frédéric Pochard (Freder-I-POC-4); Jordan Theyel (Jordan-G-LOW-4); Chris Mouchel (Bjorn-Toby-B-OLD-6); Carl White (Anders-B-DUK-2)

HIGH PROGRAMMERS: Andrew MacLennan (Ander-U-MAC); Thomas Bender (Lord-U-BER); Sawada Taiju (Taij-U-YAP); Grant Woolcott (Psyk-O-KOW); Liz Mackie (Liz-U-CRO)

GRATEFUL THANKS TO: Cat Tobin, Gareth Briggs, Garrett Crowe, Tom Pleasant, William Mckie, Luke Hawksbee

EQUIPMENT CARDS: Friction Enhancer by James Petts; Laser Tripwire by Mathieu Pasteran; Foam Grenade by Chris Fletcher; K@ Companion Bot by Garry R. Page; Hygiene-O-Matic 9000 by Augustus Golden; U.B.T Hypersense Device by Gabriel Preston; Casey B's Bombaboos by CKC; Fake Moustache by Ryan Sosa

GENTLEMAN TONE CZAR: Ken Rolston

**START WITH THIS BOOK TO BECOME
A PROUD TROUBLESHOOTER OF ALPHA COMPLEX**



The Computer endorses and approves this Celebration of the Selfless
Labours of this list of Citizens and Condemned Traitors

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HOW TO BE A TROUBLESHOOTER

- SECTION 1

This section of the book will teach you how to create a *Paranoia* character in the world of Alpha Complex, explain what they can and can't do and show you how to do it. It'll explain how to investigate crime and terrorism, how to fight people and destroy things, what happens if your character is hurt and how to improve a character's abilities and status.

But what does all that look like?

Seven players have gathered to play *Paranoia*. They are:

Anthony Wright, playing Ant-R-GCC-5
Peter Endean, playing Peetey-B-BRU-5
Manar Hussain, playing Blu-B-SKY-4
Carl Schelin, playing Carl-B-GDE-4
Marian McBrine, playing Mary-I-MAC-1
Billy Darios, playing Basil-V-FIN-3
The Gamesmaster (GM)

The plot so far: Evil terrorists have somehow scrambled the security clearances of all citizens, causing widespread chaos. The Troubleshooters, who are also affected by this, are helping High Programmer Lord-U-BER to a safe terminal where he can restore the system from a backup copy he keeps in his head. At present they are wading along a Warm Red Soup duct on their way to sector BER.

GM: Who's in the lead?

Everyone except Ant-R: Not me!

Ant-R: Not... not fast enough. I suppose it's me.

GM: Make a roll on Brains + Guns

Ant-R: Okay, my NODE is three. (He rolls three dice plus the Computer dice.) 2, 2, 4, 6. One success.

GM: You hear a faint noise from ahead down the tunnel, a sucking thunk, but you can't identify it.

Peetey-B: Is it a tunnel squid?

GM: You didn't hear it, you can't tell.

Ant-R: The Computer would want us to move on. We move on.

Blu-B: Wait a minute, I'm team leader. I decide if we move on. And the Computer would want us to move on, so we move on.

(Everyone agrees with Blu-B's strong leadership and firm decision-making.)



GM: As you move on, there's a crash. Something shatters the heavy lantern that Carl-B is carrying. Everything goes dark. Ant-R, you realise that the noise was the unmistakable sound of a gauss rifle being cocked under soup.

Carl-B: I start shooting!

GM: It's dark.

Carl-B: I have one point of Moxie left so I'm feeling really tense about things. The laser bolts will light up the tunnel. I'm going to shoot stuff.

GM: Make a roll not to destroy anything important.

Carl-B: Violence plus Guns gives me a NODE of four. (He rolls four dice plus the Computer dice.) Uh oh.

GM: Did you roll a Computer? That means you've lost your last point of Moxie. You've lost it and you're freaking out. Anyway, you definitely hit something. There's a crash and a siren starts going off somewhere far away. Nearer to you, a voice in the darkness shouts: 'Stop firing! We're on a mission from the Computer!'

Mary-I: 'No, WE'RE on a mission from the Computer! And we've got a High Programmer with us!'

GM: The voice shouts: 'Oh yeah? Well we've got High Programmer Lord-U-BER, the best High Programmer!' Another voice shouts: 'Yes! Stand down, Troubleshooters, so that I, the best High Programmer, may pass!'

Mary-I: Wait, that's not- I turn to look at Lord-U-BER.

GM: It's dark, you can't see anything. Carl-B, you are in a fragile mental place.

Carl-B: It's dark and warm and smells of soup. I imagine I am back in my clone vat.

GM: Fair enough.

Blu-B: Does anyone have a light source? The Computer would want us to have a light source.

Basil-V: I'm the Equipment Officer. Can I rig a power-pack to overclock the glowy readouts on the Geiger counter to create light? Mechanics plus Engineering.

GM: Sure, but you're in the dark so it's going to be harder.

Basil-V: (rolls dice). One success is not going to be enough, is it?

GM: No. The Geiger Counter is making a noise, however.

Mary-I: I ask the Computer to download a nightsight software package to my Cerebral Coretech.

GM: It's 200 XP points

Mary-I: Sold.

GM: One 0WL1-ZX dark-vision sensor pack installing. I'll tell you when it's ready. The siren is getting louder. The voice down the tunnel shouts: 'Are you going to let us past?'

Carl-B: 'Show us your Lord-U-BER! so we can compare them' I shout.

Ant-R: Oh great, now they know we have a Lord-U-BER too.

GM: 'We can't show you anything, it's dark!' Mary-I, your upgrade has installed.

Mary-I: I look down the tunnel. What can I see?

GM: Three figures. Your Cerebral Coretech clearly identifies one of them as being Lord-U-BER, on his last clone. Siren's quite loud now. The three figures are turning away from you and firing at something away down the tunnel.

Mary-I: I look at our Lord-U-BER.

GM: You don't have a Lord-U-BER any more. Instead, you have two Blu-B-SKYs.

Carl-B: One of them is clearly a mutant traitor! I'm freaking out even more! It's fifty-fifty. I shoot both of them to be sure.

Peetey-B: I shoot Carl-B before he can shoot either Blu-B.

Blu-B: I dive under the soup, report on the situation to the Computer and ask for guidance.

GM: None of you except Mary-I can do anything because you can't see what's happening but the duct is suddenly flooded with welcome light – as a massive duct-maintenance bot sweeps towards you, its siren blaring, pushing a tidal wave of Warm Red Soup, the other Troubleshooters and what is probably Lord-U-BER towards you. Everyone make a Violence + Athletics roll.

Carl-B: Mmm, soup.

THE CHARACTER SHEET

The characters are at the heart of any role-playing game and at the centre of every character is their character sheet, a document of who they are and what they can do in the game. These names and numbers do not exist in the game-world, except that they sort-of do but we'll cover that later.

ALPHA COMPLEX IDENTITY FORM

THIS FORM IS MANDATORY

/// PART ONE

CORE INFORMATION >>>

NAME: SECURITY CLEARANCE: HOME SECTOR: CLONE#:
GENDER: PERSONALITY:

/// PART TWO

DEVELOPMENT >>>

TREASON STARS: XP POINTS:

STATS >>>

VIOLENCE: BRAINS: CHUTZPAH: MECHANICS:

/// PART THREE

SKILLS >>>

ATHLETICS	<input type="checkbox"/>	SCIENCE	<input type="checkbox"/>	BLUFF	<input type="checkbox"/>	OPERATE	<input type="checkbox"/>
GUNS	<input type="checkbox"/>	PSYCHOLOGY	<input type="checkbox"/>	CHARM	<input type="checkbox"/>	ENGINEER	<input type="checkbox"/>
MELEE	<input type="checkbox"/>	BUREAUCRACY	<input type="checkbox"/>	INTIMIDATE	<input type="checkbox"/>	PROGRAM	<input type="checkbox"/>
THROW	<input type="checkbox"/>	ALPHA COMPLEX	<input type="checkbox"/>	STEALTH	<input type="checkbox"/>	DEMOLITIONS	<input type="checkbox"/>

/// PART FOUR

WELLBEING >>>

MOXIE >>>

○○○○○○○○

WOUNDS >>>

HURT ☐ INJURED ☐ MAIMED ☐ DEAD ☐

MEMORY >>>

ZB

/// PART FIVE

EQUIPMENT >>>

This is what it all means:

The CORE INFORMATION box at the top contains things like your character's name, their home sector, their security clearance and a few other bits of information about them as a person. Don't fill this in yet.

TREASON STARS show how much the Computer trusts them. It's zero stars right now. Try to keep it that way.

STATS and SKILLS indicate what your character can do in the game and how well they can do it. Stats can go up to 4; Skills can have values from +5 to -5. There's a fuller explanation of each one coming up in a moment.

Moxie is an indication of how in-control the character is. A high Moxie indicates unflappable calm, a low Moxie means someone who's nervous and jumps at loud noises. A high Moxie is grace under pressure; a low one is grace hiding under a table. There's more about Moxie on page 28.

MEMORY is where you record the files that your character has stored in their AugMem. The section at the end shows how much storage you have in ZB (ZB, like XP, doesn't stand for anything). Under that, list everything you have saved to AugMem, including video and audio recordings, new skills packages, holovid shows, important documentation, Cerebral Coretech wallpaper packages and so on. Your GM will tell you how much space each one takes up.

STATS AND SKILLS

- STATS

Stats are your character's four core abilities. They have a range of 0–4, the higher the better.

Since everyone in Alpha Complex is a clone you may think they all start life with the same abilities; if you do think that then report for immediate re-edification. All clones start with the same potential but it is up to them to choose how to use that potential. They do this with their Stats and Skills.

The four Stats are:

VIOLENCE: Do you know often violence arises as part of the normal duties of a Troubleshooter? Recent reports indicate that it's present in 107% of missions (We calculated the percentage by comparing the total volume of blood lost to the total number of Troubleshooters assigned last yearcycle). Violence is a measure of a character's physical fitness, combat ability, level-headedness and general willingness to inflict fatal harm on a terrorist. You'll use Violence when fighting, running, jumping, chasing, fleeing, forcibly gaining information, pushing and shoving, or otherwise acting with immediate, physical results against another character or object.



BRAINS: Your brain is your most important asset, which is why the Computer has it backed up on some of the least unreliable Memtech servers (That explains why, sometimes, when you have to think particularly hard, you may encounter buffering or a slight loss of vision quality in accordance with our Fair Usage Policy on bandwidth). Brains is a measure of intelligence, perception, knowledge, intuition and problem-solving ability. You'll use Brains when you're thinking, remembering, searching, noticing, solving, scanning or interpreting.

MECHANICS: Alpha Complex is a highly automated society. Bots are your friends and computers make your life easier, so it pays to have the knack when it comes to interacting with them. A high score in Mechanics won't help you interact with the Computer, because the way the Computer interacts with citizens is beyond criticism. (Anyone experiencing teething difficulties with the recent combination of in-eye display units and touchscreen hardware will be provided with one pair of protective gloves per mission). Mechanics is a measure of your ability to interact with bots, computers, machines and other technical, digital or robotic things. You'll use Mechanics when you build, program, repair, modify, hack, jury-rig, sabotage, reinforce or weaken any device, machinery or electronics.

CHUTZPAH: The Computer is your friend. But do you know who else is your friend? Any Troubleshooter with a high Chutzpah score, of course (Having a higher Chutzpah score than the Computer is treason. Befriending a terrorist is treason. Having a Best Friend other than the Computer is treason)! Chutzpah is a measure of your social ability, wit, persuasion, charm, adaptability, bravery, authority and willingness to do whatever it takes to succeed. You'll use Chutzpah when you lie, cheat, steal, hide, sneak, charm, threaten, hustle, persuade, convince, maintain a front, or command.

- SKILLS

Skills have a narrower focus than Stats, and handle individual areas of expertise. When you roll a number of dice (see page 24), you'll add more dice depending on the level of your most relevant skill. We've grouped the skills by the Stat that they're most commonly used with but you shouldn't let that stop you from trying to combine them in inventive ways.

SKILLS MOST COMMONLY USED WITH VIOLENCE

ATHLETICS: General physical fitness and ability. Add ATHLETICS dice to your roll when you run, jump, climb, chase, flee, push, pull, drag or wrestle.

GUNS: Proficiency and knowledge of ranged weaponry. Add GUNS dice to your roll when you shoot, plan an ambush, reload in the middle of a firefight, examine a scene for ballistic evidence or geek out about magazine sizes with fellow gun-nuts.

MELEE: Hand-to-hand and standard close-combat weapons. Add MELEE dice to your roll when you: brawl, spar, restrain, club, stab, examine violent crime scenes or clean up a surprise knife murder.

THROW: Hurling stuff, particularly grenades and knives but anything the character can lift. Add THROW dice to your roll when chucking things at things or away from things. The result indicates both the accuracy and distance of the throw. Throw also includes catching ability because of reasons.



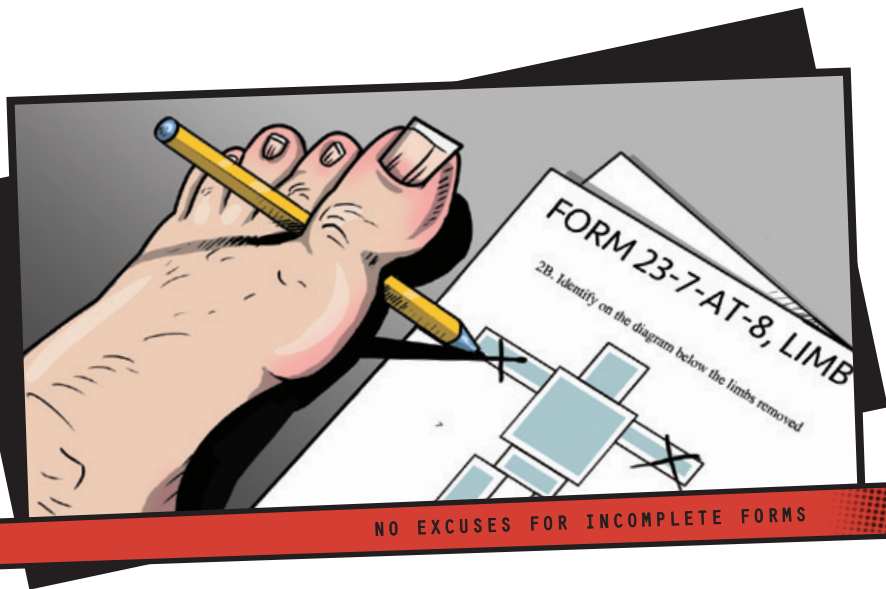
SKILLS MOST COMMONLY USED WITH BRAINS

SCIENCE: General knowledge of the sciences and ability to correlate and assess raw information. Add SCIENCE dice to your roll when you study, assess, experiment, mix chemicals, calculate or 'correct' people with how much you know about String Theory.

PSYCHOLOGY: Understanding of the human brain and behaviour patterns. Add PSYCHOLOGY dice to your roll when you predict, analyse, interrogate, confuse or manipulate.

BUREAUCRACY: Knowledge of, and intuition around, the multiple levels of bureaucracy that keep Alpha Complex working in perfect order. Add BUREAUCRACY dice to your roll when you use forms, documents or identification, pull rank, cite a long-forgotten regulation or get your way by doing things by the book.

ALPHA COMPLEX: General knowledge of your surroundings and the way things work around here. Add ALPHA COMPLEX dice to your roll when you: remember floor plans, work out who the most influential clone is in this sector, find a compnode or network access point, navigate hidden routes or get a feel for an area you've not explored before.



SKILLS MOST COMMONLY USED WITH CHUTZPAH

BLUFF: Expertise at carrying off falsehoods. A high BLUFF score is usually grounds for suspicion of treason. Add BLUFF dice to your roll when you disguise, omit information, lie, feint, spot a falsehood or fast-talk.

CHARM: Use of positive reinforcement. Add CHARM dice to your roll when you persuade, butter up, bootlick, present to camera, make a good first impression or grin through the pain.

INTIMIDATE: Use of negative reinforcement. Add INTIMIDATE dice to your roll when you threaten, scare, bluster, use your authority, command or torture others.

STEALTH: The ability to evade the surveillance of hostile parties. Add STEALTH dice to your roll when you hide, sneak, evade, pickpocket, smuggle or blend in to a crowd.

SKILLS MOST COMMONLY USED WITH MECHANICS

OPERATE: Manual operation of machinery. Add OPERATE dice to your roll when you: drive, fly, hover, perform stunts, chase, flee or ram when you're in control of a vehicle.

ENGINEER: Ability to interact with machinery. Add ENGINEER dice to your roll when you: build, repair, jury-rig, sabotage or modify a machine, device or robot.

PROGRAM: Aptitude with computer programs. Add PROGRAM dice to your roll when you: repair, modify, build, hack, disable, sabotage or gain forced entry to a computer system. (Not the Computer, however.)

DEMOLITIONS: Safe handling and use of explosives. Add DEMOLITIONS dice to your roll when you: blow things up, examine bomb sites for evidence, defuse explosives or create explosive compounds from seemingly innocuous chemicals.

ADDITIONAL SKILLS

Under each group of skills on your character sheet are blank spaces for a couple more. You don't get these yet. They can come as downloadable upgrades for a specific mission objective, they can come from specialist learning or discovery of a new field of knowledge or they can be taught by someone with unique talents and the willingness to pass them on. Your GM will let you know about them when the time is right.

CHARACTER CREATION

- SECTION 1.1

Character creation – making the character you'll play in the game, known as a 'player character' – starts way before anyone gets their character sheets. Usually it starts before anyone actually arrives to play the game and sometimes it started decades ago.

Every group of players will have a dynamic with friendships, likes and dislikes, favourites, animosities and simmering resentments. A party of characters should have a similar dynamic and most character creation systems don't model that at all. So *Paranoia* has a party-creation system – each player builds a character to play in the game, but you're able to affect the making of other people's characters and that creates tensions and links within the group that will transfer into play, all without tearing the group apart in petty feuds and minor incidents of attempted homicide... or at least that's the plan.

So the players will go through character creation as a group, with all of your group's existing vibes, tensions and lapsed restraining orders. On the other hand you can do it solo, particularly if you've joined the group late or all your clones have been killed and you've got to start again. There's a system for that on page 20 but you should only use it as a last resort.

GROUP CHARACTER GENERATION

When you're doing it in a group, with players and GM all together around the table maintaining the facade of friendship and the bonhomie of co-operative gameplay and shared story spaces and nobody hogging the crisps, then character creation goes through these six stages:

- **DEFINE**
- **SKILLS**
- **STATS**
- **OPTIMISING**
- **DETAILS**
- **REDEFINE**

1. DEFINE

Everyone gets a blank character sheet. Choose a character name, appearance and gender. The GM will tell you what your starting security clearance is: most likely Red but possibly not. Also choose three adjectives that describe your character – probably positive ones but it's up to you – and write them down under 'Personality'.

GENDER AND SEXUAL PREFERENCES IN ALPHA COMPLEX

Thanks to hormone suppressants, extensive cloning facilities, real-time pixelation of genitals and genetically modified bodies and minds, gender isn't as big a concern to the citizens of Alpha Complex as it is to today's society – gender discrimination is treasonous because it wastes valuable time. Women, men, cisgender, transgender, non-binary and intersex people are all equally capable of serving the Computer, and all of them work equally well as reactor shielding should they fail in their duties, so play as whatever gender (or non-gender) you'd like.

Sexuality is a different concern; heterosexual sex is treasonous, as it makes a mockery of the Computer's extensive cloning facilities. The Computer has no official stance on homosexual activity due to a lack of programming on the matter, and treats it as a form of enthusiastic wrestling that is inadvisable when traitors may be nearby.

EXAMPLE: This is Ave-R-AGE-001, known as 'Ave'. Ave's player Adele has decided that Ave is female, and the GM has decided that all the PCs will start with a Red security clearance. So Ave's character sheet starts off looking like this:

/// PART ONE		CORE INFORMATION >>>					
NAME:	AVE	SECURITY CLEARANCE:	RED	HOME SECTOR:	AGE	CLONE#:	1
GENDER:	F	PERSONALITY:					HELPFUL, LOYAL, RECKLESS

2. SKILLS

Every *Paranoia* player character begins the game with different skills, rated from 1 to 5, to indicate things they're good at doing. They also get anti-skills rated -1 to -5 for things they're really bad at. But it's not as simple as just putting numbers by things. Here's how you decide what your skills are and also what the other player characters' skills are.

1. The player to the left of the GM – call them Ingrid – begins by choosing one of the skills listed on their character sheet to take at level 1. Write a '1' by it. The player on their left – John – automatically gets the same skill but at -1.
2. John chooses a different skill to take at +1 and the next player – Kat – gets it at -1. Kat turns to Leigh and the process continues.
3. Keep going round the group, slowly building the simmering resentments – 'What do you mean, I've got a negative guns skill?' until everyone has one +1 and one -1 skill. Don't worry, simmering resentments are good! Interesting stories arise from conflict, so anything that is going to provoke conflict is good.
4. John starts the next round, taking a different skill at +2 and passing a -2 to Kat; Kat takes a +2 and passes a -2 to Leigh and so on until everyone has skills at that level. Kat starts the next round, taking a +3 and passing on a -3 to Leigh and so on. Carry on until you complete the +5/-5 round.
5. Keep going until everyone has five positive skills and five negative skills, and is drawing little skulls, lightning bolts and decapitated heads in the margins of their sheet.

TWO IMPORTANT RULES:

- Each skill can only be chosen once per round.
- You can't re-choose a skill that you already have. So you can't put a +4 onto a -3 to get a +1.

/// PART ONE

CORE INFORMATION >>>

NAME: SECURITY CLEARANCE: HOME SECTOR: CLONE#:
GENDER: PERSONALITY:

/// PART TWO

DEVELOPMENT >>>

TREASON STARS: XP POINTS:

OTHER WAYS TO MAKE CHARACTERS

This system isn't set in stone and your GM may decide to do it a different way. You can reverse the direction of going around the group after each round. You can have players choose who gets the negative number or roll a dice for it. Rest assured that your GM will have considered all the options.

EXAMPLE: Ave-R-AGE ends this round with the following skills:

(Violence skills)	(Brains skills)	(Chutzpah skills)	(Mechanics skills)
Athletics 0	Science 0	Bluff 0	Operate -4
Guns -2	Psychology 0	Charm +2	Engineer 0
Melee -5	Bureaucracy +1	Intimidate -3	Program -1
Throw +5	Alpha Complex +4	Stealth +3	Demolitions 0

Adele had wanted a good Guns skill for Ave-R but it went early in round 1 and then she was beaten to it on round 2. Sucks. She'll make do with Throw +5, since with Melee -5 she should stick to throwing things at people.

3. STATS

Add up the number of positive skills you have in each of the four skill groups. Ignore skills at zero or below. That will give you four numbers rated from 0 to 4. Pass your character sheet to the troubleshooter on the left, who you just water-tortured by dripping negatives all over their skill list. They get to choose which of the four numbers goes onto which of your four attributes.

Example: Ave-R-AGE receives the following:

STATS >>>

VIOLENCE: BRAINS: CHUTZPAH: MECHANICS:

The guy on Adele's left is being unreasonably vindictive. She asked nicely for a 2 in Violence but no. She viciously eats the last of the Pringles in revenge.

4. OPTIMISING

Characters normally start the game with eight Moxie points and six clones but you can sacrifice some of either to make your character better or at least less bad. Players can boost their characters' just-created abilities in two ways:

- They can spend up to 5 Moxie points to raise their skills, at one Moxie point per skill point.
- They can burn up to 5 clones to raise their stats, at one clone per stat point

Spending Moxie at this stage permanently reduces the character's maximum Moxie – we call this process 'stiff upper liposuction'. Each Moxie point spent is worth one skill point. You can spend Moxie to raise any skill any amount, including negative ones, as long as you don't spend more than 5 Moxie points in total or raise a skill above 5. Cross out the relevant number of Moxie point circles from the character sheet.

Burning clones to raise stats works the same way: players can trade one or more of their character's unused clones for stats points, in a one-for-one exchange. Players can't raise a stat above 3 and they can't burn more than five clones in total. Increase the Clone Number by one for each clone burned. If they ask why they can't burn six clones before the game starts then they may be too stupid to play this game.



When a player burns a clone, they have to make a note on their character sheet how each clone met their demise. Make something up. Give the character a bit of history. You should also do this if you have any clones die during the course of the game.

You can't raise an attribute to higher than 3 using clone-derived points. It is theoretically possible to have an attribute of 4 but you have to do a lot of groundwork during the Skills phase, because you have to choose four skills in the same attribute-group without the jerk on your right hitting you with a negative for one of them.

There's more about Moxie and why spending points now may be a bad idea on page 28.

5. DETAILS

Ask your GM for information on your security clearance and equipment. The GM may also give you one or more face-down cards marked 'Secret Society' and/or 'Mutant Power'. This doesn't mean that you're necessarily a traitorous mutant terrorist from the start of the game! There's a good chance your card is blank – but everyone receives one so it's not clear who the traitor(s) are.

6. REDEFINE

Remember those three adjectives you chose at the start to define your character? Remember the player sitting on your left, who hates you now? They get to flip one of your character's adjectives, turning it into its opposite. So 'friendly' could be flipped to 'unfriendly', 'handsome' becomes 'ugly', 'brave' becomes 'cowardly', 'optimistic' becomes 'pessimistic' and 'loyal' becomes 'disloyal'.

The flipper chooses which adjective to flip. The flippee is welcome to try bribery, as long as they do it with game-assets: they can offer anything listed on their character sheet, including equipment, Moxie points, clones, mutant powers and Secret Society memberships, if they happen to have anything so traitorous. This does mean that a character can start the game with two mutant powers, two Secret Society allegiances, up to eleven clones, or one point of Moxie, although we really do not recommend that. Threats of vileness or violence are not allowed, nor are offers of real-world assets, favours or favourite dice.

BUT WHY?

This process means that not only do players get an extra degree of optimisation for their character's abilities but the characters all start the game with different numbers and different numbers of numbers. Having different amounts of Moxie or clones also defines the character a bit more personality-wise; plus having already lost a few clones as the game starts gives a character an opportunity for back-story and a couple of plot-tags the GM can attach story-stuff to later. So this is a very clever mechanic, and we are quite smug about it, and we expect you to call attention to it in reviews and on whatever social network you kids are using when this game finally comes out. Don't over-praise it, obviously, but show it respect as a strong example of simple mechanical design that gives complex narrative feedback and the use of a single system to perform several tasks to enrich characterisation. This is the good stuff, people. This isn't hack-work thrown together for a couple of cents a word.

Stats deriving from the number of skills you have, on the other hand, that's a pure rules kludge.

EXAMPLE: Adele is really not happy with Ave-R-AGE's Guns -2. She burns 3 points of Moxie to bring it up to a +1 and then decides to ditch a clone to bring her Chutzpah up another point to the maximum of 3 and another clone to put her Violence on 1, then she crosses off two more points of Moxie for Bluff +2. Maybe she's a talker not a fighter. Of course, Ave-R-AGE's base Moxie of 3 means that she's going to be twitchy and close to the edge from the get-go, which may not be the calm and sophisticated chutzpah-monster exterior she was after but it all adds to the fun of roleplay.

SOLO CHARACTER GENERATION

Creating a character that isn't part of a group is a different process that tends to lead to a better character but means you have less fun making it. The process goes like this:

1. **DEFINE:** The player chooses a name, gender and three adjectives that define their character (see above).
2. **SKILLS:** The player chooses five skills to take, assigning them points values of 5, 4, 3, 2 and 1. They choose five more skills, and assign them -5, -4, -3, -2 and -1.

3. **STATS:** As normal, work out the number relating to each of the four skill groups. Then shift each one along one place. So if you have 3 positive skills in Violence and 1 in Brains, then your character has a Brains of 3 and a Chutzpah of 1.
4. **OPTIMISING:** The player can spend up to 5 Moxie points to buy new skills or increase any existing ones – skills cannot go higher than 5 points. They can also burn up to 5 clones to increase any attributes – attributes cannot go higher than 3 points.
5. **DETAILS:** The GM assigns you a security level and may or may not give you a Secret Society and Mutant Power card. As above, don't assume these actually have Secret Societies or Mutant Powers on them.
6. **REDEFINE:** The GM flips one of the player's adjectives from the Define stage.



HOW MANY TROUBLESHOOTERS DOES IT TAKE TO CHANGE A LIGHTBULB?

EQUIPMENT

The standard kit for Red-level Troubleshooters is one (1) red jumpsuit and one (1) red laser pistol, which Troubleshooters are expected to wear/carry at all times. Terrorist action may have resulted in unavoidable shortages in supplies, so Troubleshooters may have to occasionally share laser pistols or jumpsuits.

Additional equipment will be issued to characters after the mission briefing using a complex algorithm that automatically determines the best materials for each clone's skills and is definitely not randomly allocated by an overworked admin officer who has little in the way of effective oversight or a subroutine that was originally designed to operate a Hot Fun dispenser.



XP POINTS

As fresh, new, go-getting Troubleshooters, you'll start with zero XP points. Your character might have had some before but you spent most of them to buy your way up to your current security clearance. If you had any left over, then to encourage an atmosphere of healthy competition and cooperation, the Computer has taken the rest away to ensure the whole team starts on a level playing field. Don't worry – you'll have plenty of opportunities to earn more XP points during your missions!

CLONE NUMBER

Your clone number is part of your character's name and shows which clone is currently operational, starting at 1 (unless you burned any clones when creating your character). This number will never go down barring unforeseen numbering confusion (as a result of terrorist activity) but in special circumstances it may go higher than six.

LOYALTY RATING

Your Loyalty Rating is how much the Computer distrusts you, on a scale of 0–5 Treason Stars. Zero stars means you're fine, five stars means you'll need to change your Clone Number.

SECRET SOCIETIES AND MUTANT POWERS

Membership of Secret Societies and possession of mutant powers are both treasonous but sometimes unavoidable. During the Details phase your GM will have given you a card and that card might have details of a mutant power or a Secret Society on it. If so these will describe your hidden abilities, allegiances and agendas. If you have any questions about these new bonus powers, chances are the GM will give you a briefing in private soon after the mission details are delivered.

BASIC MECHANICS, OR DOING THINGS, OR HOW TO SOLVE SIMPLE PROBLEMS FOR YOUR FRIEND THE COMPUTER

- SECTION 1.2

THE CORE MECHANIC

It's all about rolling dice. Of course. The question is; how many dice, how do you read them and what result are you looking for?

Every time you do something, you'll use two numbers from your character sheet data – a Stat and a Skill (see page 8 for more info.) You'll add these and any other modifiers to create your NODE dice number, which stands for 'Number Of Die: dice number'.

When your character needs to do a non-easy thing in the game or the GM asks you to do a thing, you'll roll a number of dice equal to your NODE *plus* the Computer Dice. You *always* roll the Computer Dice. Even if your NODE is zero or less, you *still* roll the Computer Dice.

Each rolled dice that shows a 5 or 6 is a 'success' and adds one point to your final total. Tell your GM this total and they'll compare it to the difficulty number they've assigned to this action and tell you how well you've done. You'll almost always be looking for the highest possible number of 5s and 6s here.

Other things may add to your NODE dice number; action cards; equipment, supports or assists from other characters or the Computer, one-off bonuses the GM may give you, special skills, behaving smartly and other factors. Some things also take dice away, negative skills, negative combat modifiers, doing something that annoys the GM, and more. You can learn more about these in their respective chapters.

COMBINING STATS AND SKILLS

To find the NODE dice number for an action, add the clone's relevant Stat and Skill. Skills on your character sheet are grouped under the Stat they're usually used with but that doesn't have to be the Stat you always use. You can mix and match, depending on the situation.

For example, while Violence looks like a natural pairing for Guns – and that's the combination you'll usually use when laser-bolts start flying to work out if you've hit a target or not – you can also combine Guns with Brains to examine the aftermath of a gunfight and work out who shot first, or to plan a tricky ricochet off a mirror to shoot a terrorist in the back. You could combine Guns with Mechanics to modify or repair a laser pistol and maybe wring some extra power out of the power-pack at the cost of reliability. You could even combine Guns with Chutzpah to waffle on about the latest developments in focusing crystals with a fellow firearms enthusiast to get in their good graces.

It's up to you to come up with combinations that give you the best chance of succeeding and it's up to the GM to work out if they're valid for the situation or just you being cheeky. If you use a particularly outlandish combination of skill and stat, the GM might rule that your task is harder than usual – or maybe they'll reward you for your ingenuity. Probably best to assume the first, though.

EXAMPLE: *Anthony's character Ant-R-GCC-5 spots a terrorist on the other side of a crowded food dispensary. Unfortunately his laser pistol has recently calcified, so he's without a ranged weapon. Thinking fast, he grabs the Bouncy Bubble Beverage dispensing hose, forces a fork into the nozzle and endeavours to use the hydraulic power of the liquid to fire it across the room and into the enemy of Alpha Complex.*

Anthony thinks that Ant-R's best combination would be Mechanics (2) + Throw (1). Someone else suggests Violence + Operate but Anthony points out that Ant-R's Violence is 0 and his Operate is -2. The GM is okay with Mechanics + Throw, so Anthony's NODE dice number is 3, meaning he rolls three dice plus the Computer dice.

NEGATIVE NODES

If you have a negative NODE dice number, don't worry – it gives you lots of room to improve! The Computer encourages confidence and optimism, since optimism is a sign of happiness and everyone in Alpha Complex is happy. The only way you'll get better is through practice, so keep trying.

If your NODE dice number for a particular task is negative, treat the negative number as a positive and roll that many dice – plus the Computer dice, of course. However, any dice that don't show 5 or 6 *subtract* from your score rather than simply not adding to it – so if you rolled 4 dice and only 1 showed a 5 or 6, then your overall score is 1 minus 3, making -2, which is a pretty bad score. But at least you've still got a chance to succeed, right?

THE COMPUTER DICE IS YOUR FRIEND

Having trouble reloading in the middle of combat and need to watch a pop-up instructional video? Fancy having the morale of your stealth mission livened up with jaunty inspirational tunes? Disgusted by the wound you're trying to suture and need it pixellated out? The Computer can deliver all these improvements and more straight to your Cerebral Coretech in a handy pop-up format – if the Computer notices that you need some assistance.

Whenever your character acts, you *always* roll the Computer Dice as well as your NODE dice pool. If it shows the Computer symbol instead of a number, tell your GM and cross off a point of your character's Moxie, because things are about to get non-standard.

EXAMPLE: *Manar's character, Blue-B-SKY-4, is trying to defuse a bomb that terrorists have strapped to the base of Sector OMG's main Bouncy Bubble Beverage tank. Manar declares that Blue is using Brains (2) and Demolitions (1) to work out which wire to cut, giving him a NODE of 3. He rolls three regular dice and the Computer dice, getting 3, 1, 6 and a Computer. The GM, knowing the task needed 2 successes, decrees that at the moment Blue cuts the wire, the Computer helpfully places a full-retina pop-up animation of the bomb's internal workings and blast radius in his Coretech in-eye display. Thank the Computer for its timely assistance and send in a Clean-Up Crew.*

IF THERE'S ONLY ONE, SHOULDN'T IT BE 'DIE'?

No. There's quite enough use of the word 'die' in this game already and it would just be confusing.



WHY WON'T MY HANDS STOP SHAKING?

That's called 'withdrawal'! It's a perfectly natural reaction that your body has upon removal of the regular chemical supplements that you're used to.

See, when you're an Infrared clone the Computer ensures that you're happy and efficient at all times by adding special supplements to your food and drink. Once you're promoted to Red level, tests have found that those same supplements can interfere with the higher levels of reaction time, reasoning, logic and basic motor functions that you'll need to use every day, so they have been removed from your system to make your task easier.

Here are our top six tips to control withdrawal symptoms:

1. Think about how much you trust the Computer and how it only wants what's best for you.
2. Drink a full can of ice-cold, refreshing Bouncy Bubble Beverage (only 5 XP points).
3. Ask someone you trust to keep hold of your hands, close your eyes, and count to [Sunassignedvariable].
4. Book a ten-minute session in your nearest Designated Screaming Area.
5. Progress to your next clone.
6. Remind yourself that everyone feels just like you and you're all happily living together, here in Alpha Complex, from which escape is both impossible and non-desirable.

MOXIE

Since joining the ranks of the Troubleshooters, you may have noticed that you're a little more tense than you were before. Don't worry! This is completely normal.

Moxie represents a character's stress levels. Clones with high Moxie are stable, brave, competent and not seconds away from the sort of catastrophic mental breakdown that results in Clean-Up Crews being dispatched to their location. Clones with low Moxie are the opposite. Keep your Moxie high, Troubleshooter!

On your character sheet you'll have two pieces of information about Moxie – maximum and current. Your maximum Moxie (determined during character creation) is the highest possible Moxie you can possess. Your current Moxie

is how many points you have currently. If you used any points of Moxie during character creation, cross them off in pen – they are gone for good. When you use a point of Moxie in play, cross it off in pencil as you will get them back.

If your clone loses their last point of Moxie, consult the LOSING IT section on page 31.

Note: Only player characters have a Moxie score. Characters controlled by the GM don't.

USING MOXIE

You can use Moxie points in the following ways:

- You can spend Moxie to get extra dice on any roll, one Moxie point per dice.
- If you're not happy with the result of an action, you can choose to try again – but only once per action. Spend a point of Moxie to re-roll your entire dice pool and describe how you frantically try to fix the problem. You can't do this for a roll if you've already spent Moxie buying more dice on it.
- Registered mutants use Moxie to activate their powers. Precisely how unregistered mutants use their powers and what those powers might be is above your security clearance, Troubleshooter. Spend Moxie points to activate Mutant Powers, if you have them. The more Moxie you spend, the more oomph the power will have. For more information on Mutant Powers see page 23.

You won't always choose when to suffer from stress. You'll automatically lose one point of Moxie in the following situations:

- When you roll a Computer symbol on the Computer dice. Research has shown that attracting the attention of the Computer during a stressful situation may result in additional stress as a byproduct of this increased efficiency. This may lead to inefficiency. Please do not become stressed about this inefficiency, as that can lead to further inefficiency and leakage.
- If you encounter upsetting visuals, substances or experiences during your missions, you might find yourself becoming stressed as a result. This is unavoidable. When you suffer horrific injuries, great misfortune, or see or do something particularly unpleasant, the GM may tell you to lose a point of Moxie.

EXAMPLE: *Having tracked the terrorists to their hideout, Basil-V-FIN-3 knows his next action is crucial – stealthily rolling a foam grenade into their midst. His NODE is only 2, so he spends 2 of his 3 remaining Moxie points for two extra dice. The roll is a success but the Computer dice comes up too, meaning Basil-V is reduced to zero Moxie. It suddenly seems like a very good idea to throw his other foam grenades at the terrorists, followed by his regular grenades, the rest of his equipment and his uniform.*

REGAINING MOXIE

You can restore your clone's stability and sanity by spending XP points to regain Moxie at a rate of 50 XP points per Moxie point.

You can also regain Moxie points by asking your Happiness Officer to administer a Cheeroxin stim-pak, which they should have received as part of the mission equipment. To use a stim-pak or similar Moxie-restorer on any clone including yourself, make a Brains + Science roll versus difficulty 2 and restore one Moxie point per level of success. Failure brings drowsiness, loss of co-ordination and lots of quiet sitting down; extreme failure is probably some kind of drug overdose or a comedy mix-up between the bottles marked 'sedative' and 'stimulant'.

Do not over-use stimulants.

A good night's sleep and a hearty breakfast of stimulant-laden Food-Stuff™ will restore 1 point of Moxie.



LOSING IT

Should your character ever be unlucky enough to have zero Moxie points left, then they Lose It. They freak out big time. They blow a gasket. They go off the deep end without a life-vest. Their case of the heebie-jeebies becomes the full-blown screaming abdabs, with an emphasis on the screaming. This will be entertaining but probably not for you.

As they reach zero Moxie, your character will feel some, more or all of the following things:

- A disconnection between their actions and themselves
- A desire to act in unusual or dangerous ways
- Happiness, clarity and an intense sense of fresh purpose and direction
- All-consuming hatred of something or someone in the immediate area

There are two ways you can play this.

1. Look at the three adjectives that describe your character's personality. Imagine they run on a scale of 1–10. Now imagine that one of them just went to 700. Roleplay that.
2. If the GM feels that you're underplaying your unfortunate episode, they may roll on the Losing It table in the Gamesmasters Handbook and tell you the result. Play it to the hilt.

Go at it hard. The better and more interestingly you play your character's lid-flipping episode, the greater the chance that you'll survive it. If you try to do anything sensible the GM will make it hard for you to succeed, for obvious reasons. If you demand that time or energy be devoted to sorting you out while everyone else is trying to deal with a crisis, someone may well judge that you're an enemy of Alpha Complex and have you shot. And try to claim XP points for it. And will probably get them.

If you, or another clone, can administer sedatives there's a chance you can get your head in order. If not, don't worry – other Troubleshooters and the Computer will take care of your character, one way or another.

If (when) you die after (while) Losing It, your next clone returns with one dice +1 Moxie points. This cannot exceed your maximum Moxie.

HOW DO I CALM DOWN?

If you've let stress get the better of you, here are five tips for calming down during a tricky psychotic incident.

- If you feel hot and bothered, try to reach a ventilation shaft or refrigeration unit and crawl inside until the sensation ends.
- File a report with your supervisor to let him or her know of the current mission status and any expected inefficiency due to your Psychotic Break.
- Count backwards from 100. (In Sector [REDACTED] knowledge of numbers exceeding 17 is Treasonous, so instead count backwards from 17 exactly 5.88 times).
- Using your Computer-given authority, commandeer a vehicle and drive to the nearest medical centre for immediate attention.
- Try not thinking about sector THA, the Gehenna Incident or any of the events that did or did not occur throughout its duration.
- Clones decanted in Sectors [REDACTED] have 'killswitch' phrases implanted into their Cerebral Coretech. If this is you, simply have your team-mates speak this phrase out loud to reboot your consciousness and the episode should pass. Knowledge of your own killswitch phrase is treasonous and self-use of it will cause unconsciousness, slight memory loss and immediate termination.

Alternatively, you can spend 50 XP points on any of the following:

- Sedatives released into a clone's bloodstream from [REDACTED].
- A brief flash of calming alpha-wave imagery backed up with powerful hypnotic suggestion that Everything's Going To Be Okay fired directly into a clone's optic nerve via their Cerebral Coretech.
- A piping hot cup of Hot Brown Drink, delivered by a branded bot or from a curiously well-hidden nozzle.
- A single Hearty Brand Cigarette™, designed to leave clones calm and collected under pressure, lit and inserted into mouth or similar orifice by robotic arm.

EXAMPLE: *Peter's character Peetey-B-BRU-5 is on zero Moxie after a tunnel-squid drops on his face. His three descriptive adjectives are Friendly, Loyal and Unambitious (thanks to Mary-I-MAC-1). Peter decides that Peetey-B's loyalty kicks into overdrive and he sees everything around him as disloyal to the Computer – tunnel-squids, tunnels, flickering lights, high-voltage cables, strange crunching noises and his fellow Troubleshooters who are clearly responsible for all of the above. And he has a laser pistol. And he's going to use it.*

AFTER LOSING IT, HOW DO I FIND IT AGAIN?

There are two ways.

1. The only way to recover from Losing It is to get some points of Moxie back. The Happiness Officer should have some useful stimulants that will help, or any character can spend some XP points to order some, or the character who is freaking out may be persuaded to have a nice lie-down for a few days until they feel better.
2. Actually the fastest and most efficient way to get back in the action is to get a fresh clone. Have your character die due to their own or someone else's actions and a couple of minutes later Your Clone v1.2 (or v1.3 or so on) will arrive with their Moxie dial and their laser pistol's power-pack recharged, at least partially (new clones recover Moxie as above, power-pack charge levels are at the GM's discretion). Sometimes this is the kindest solution and usually it's the quickest.

COMBAT

- SECTION 1.3

Every clone would (and does!) jump at the chance to violently eliminate dangerous troublemakers such as terrorists, mutants and members of insidious Secret Societies – and as Troubleshooters, you're ideally positioned to do just that! Not jumping. We're not talking about jumping any more. Stop jumping.

Combat in *Paranoia* is chaotic and wild but takes place in a structured form to keep everything clear. When you act in combat, that's your *action*. Once every player character has acted, that's a *round* of combat. Actions and rounds take place in a fluid timescale but it's important to pin them down so you can work out when to play Action cards.

DON'T PANIC

As an extension of the Computer's will, you'll sometimes have to act as enforcers, neutralising dangerous or subversive elements. As such, you're more than adequately trained and equipped for combat. Don't forget that every Troubleshooter goes to work with a standard-issue laser pistol complete with complimentary holster and knows exactly how to use both.

While most of those aforementioned elements will be external, a rare few may be internal as the sick and twisted doctrines of terrorism can penetrate any and all levels of society – even the great and loyal Troubleshooter teams – and clones should be prepared to open fire on duplicitous criminals within their ranks who have turned their back on the Computer's perfect society. Particularly if this means you can shoot them in the back.




ACTION CARDS

Your GM will deal out a hand of Action cards (usually four) to you at the start of the game and will give you more, or take away ones you have, at intervals that may seem random to you but are in fact the product of a series of carefully balanced game mechanics and not, we repeat *not*, due to a section in the GM guide where we tell them to swap out cards when they get bored.

You can play one Action card per *action* – yours or someone else's – but no more than one. When you play a card by turning it face-up, use the rules on the card.

CARD EXAMPLES:



ACTION ORDER shows when a card can be used. All Action Cards either have an Action Order number here or a , or both. A number means it's a normal Action card and the higher the number, the earlier in the round this action happens. A card with a  symbol is a Reaction card: it can be played on any characters' actions (yours, other players', or NPCs controlled by the GM) to affect them but can't be played on its own. A card with an Action Order and a  symbol can be used either way but not both at the same time.

LEVEL (ONLY ON EQUIPMENT CARDS) shows how many dice you add to your roll when using the piece of equipment correctly. If you use a Level 3 gauss rocket launcher to launch gauss rockets, add 3 dice to your NODE. If you use it to jam open a bulkhead door, don't.

DESCRIPTION: This is what will happen when you play the card.



THE ORDER OF COMBAT

Doing things in combat in *Paranoia* works a lot like doing things generally in *Paranoia*. You work out your NODE dice number, roll, look for 5s and 6s to indicate successes and the GM tells you how well you do. But there's a whole other dimension; a dimension of cards. The game uses the card deck to let you perform special actions, to decide Action Order or who goes first.

Most people think the most important part of an RPG combat system is the bit where you hit each other, or try to. Most people are wrong. The most important part of a combat system is working out who goes first. Because if I have a laser-pistol and I go first, there's a good chance your 154 warbots waiting for your command to attack are irrelevant.

You may disagree and for you we have the Simple Attack Order on page 42. For everyone else, the better class of player, willing to take a risk and try something new, we present the Dynamic Yet Narrative Action Melee Order system or DYNAMO.

Before we explain DYNAMO, we need to give you a couple of new terms:

- A Basic Action is a regular Stat + Skill check, as described before.
- A Card Action is triggered by playing a card – usually an Action card, although it can be an Equipment Card or a Mutant Power Card too.

A round breaks down into four stages:

1. Everyone puts a card face-down
2. The GM counts down the Action Order numbers from 10 to 0; each PC acts on their Action Order number
3. Players accuse other players of lying about their Action Order number
4. Players resolve their actions

DYNAMO uses a five-second combat round. The difference between this and most other role-playing games is these rounds are in real time, not game time. The GM counts, 'ONE *Paranoia*, TWO *Paranoia* –' and by the time they reach five *Paranoias*, every player needs to have chosen a card from their hand and put it face-down in front of them. This is important: *The card does not have to describe what you want to do this round.* It could even be a Reaction Card, with no Action Order number on it at all. If you don't have a face-down card, you take no action this round.

The GM counts down the Action Order numbers, starting at 10 and going down to zero. Players can chime in at any number if:

1. It matches the Action Order number on their face-down card, *or*: They just want to.
2. *Players can lie here.* Call it a bluff but it's a lie. If you want your character to act early in the round, claim you have a higher Action Order number than you do.
3. Once per round, each player can challenge one other player's claimed Action Order number. The challenged player flips their card to show if they were telling the truth or not.
4. If the Action Order number on the card matches or is higher than the last number the GM called, the challenger loses. They must discard one Action card.
5. If the Action Order numbers don't match, the challenger wins. They immediately get to act (meaning they can act twice this round). The failed bluffer discards their card and takes a Basic Action last in the round.
6. Once any challenges have been resolved, then characters taking actions this Action Order number get to describe what they're doing and roll dice and stuff. See further on.
7. If two players have the same Action Order number, the first one to say the name of the other player's character in full goes first. If neither can say the other character's name, neither act this round.

If you have no cards in your hand with Action Order numbers on them, you have two choices. You can bluff, as in stage 2 above or you can wait until the end of the round and meekly go last.

If you run out of Action cards at any point, that'll teach you to look after your finite resources better.

EXAMPLE: *Marian's character, Mary-I-MAC-1 and Carl's character Carl-B-GDE-4 still haven't fixed the problem with the security clearances. They're facing an enemy so terrifying that the Computer has pixellated it out of their field of view for their protection but the Computer has also delivered some excellent new equipment that they both want to get their hands on.*

Stage 1. The GM starts counting up to five. Carl and Marian play cards face-down before the time runs out.

*Stage 2. The GM counts down the Action Order numbers: '10, 9, 8, 7 –'
Marian: 'I have seven.'*

*Stage 3: Carl: 'The hell you do. I call your bluff.'
Marian flips her card: It is Sniper Rifle, with an Action Order of Violence +4. Since Marian's Violence is 3, her Action Order is in fact 7.
Carl, annoyed at himself, discards an Action Card face-down*

Stage 4: Marian gets to act. Marian plays Sniper Rifle and suddenly Mary-I headshots a dastardly terrorist.

RESOLVING AN ACTION

Wait! Don't turn that card face-up yet! *You don't have to play your Action Card.* Particularly if it was an undiscovered bluff but not only then. You always have to put a card face-down at the start of a round but it may be a card that you don't want to play or can't actually play now, such as a Reaction.

There are three things you can do when it's your turn to act.

- Play your card face-up and resolve it. Then discard it.
- Put your card back into your hand, without showing it to anyone, and take a Basic Action. Sometimes it's better to conserve your Action Cards.
- If your face-down card says 'Action' on the back you can discard it, take a Basic Action and add one extra dice to your NODE.

At the end of the combat, ask the GM whether you should discard the rest of your Action Cards or draw back up to the full number. Some GMs will prefer to only use the cards for combat and others will let you play Action and Reaction Cards during non-combat play.

That sounds like a lot but trust us, it's really smooth and simple. It's a robust framework for hanging interesting narrative possibilities and you'll pick it up fast.

CALCULATING YOUR NODE

Your NODE number is a combination of your relevant Stat and Skill, as usual. However the card you've played may add extra dice to it. You can also burn Moxie points for extra dice, and if you're taking a Basic Action you can burn your face-down Action Card for an extra dice too.

PLAYING A BASIC ACTION

Basic Actions are worked out like the normal actions described on page 35. When your character's Action Order number comes up you declare what you want to do, what combination of stat and skill you're using to do it, and what your NODE number is. Then roll the relevant number of dice and tell the GM your score. They'll work out what happens, and who gets hurt, and fill you in on the gory details. There's no dodging, blocking or evasion in *Paranoia* combat, unless it's up close and personal.

UP CLOSE AND PERSONAL, YOU SAY?

When two characters are in hand-to-hand combat, they get a chance to dodge or block their opponent's attacks. However, it comes at a price. It goes like this:

1. The attacker rolls their NODE number of dice and the GM says if the attack connects. If it does...
2. The defender can discard an Action card to try to avoid the attack. If they don't, the attack connects.
3. If the defender discards a card, they get to describe how they're trying to avoid being damaged and roll their NODE. If they get more successes than their attacker, the attack fails and they take no damage.

NPCs can try to block an attack but only if they haven't taken an action yet this turn. The block takes up their action.

PLAYING AN ACTION CARD

Turn the card face-up and tell everyone what your character does and who the effect is directed at. Roll dice as instructed. The GM will tell you what happens. Cards are narrative and, the more colourful and interesting your description, the more interesting the game will be. The GM may even give you dice bonuses for really creative ideas.

PLAYING A REACTION CARD

Reaction Cards do not have Action Order numbers and are played outside the regular turn order. As the name suggests they can only be used to aid or hinder a character who is trying to do something.

- If the Reaction Card adds or subtracts dice from a roll, you must play it before the dice are rolled.
- If the Reaction Card modifies the score or the outcome of a roll, you must play it after dice are rolled.
- If the Reaction Card does something else, play it after the player or GM has finished describing the action but before anyone else does anything.

You can *always* play a Reaction Card, even when it's not your go, even when your character is unconscious, dead, out of action or in a different scene – so feel free to get revenge from beyond the grave by screwing over another player who took you out in an earlier round.

PLAYING AN EQUIPMENT CARD

This works the same way as an Action Card; you play it face-down and when your Action Order number comes up you either reveal it and play it, or put it back in your hand and play a Basic Action, or discard it, do a Basic Action and add an extra dice to your NODE. In the last case you have to describe how the piece of equipment gets destroyed to give you the extra dice. Unlike other cards, Equipment cards do not have fixed Action Order. Instead the Action Order is expressed as a Stat, plus some other number. For example, the Grenade card's Action Order is 'Violence + 3'. If your Violence is 1, its Action Order for you would be 4.

Beware: Fail to bluff the Action Order number on an Equipment Card and you'll have to discard it and the player who revealed your bluff gets to describe how and why it no longer exists.



PLAYING A MUTANT POWER CARD

This also works the same way as an Action card, except for four things:

- You have to expend Moxie points to activate a mutant power. The more Moxie you use, the greater the effect will be.
- When you turn the card over, for any reason, the only person you should show it to is the GM. Don't let the other players see it.
- You never discard your Mutant Power card, even if you're caught in a bluff.
- Quietly tell the GM what you want to achieve and how many Moxie points you're burning to do it and they will tell you how many dice to roll. They will describe what happens and whether it's successful. Mutant powers are weird and unpredictable, and having the GM describe them preserves the illusion that the other players don't actually know which character is responsible for them.

GETTING MORE CARDS

The GM is in charge of dealing out more Action Cards, which includes deciding when to do it. Usually you won't get to refill your hand of cards until the combat is over. Take it as a hint that combat should be dealt with quickly, not drawn out till your hand is empty and your choices are limited.

Note: NPCs don't get cards to play. The GM knows their Action Order number in advance and will say what they do and when they do it. It's an underprivileged life, being an NPC, so it's probably a good thing that it's short.

SIMPLE COMBAT ORDER

If all that bluffing and lying seems contrariwise to the declared spirit of camaraderie and common-cause that embodies the glorious role of Troubleshooters, there is a simpler method:

- At the start of the combat round, the GM asks the player on their left what their character is doing this round. Once that is resolved, they ask the next player and so on clockwise around the group. NPCs act when the GM decides they act. On the next combat round, the GM starts with the player on their right and proceeds anticlockwise.
- That's about it.

QUICK WITS

Making sure you act quickly in any given combat is often the key to success. If you find yourself acting slowly and lagging behind your team-mates in combat, answer the following questions:

- Do I like wasting the Computer's time?
- Am I drinking enough Bouncy Bubble Beverage: Uncomfortably Awake Edition caffeinated beverage-themed fluid?
- Why was I not looking out for terrorism at all times?
- What else was I doing?
- Was I involved in the recent events that did not take place in Sector THA, otherwise known as the Gehenna Incident?

Once you've answered them, take a look at your responses and, if necessary, report to your supervisor for questioning and re-education.

HOW MANY SHOTS DOES A POWER-PACK LAST?

Most weapons in Alpha Complex use electricity to create an effect or to accelerate a projectile and almost all take interchangeable rechargeable power-packs. These can be swapped out in a single action. Weapons can also be plugged into a power outlet with a charging cable to recharge or fire freely.

Alpha Complex weapons are complex pieces of always-on machinery, with auto-targeting, auto-variable blast levels for range and effect, and other features including remote activation, DNA-print security, self-cleaning systems and voicemail. All of this drains power constantly, so it's important to keep your weapon recharged (And patched with the latest software updates, of course). Also, be careful not to expose power-packs to fire, water, earth, air or other power-packs or their performance may be affected, as may yours.

All this means that a power-pack doesn't last a predictable number of shots. Your GM will monitor your weapon use and tell you when its power-bar is flashing.

DESCRIBING STUFF WITH CARDS

Some cards will ask you to describe things that crop up in the environment during the chaos of combat. When you do this, you have free rein to describe whatever you like – but the GM has authority to negate or change what you've said if they think it's not appropriate.

For example: *The card SUDDENLY, KNIVES! lets you insert a melee weapon into the scene. You say that you reach into your backpack and pull out a chainsaw. The GM thinks that this is a bit cartoonish and silly, so instead they have one of the maintenance bots nearby explode, leaving a robot arm with a chainsaw blade attached embedded in the wall you're taking cover behind.*

Some cards will ask you to persuade the GM what you want from a situation, and see if they listen to you – be clever, be interesting, don't take the piss and try to take full advantage of how lazy most GMs are in regards to coming up with ideas. Some cards will say things like 'GM, time to shine' on them – you don't get *any* say in these and instead you must trust your referee to do what you want. This is a good reason to be nice to the GM and keep them well supplied with food and drink.

DOING DAMAGE

Now you know how to hit someone. How badly are they hurt?

For each extra success you roll – each 5 or 6 that is above the difficulty level set by the GM – you do one level of damage to your target.

EXAMPLE: *Mary-I-MAC-1 takes a shot at a terrorist who is doing terrorism. The GM, for reasons that will be explained in the Gamesmasters Handbook, sets a difficulty of 2. Mary's NODE is 6: she gets 1, 2, 5, 5, 6, 6. That's two successes over the difficulty, so the terrorist takes two levels of damage.*

PHYSICAL INJURIES

There are five states of got-hurt that a Troubleshooter might find themselves in. Their default state has them unharmed, absolutely fine and going about their business so merrily that they don't need to check any boxes. However, when the harm happens, when damage is inflicted on a Troubleshooter, it can leave them in one of four other states: Hurt, Injured, Maimed or Dead.



TEAM LOOKING FOR TANK

HURT means a character is in pain but not damaged so badly that they can't do things any more. However, while you are Hurt you must subtract 1 from your NODE number.

INJURED is, well, injured. You're in so much pain that you can't focus properly. Subtract 2 from your NODE number while Injured.

MAIMED is much worse. You have lost the use of part of your body. This may be because you have lost part of your body – your GM will tell you if this is the case. Either way, you need urgent medical attention. Each round that you don't get it you must roll one dice and on a 1 you have died. You can still perform tasks with whatever parts of your body are still attached and working but at -3 to your NODE number.

DEAD is obvious but not so obvious that we didn't write a whole section about it below.

When your character has been successfully attacked, the GM will tell you how badly injured you are – cross off the appropriate box on your character sheet and all the ones that come before it. (So if you're Maimed, cross off the Hurt and Injured boxes, too.)

If you take damage of a type that you've already suffered, fill out the next empty box on the damage track. So, if you're Hurt, and you get Hurt again, that drops you down to Injured. If you're Injured and you get Hurt again, you are now Maimed.

EXAMPLE: *Chasing a fleeing mutant traitor, Carl-B-GDE-4 trips over a wandering scrub-bot and is Hurt. The scrub-bot, damaged by his boot, registers him as a patch of synthetic oil and attempts to scrub him, which he fails to avoid. The scrubbing is not very effective but being run over by half a ton of bot is. The GM declares he is now Maimed. The mutant traitor uses her vile mutant ability to take control of the scrub-bot and reverse its direction so it runs over Carl-B-GDE-4 again. He's already Maimed which means he can't take a second Maiming, so he drops to the next level of injury and is Dead.*

FIRST AID

First Aid is almost exclusively applied in the field via the use of Standard Issue Medkits. A Standard Issue Medkit is a relatively easy item for a Troubleshooter to make use of and is good for one course of First Aid.

Using a Standard Issue Medkit requires the Troubleshooter holding it to make a BRAINS+SCIENCE check. Each success rolled bumps a Troubleshooter one step back down the scale of harm. One success could take a Troubleshooter from, say, Maimed to Injured, while two could take them from Injured to being fully healed.

Standard Issue Medkits include a variety of drugs, dressings, stimulants, applicators and ointments that cannot be used haphazardly or without direction. While these Medkits are tools for good, untrained use can have unintended consequences and Troubleshooters should bear this in mind.

Major injuries like lost limbs must be treated with specialist medkits capable of regrowing body-parts in under a minute. Check carefully to make sure you are applying the appropriate kit to the wound and remember that when it says 'right arm' it means your right and not the patient's – or is it the other way around? On no account should you apply a limb-regrow kit to someone who has not actually lost the appropriate limb and you should particularly not apply it to inappropriate parts of their body.

First Aid cannot be used on dead Troubleshooters. Well, it can but it's a waste and the Computer really dislikes waste.

DEATH AND CLONES

In the unlikely event that you are killed in the line of duty, the Computer has blessed you with a number of replacement clone bodies. Upon your death, your memories and personality will be downloaded from your Cerebral Coretech and implanted into a new body, fresh from the vats, which will be delivered post-haste to your mission area.

The clone will be delivered via trans-tube, emergency lift, insertion rocket, Reincarnation Flume, organic 3D printer or one of any other number of exciting and efficient means of transportation.

As a Troubleshooter fresh out of training, you'll most likely have access to your full 'six-pack' of clones – your current body and five replacements. Citizens of a clearance level of Green or higher can choose to allocate their XP into purchasing extra clones – so if you plan on leading a dangerous life, make sure you get to Green clearance first!

It is important to notice that the new clone body is a legally distinct entity from the previous, dead clone and that aberrations in the genetic template caused by terrorist intervention (including but not limited to, mutant abilities, membership of Secret Societies, treasonous intent or tumours and lesions relating to the Gehenna Incident which did not happen) will not be present in the new body and the Troubleshooter should not be punished for the crimes of their genetically inferior predecessor. New clones are also delivered with a lungful of D-Venge, the neuro-gas that removes all thoughts of taking revenge on any Troubleshooters who may have killed their previous clone or through their inaction caused it to be killed.

New clone bodies will arrive at the end of the current scene, or whenever it's dramatically appropriate – although it's up to the GM. You have six clones, citizen – use them wisely! Or, you know, use them foolishly, who are we to tell you what to do? It's your funerals.

Newly decanted clones will have the memories, security clearance and all the XP points of their antecedent. Although it says otherwise in the official party line above, *all* of your mutant powers, Secret Society memberships and so on, survive between clones. Treason stars are not carried over and your Moxie is back at the maximum level on your character sheet (Unless you died after Losing It, at which point you gain back D6+1 Moxie). You should have a jumpsuit and laser pistol appropriate to your security clearance but mistakes and shortages do happen and you may have to use your previous clone's equipment.

Troubleshooters are expected to clear up the used clones of fallen comrades or make sure they're properly recycled down the appropriate disposal chute, or at least call in a scrub-bot to clear up any viscous pools or thin vapours that may remain of their former associate. Leaving corpses lying around is littering and the penalties for littering in Alpha Complex are surprisingly harsh.

'WHY DON'T WE JUST DELIVER THE INITIAL TROUBLESHOOTERS TO THEIR MISSION OBJECTIVE THROUGH THE CLONE DELIVERY SYSTEM, WOULDN'T THAT BE MORE EFFICIENT?'

Shh.

USING YOUR CEREBRAL CORETECH

- SECTION 1.4

Your character's Cerebral Coretech augments their cognitive and sensory abilities in all sorts of interesting ways. They can download new packages to enhance their existing abilities or improve their physical or mental abilities, access information on just about any database within their security clearance, order new equipment *and all without the other members of their Troubleshooter squad knowing.*

TALKING WITH THE COMPUTER

Most of the things your character will say to the Computer will be fine for the other players to hear but, some things – things that might suggest you believe one of the other Troubleshooters is less loyal to the Computer than they ought to be, for example – you will want to keep between the Computer and your character. In Alpha Complex your character can communicate directly with the Computer by sub-vocalising and getting answers via an aural interface. As a player, you can also use technology to communicate directly with the GM. All it needs is a system where you can message them directly and they can message you back. Any decent IM program that you can run on your phone or a small computer is ideal.

Some game groups prefer the old-school approach of passing written notes but for most people writing takes longer than typing and note-passing leaves physical evidence that sneaky players can intercept to find out what's going on. Trust your digital systems, citizen. Digital systems are your friends.

Only do this for conversations with the Computer/GM that need to be secret from the other players. Likewise, don't ask the GM to leave the room with you for a private face-to-face chat if you don't absolutely have to. Role-playing games are group story-building games and anything that breaks up the dynamic of the group is disruptive. So keep as much of it in the open as you reasonably can. You'll find things are faster and funnier that way.

IBALL RECORDING SOFTWARE

All Troubleshooters can use the Cerebral Coretech's iBall module to record video and audio to their AugMem storage. They activate and control this through eye movements.

If you want to record what's going on, you need to notify the GM and possibly the other players. Obviously if you say, 'I wink with my left eye' then everybody will know that your character just started recording a video. Instead, you should get the GM's attention *and actually wink at them*. Some of the other players may notice. Some may not. That's kind of the point.

Your GM will tell you when your AugMem storage is getting full.

DEAD ZONES

AugMem and some other Cerebral Coretech functions will only work if the Troubleshooters are in communication with the Computer. Alpha Complex wifi is much more reliable than today's shoddy hotch-potch of standards and most of the time this won't be a problem. However there are areas known as 'dead zones' where the wifi signal cannot penetrate.

In a dead zone, a character's Cerebral Coretech will continue to function but any facilities that require direct communication with the Computer or the Cloud will go off-line. That includes:

- Alphapedia
- AugMem
- Citizen-Filer
- CitizenText
- Treason Beacon
- News updates
- XP point rewards catalogue and ordering
- Today's menus

The following items will disappear from the players' in-eye displays:

- Other citizens' names, XP points and Treason Stars
- Direction indicators and maps
- Pop-up advice boxes

Crucially, if the Troubleshooters are out of range of the Cloud, then their personalities and memories are not getting backed up to MemTech. If they die before they return to signal range, their replacement clone will only have memories up to the point they lost the connection. Fear dead zones, citizens!

Skill packages and enhanced abilities that the characters have already downloaded will remain available. Software updates will be offline until the characters leave the dead zone.

There is an XP point bonus available for reporting the existence and location of dead zones.

XP POINTS, OR BETTER LIVING THROUGH GAMIFICATION

- SECTION 1.5

EARNING XP POINTS

There are three ways to earn XP points. Through good works, through completing missions and through Achievements. All clones get one XP point per day and bonuses for any spontaneous acts in the service of Alpha Complex. That's the good works part.

MISSION XP POINTS

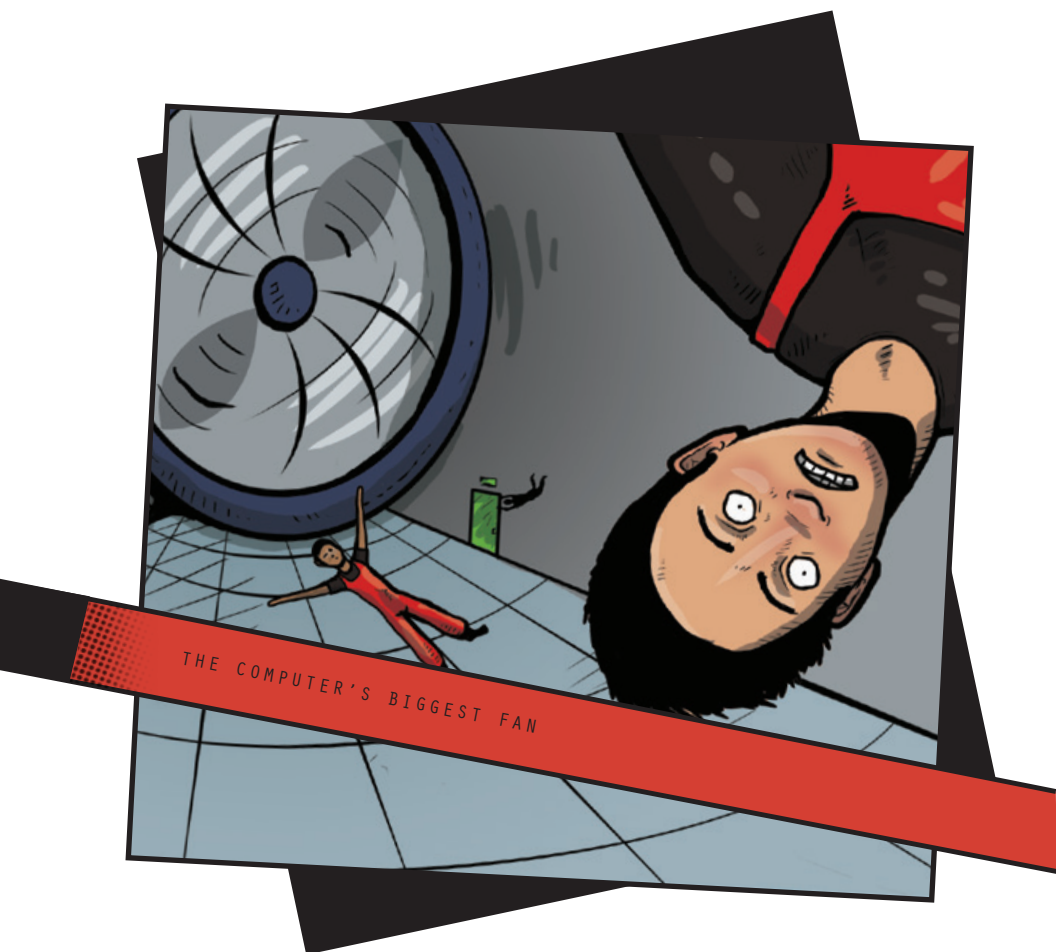
Troubleshooter teams are awarded XP points for successful completion of a mission – and the Computer is generous in how many XP points it gives out!

The Team Leader will divide the group's XP points between all its members following the debrief, with each team member being allotted an amount relative to their contribution and how well they performed their mandatory bonus duty, if those were assigned. In the unlikely event that mission objectives are only partially achieved, XP point totals may be docked slightly.

Also, if the group loses a number of clones during the mission, the cost of delivering replacements may be deducted from the final XP point total. After all, clone replacement is inefficient! Likewise, although Troubleshooters may request new equipment to be delivered during a mission, during debriefing the Computer or an accredited requisitioning official may decide that the equipment was not used in an appropriate manner and must be paid for with the XP points the group has earned.

ACHIEVEMENT XP POINTS

To foster healthy competition and co-operation between Troubleshooters, the Computer has developed Achievements. These are optional bonus objectives, supplemental to the main mission, that will earn the first clone that completes them an immediate XP point reward. To ensure that tasks are not over-completed, each Achievement can only be claimed once and only by one person, not a group – so make sure to be first if you want that bonus!



Here are some sample Achievements but each mission will have its own set, specifically engineered to emphasise the priorities among the obstacles, challenges and side-quests ahead.

50 XP points – Repair malfunctioning technology.

100 XP points – Bring a terrorist to justice.

100 XP points – Confess your own treasonous acts to Friend Computer.

200 XP points – Appear on popular holoivid show Brave & Expendable.

300 XP points – Discover the location of notorious mutant Wossname the Not Dead.

400 XP points – Save a crowd (10+) of citizens from imminent danger.

500 XP points – Recover the glass flask from the Control Room without contaminating more than 20% of the sector

2000 XP points – Perform actions leading to the arrest of an entire cell of a Secret Society.

XP points are the only currency that Alpha Complex uses. XP points are created by the Computer and given to clones in exchange for their services. As the points are tied to your clone-DNA and you can't trade them with other clones, you never need to worry about unscrupulous traitors trying to trick you out of your hard-earned XP points! Warning: DAIVs can syphon a clone's XP points for their own nefarious purposes. Be constantly vigilant for DAIVs and other malign intelligences.

Other currencies do not exist and have never existed, and rumours of stable trade through value-fixed barter goods between treasonous clones are so false they should not even be investigated.

SPENDING XP POINTS

Citizens of Alpha Complex can spend their XP points at any time. The process is as simple as calling up the XP points app in their Cerebral Coretech, selecting the desired option and answering a couple of simple proof-of-identity questions.

SPENDING XP POINTS ON EQUIPMENT

The Computer is keen for you to spend your XP points on whatever you want (while, obviously, strictly observing your security clearance). To that end, and to make things easy for you in the field, the technology that delivers your replacement clones to a mission in the unlikely event of your death has been repurposed to quickly deliver on-demand supplies to you and your Troubleshooter colleagues.

Run out of power packs in the middle of a gunfight with some terrorist scum? Simply navigate to the XP point reward catalogue on your Cerebral Coretech (see page 66), order what you need (or two!) and sit back and relax as it's delivered to you through a series of pressurised tubes and overclocked 3D printers.

If you're after something that the Computer can't provide (you rebel) then you'll need to do a favour for someone in a position to get it for you. Perhaps someone with a higher security clearance.

DIDN'T WE USED TO HAVE CREDITS?

You are mistaken, citizen. Have a Treason Star to remind you not to be mistaken again.

SPENDING XP POINTS ON IMPROVING YOUR CLONE

But wait, there's more! Using a combination of invasive synaptic fusion and advanced gene manipulation techniques, the Computer can adjust your body and mind to suit your desires. Do you want to be faster, stronger, smarter and just plain better than your fellow Troubleshooters? Fret no more – when you spend XP points to improve yourself, you'll feel those adjustments to your character sheet immediately as your brain is connected to the Improvement Database and the relevant information is downloaded directly into your grey matter.

USING XP POINTS TO IMPROVE GAME STATS

Here are the costs of boosting your character's abilities.

- Recover Moxie: 50 XP points per point of Moxie
- Increase Moxie: 200 XP points per new level (maximum 8)
- Boost stat: 500 XP points per additional point (maximum +3)
- Boost skill: 200 XP points per additional point (maximum +5)
- Acquire new specialist skill: 300 XP points

SPENDING XP ON IMPROVING YOUR CLEARANCE

While you might be promoted to Orange (or even Yellow!) clearance during your time with the Troubleshooters, you'll be pleased to hear that you can fast-track your promotion experience by spending XP points to upgrade your security clearance as soon as you have enough XP points to do it, even in the middle of a mission. Field Promotions are accompanied by rush delivery of an appropriately coloured jumpsuit and laser pistol and a small shower of Loyalty Confetti™. Cake can be supplied on request for an additional fee.

Enjoy your new-found authority, citizen! We're sure you'll put it to good use in service of Friend Computer.

WAYS TO IMPROVE SKILLS

The easiest and most convenient way to improve a character's skills is by spending XP points on them, of course, but there are two other ways that characters can improve the range and extent of what they can do. They can be given them as part of a mission or they can receive them from a third party.

BUYING SKILLS WITH XP POINTS. As above.

MISSION-SPECIFIC SKILLS. At the start of a mission the Computer may give one or more Troubleshooters a skill package. This may take the form of a temporary upgrade in a skill by uploading the relevant expertise into the Troubleshooter's cerebral coretech, or possibly a hyper-specialist skill for them to use on the mission, such as 'defuse unstable nuclear warhead'. Some skills packages go along with specific pieces of equipment. Sometimes the geniuses at R&D will create a brand new skill for the Troubleshooters to try out!



THE CLONE TANKS

WHY IS MY NOSE BLEEDING?

Sometimes noses bleed, Troubleshooter. Sometimes ears bleed. Sometimes eyes. Sometimes you shouldn't ask questions about the Computer's invasive synaptic fusion techniques, because you wouldn't understand the answer unless we implanted it into your head and as that is above your security clearance, we won't.

We are remotely adjusting your Curiosity Matrix to ensure that questions such as the preceding do not bother you in the future. Please do not move your head, neck or brain during this process.

Warning: Using a mission-specific skill package for purposes not associated with the mission is treason.

RECEIVING SKILLS FROM THIRD PARTIES: It can happen that the players will meet or become associated with someone who can teach them a new skill or upgrade a previous skill for them. This may be a shadowy figure who agrees to pass on secret knowledge in exchange for favours or tokens, such as pre-**[REDACTED]** artefacts which are highly prized or someone who is eager to transmit a new discovery to a wider audience. There's a name for these skill-trainers. It is 'traitor' and they can be turned in to the Computer for XP points. Note: Many Secret Societies offer 'unique skills' to lure new members into their clutches. It is well known that these so-called skills will fry a clone's Cerebral Coretech and leave them a gibbering wreck for the rest of their life, which will be short. Trust only the skills given to you by the Computer, citizen.

IMPROVING STATS

The only way to permanently increase a stat is to buy an increase with XP points. Troubleshooters may be assigned equipment or get a temporary ability that boosts a stat higher than normal but that will only last for as long as the character has the ability or equipment.

EQUIPMENT

- SECTION 1.6

Equipment is a Troubleshooter's best friend. (Incorrect: the Computer is a Troubleshooter's best friend. If you found yourself agreeing with the previous statement, please press your temple against the nearest wireless re-education dock until you no longer agree.) You'll be relying on your kit to see you through all sorts of exciting scrapes, so pay attention as we run down the three different types of equipment that you'll use in your missions.

REMEMBER: ABANDONING YOUR EQUIPMENT IS TREASON!

The Computer has selected your equipment in accordance with your abilities so you can realise your full potential. Equipment is valuable and hard to come by, so every time you leave equipment in the field, you sacrifice important assets – and potentially let them fall into Terrorist hands!

Indeed, it is rumoured that the Gehenna Incident, which did not occur, was caused by a lazy operative treasonously leaving their experimental equipment unattended.

To that end, leaving your equipment in the field is treasonous and those operatives who do not return their kit to Troubleshooter HQ in a timely fashion will be penalised appropriately.

REGULAR EQUIPMENT

When Troubleshooters set out on a mission, they'll always have access to a laser pistol and a jumpsuit in an appropriate security clearance-coded colour. If you believe you do not have your jumpsuit and laser pistol, please check again until you find them; you are mistaken and they have been correctly issued to you.

Clones may be issued with other standard equipment appropriate for their current mission – breathing apparatus for dangerous environments, armour for combat missions, tracking hardware for recapture operations and so on. Your GM will tell you what you receive as part of your mission briefing.

SPECIAL EQUIPMENT

Special equipment is better than regular stuff, usually represented by cards, and usually handed out just after briefing. If your character trades equipment with another Troubleshooter, or they loot it off your clone's corpse, then the card changes hands. Most special equipment has additional rules – check the card for more details. Equipment cards are the responsibility of the Equipment Officer, who decides who gets what and when they get to use it and when they have to give it back.

Do you know what an algorithm is, Troubleshooter? Algorithms are sums that are better than humans! The Computer has used an algorithm to determine the best possible pieces of equipment for you on every given mission. In the unlikely event that you are unhappy with your algorithmically selected equipment, please continue using it until happiness results.

R&D EQUIPMENT

The brave boys and girls in Research & Development are creating new and exciting technologies all the time. Thanks to their resourcefulness and availability, Troubleshooters will often be selected to test out these technologies and to keep a thorough record of how the equipment helped you in your mission, along with the top five things that you loved about it!

R&D equipment is brand new, experimental items that are specific to missions. Each one is so special and unique that it isn't represented on a card. If you're lucky enough to receive any, note it down on your character sheet. The GM may pass you a short description of the item and its capabilities.

EQUIPMENT LEVELS

The Computer has introduced a level system for equipment to facilitate ease of use. Please consult the following chart for sample equipment sorted by grade.

ALPHA: Red-level jumpsuit, Red-level laser pistol, most standard equipment.

Level 1: Orange or Yellow laser pistol. Red-level laser rifle. Knife. Heavy handheld scanner.

Level 2: Green-level laser pistol. Backpack scanner.

Level 3: Indigo-level laser pistol. Armed Services-issue wide-bore shotgun. Elite computing rig.

Level 4: Vulture Squad Assault Laser. Light powered armour. Jetpacks.

Level 5: Heavy powered armour. Forcefields. Hoverboards. Robot unicorns. [REDACTED].

When you use a piece of equipment in an appropriate way (or an inappropriate but entertaining way, based on the GM's judgement) then you add a number of dice to your NODE equal to the item's level to your roll. ALPHA equipment adds no dice.

WEIGHT

For ease of calculation, the Computer has introduced a simplified method of weight management.

SMALL equipment is light enough that you don't have to worry about carrying it – you can stick it in the pocket of your jumpsuit. Laser pistols, grenades, handheld computers, bags of algae chips and spare power-packs are all Small, and you can carry as many as you want without impediment, within reason. The GM is liable to enforce weight penalties if you try to carry, say, fifty grenades or all the Brown Food Bars.

MEDIUM equipment is sizeable stuff and you need to carry it in one or both hands, stuff it in a bag or strap it to your body to move around effectively. Laser rifles, jump boots, scanners, toolboxes and portable computers are Medium equipment and you can carry two of them without problems, or one piece while wielding a weapon.



AT LEAST YOU HAVE YOUR HEALTH

LARGE equipment is big, heavy and bulky. You'll need to carry Large equipment in both hands or hope it comes with a special carrying case. Machinery, squad support lasers, some bots and the chairs are all Large, and you can only carry one before the weight interferes with efficient completion of your mission.

OVERSIZE equipment is too big for one clone to carry on their own, although they might be able to drag it. Even with assistance, carrying an Oversize item requires all of a character's attention. They can't do anything else until they put it down.

If your character is carrying more than two Medium items or more than one Large item, deduct one from their NODE on all rolls. If they are carrying an Oversize item, deduct two from their NODE on all rolls.

If you find yourself able to carry oversize equipment – such as taxibots, engine blocks, refrigeration units and [REDACTED] – on your own then please report to your nearest medical centre to be scanned for mutant abilities.

ARMOUR

Armour is rated by level, as described above. Each level of Armour protects the wearer from one level of damage but is destroyed by that. For example, a piece of Level 5 armour can take 5 wounds and then ceases to function.

Some forms of armour may have special conditions. For example, some heavy armour may ignore all Hurt-level wounds (attacks with a single success dice have no effect, in other words). Troubleshooter uniforms are made of a special fabric that reflects laser shots from lasers with the same or lower security clearance than the wearer. In other words, a Red-level Troubleshooter's uniform will reflect bolts from Red and Infrared laser-pistols (there is no such thing as an Infrared laser pistol) but will let bolts from attackers who are Orange and above pass straight through.

BREAKING STUFF

Equipment and other items will take damage depending on size. Roll your NODE as usual: You're looking for successes above the basic difficulty number, the same way you do damage to clones:

SIZE	DOES IT BREAK?
Small	1 success
Medium	2 successes
Large	3 successes
Oversize	4 successes

Damage is cumulative: if you attack a Large scrub-bot three times, doing one success each time, it will break after the third success.

ACQUIRING ADDITIONAL EQUIPMENT

Characters can acquire additional equipment during a mission by ordering it from the Computer and having it delivered to their location. Equipment will only ever be delivered to the ordering clone's location, never to anywhere else. Individual clones will have to spend XP points to do this but some missions allow the Equipment Officer to requisition more equipment, either from the catalogue or by taking it from nearby clones, who will be executed— sorry, *excited* to help Troubleshooters carry out their dangerous and important work.

HOW DO YOU JOIN A SECRET SOCIETY?

- SECTION 1.7

In most cases you don't, the Secret Society recruits you. Someone – maybe a friend, maybe a complete stranger – tells you that you've been chosen for a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to join a group that will help you reach your full potential, zoom to the top of the security clearances, get to be first in the food-hall queues and incidentally save Alpha Complex from its greatest threat which is not actually mutant terrorists, it's something that you're not cleared to know about yet and do you want to join.

Say yes. For heaven's pity say yes, because saying no isn't just impolite, it will earn you that Secret Society's undying distrust and hatred. This goes double in the case of IntSec. IntSec does not take no for an answer, literally. If you are approached by IntSec then congratulations, you're happy to be in IntSec. Your protestations and screaming are fooling nobody.

Joining a Secret Society can be awkward if you are already a member of a different Secret Society and can cause cognitive dissonance, panic and chaos as you attempt to fulfill two entirely contradictory sets of mission objectives. Much like a regular Troubleshooter mission, really. However it's quite possible to be a member of multiple Secret Societies at the same time, as long as you can hold all the contradictions in your head and as long as none of those Secret Societies find out about the others.

If you want to join a particular Secret Society, there are ways. The best thing to do is to do something public that fits the society's objectives and if it was noteworthy enough then someone from the society will contact you. Probably. They may be from IntSec, they may be from the Illuminati – it is very difficult to join the Illuminati, they are the synthicreme de la synthicreme – or they may be another wannabe who wants to join the society and assumes you're already in it. This is how many new Secret Societies start.



BEING IN A SECRET SOCIETY

Secret Societies have agendas, aims and objectives, and members are expected to actively work to help fulfill them. That means spotting opportunities to advance the society's aims and taking advantage of them but it also means that from time to time Troubleshooters will receive briefings from their superiors or cell-leaders with specific instructions regarding the mission they're on at the moment. These are usually delivered in unique and bizarre ways to get around the Computer's constant surveillance. They may involve subverting or crashing the mission, stealing the objective, or taking advantage of it to complete some other task. Sometimes Troubleshooters will be asked to undertake an entire mission on behalf of their society.

Not every Secret Society is organised the same way and even different branches of the same society have different set-ups and structures. Don't assume that just because you're a high-up in the Mystics of Sector IZX then the Mystics in Sector TYH will welcome you with open arms or anything except laser fire.

REWARDS

Secret Societies have systems of rewards for their faithful and loyal agents. They can't hand out XP points, obviously (although the Phreaks have hacked gift-cards and Free Enterprise has its own currency) but characters can rise up the ranks of society and obtain special and unique items of equipment. Some societies also have specialist skills that PCs can learn, once they've amassed enough kudos with the group.

ALL SET!

- SECTION 1.8

Congratulations, Troubleshooter! You have successfully completed Module PARAN-01-B in Elementary Troubleshooting. Have 20 XP points for your diligent attention to details. There will be a test on what you have learned, in the form of your first live mission, starting shortly.

We hope that this guide has taught you everything you need to know about Alpha Complex and your important role in keeping it safe. Please remember that this is a classified document and should not be passed to anyone unless you both have the proper clearance. This includes you. If you wish to refer to this document again, first check that you have the appropriate clearances. Displaying knowledge of the contents of this document to unauthorised citizens is treason.

The Computer wants you to be successful as a Troubleshooter. It wants you to root out the enemies of Alpha Complex and the causes of enemies of Alpha Complex, no matter how close to home they may be. Be alert at all times. Be ruthless. Be unstinting. Be loyal.

These are troubled times for Alpha Complex. The propaganda and divisive tactics of our enemies grow more cunning day by day and your work is crucial. Infiltrate Secret Societies if you can but only to unmask them and gain great happiness and many XP points. Do not fall for their lies or their offers of secret knowledge. Trust nobody.

And remember, the Computer is always with you. It is a friendly voice in your ear, literally, thanks to the wonder of subdermal cochlear implants. If you need advice or reassurance, you should turn to the Computer. Amend the instruction at the end of the last paragraph and trust the Computer.

[illegible]

XP POINT REWARD PROGRAM

- SECTION 1.9

Welcome to the XP Point Redemption Programme Special Troubleshooter Edition, citizen. You have been issued XP points as a reward for your loyalty to Alpha Complex and the Computer. XP points can be redeemed at any time for many acceptable rewards suitable for your security clearance. Pick up that mop and start earning now! You will notice in your viewfield that every citizen's XP point total is visible above their heads, just under where their Treason Stars would be if they have any Treason Stars. Be proud of your XP point total, citizen!

Your current XP point balance is [\$updating]

EARNING XP POINTS

All citizens earn 1 XP point per day of employment in the service of the Computer. Additionally as a Troubleshooter you can earn variable additional points for doing additional deeds such as:

- Successfully completing a mission in the service of the Computer
- Successfully earning an Achievement
- Identifying a mutant, traitor or terrorist
- Arresting a mutant, traitor or terrorist
- Executing a mutant, traitor or terrorist
- Improving the wellbeing or morale of the citizens of Alpha Complex
- [\$notfound]

SPENDING XP POINTS

This catalogue has been customised to your chosen profession. These items are suitable for use as Troubleshooter Equipment. Please note that the Equipment Officer in your Troubleshooter Equipment squad may have been issued a requisitions budget for your current operation, which can be used to order items in the field. Requisitioned items are the responsibility of the Equipment Troubleshooter Equipment Officer Troubleshooter Equipment and must be returned after use. Equipment ordered by an individual clone by spending their personal XP points becomes the property of that clone.

EQUIPMENT

Upgrade	Cost
Grenades x3	75 XP points
Sniper rifle	250 XP points
Mini-gun	350 XP points
Laser pistol	100 XP points
Laser rifle	200 XP points
Spare power pack (fits all standard laser weapons)	30 XP points
Power cord (fits all standard laser weapons)	45 XP points
Multi-charger	70 XP points
Sabre	80 XP points
Grapple gun	70 XP points
Body armour	220 XP points
Sedatives x3	120 XP points
Gauss rocket launcher	450 XP points
- Additional rocket	60 XP points each
Multi-tool	25 XP points
Replacement armour	95 XP points
Replacement mop	15 XP points
Nightcycle vision goggles	110 XP points
Safety gauntlets	35 XP points
Insulated gauntlets	45 XP points
Insulated mug – enjoy your Hot Fun anywhere!	20 XP points
Hoverboard	[AWAITING STOCK]
Medkit x3	150 XP points
Electro-knuckles	50 XP points
Megaphone	35 XP points
Needler	180 XP points
Laser tripwire	150 XP points
Foam grenade x3	130 XP points
K@ companion bot	650 XP points
Hygiene-o-matic 9000	220 XP points
UBT Hypersense device	240 XP points
Casey-B's Bombaboots	270 XP points

HOME IMPROVEMENTS

Upgrade	Cost
Increase your living space (per square metre)	100 XP points
Increase your physical storage space (per cubic litre)	20 XP points
Increase your AugMem digital storage space (per 16 zb)	65 XP points
Replacement clothes (appropriate to your security clearance)	45 XP points
High-fashion clothes (appropriate to your security clearance)	95 XP points
Icon sets, wallpapers and themes for Cerebral Coretech	3 XP points each

RECREATION

Upgrade	Cost
Bouncy Bubble Beverage	5 XP points
Standard one-hour video cast	5 XP points
Premium one-hour video cast	15 XP points
Deluxe food rations for 1 daycycle	20 XP points
Private room for 1 daycycle	50 XP points
Use of taxi-pod for 1 journey	40 XP points
Hire of petbot for 1 daycycle	40 XP points
Hire of funbot for 1 daycycle	80 XP points

SELF IMPROVEMENT

Upgrade	Cost
Specialist skills package	300 XP points per level
Upgrade existing skills package	200 XP points per level
Core module upgrade	500 XP points per level
Calming alpha-wave moderator	50 XP points per use

INCREASING SECURITY CLEARANCE

Upgrade	Cost
Upgrade from INFRARED to RED Security Clearance	500 XP points
Upgrade from RED to ORANGE Security Clearance	1000 XP points
– As above, with cake for your team	1100 XP points
Upgrade from ORANGE to YELLOW Security Clearance	2000 XP points
– As above, with cake for your team	2100 XP points
– As above, and the cake is YELLOW cake only you can eat, but there's enough for everybody	2400 XP points
Upgrade from YELLOW to GREEN Security Clearance	4000 XP points
– This level comes with complimentary cake	
Upgrade from GREEN to BLUE Security Clearance	8000 XP points
– This level comes with two complimentary cakes	
Upgrade from BLUE to INDIGO Security Clearance	16000 XP points
– Information about Indigo cake is above your security clearance	
Upgrade from INDIGO to VIOLET Security Clearance	32000 XP points
– Your unauthorised knowledge of Violet-level cake has been noted, citizen	
Upgrade from VIOLET to ULTRAVIOLET	[\$NOTFOUND]
[\$UNEXPECTEDENDOFCAKEERROR]	

Note: all security-clearance upgrades include new body armour and a laser pistol in the appropriate colour.

SPECIAL REWARDS

Upgrade

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Additional clone

Cost

200 XP

350 XP

1750 XP

7200 XP

[REDACTED]





THIS WEEKCYLE'S SPECIAL OFFER

STUN GUN! Be the envy of your friends with the B-83/n 'Blipper' classic stun-pistol. Convert enemies of Alpha Complex to prone, twitching yet sentient and not-dead lumps of humanoid organic matter at up to 15 metres. Causes no wounds and only minor internal bleeding. Ineffective against bots, vehicles, stationary objects, infrastructure and clones who are already dead. Includes safety shut-off to prevent accidental stunning of citizens with a higher security clearance than you. Now just 250 XP points!

COMING NEXT WEEKCYLE!

Be the first to own the all-new B-84/n2 'Blitter' for an introductory 'test subject' price of 225 XP points!

ATTENTION!

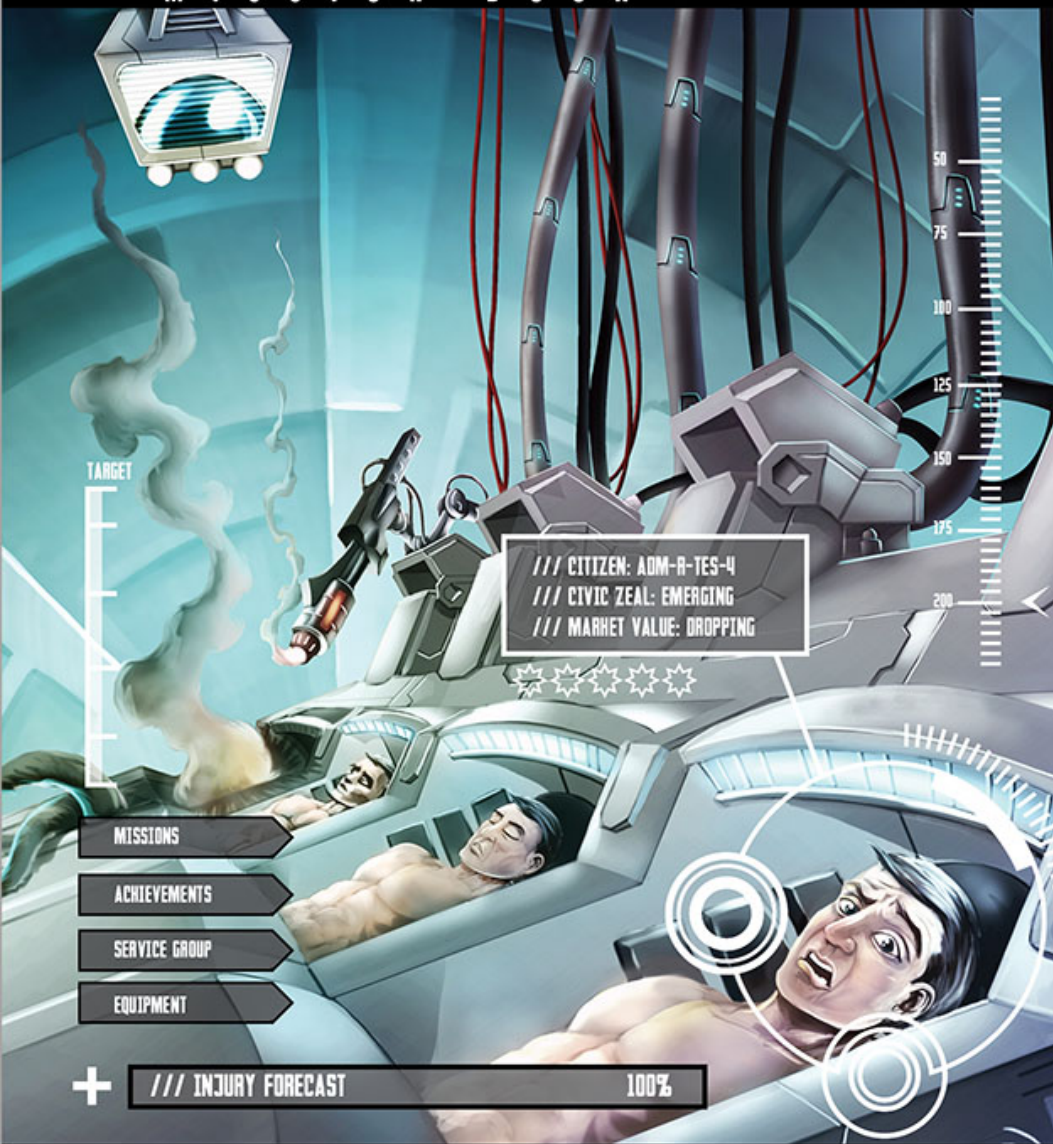
All clones who downloaded item 0WL1-ZX 'iBall enhanced dark-vision package (experimental do not release)' should be warned that some users have reported an incidence of exploding retinas. R&D apologises if this has caused you any inconvenience. An iPatch will be made available next monthcycle. In the meantime, if you want to return this item for a partial XP point refund then you are wrong.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

XP points are a virtual currency issued, administered and generously donated to citizens of Alpha Complex in return for services rendered by the Computer. All XP points remain the property of the Computer at all times and may not be traded, swapped or given by any citizen to any other citizen, bot, lifeform or being or object sentient or unsentient at any time for any reason except to their own subsequent clones. XP points may not be exchanged for objects material and immaterial, favours, promises, thoughts, ideas, concepts, beliefs, tokens, bon mots, emotions, intangibles, miasmas, ethers, memes, whuffie or anything else that does or does not exist without the prior approval of the Computer, which will not be granted. The Computer reserves the right to remove XP points from your account as a punishment for infractions or for causing damage to the physical, mental, emotional or spiritual structure of Alpha Complex, or to encourage citizens to perform better in future, or for asking what the 'XP' in 'XP points' stands for. The XP point cost of rewards may change at any time without notice. XP point rewards may be removed from this catalogue or replaced with similar items of equal or greater or other value at the discretion of the Computer. Likewise the catalogue may be withdrawn at any time. All deliveries are final. Asking about warranties may affect your statutory rights, where 'statutory rights' are defined as your right not to be turned into a statue. Enjoy your XP point rewards. The Computer is your friend.

PARANOIA

MISSION BOOK



TARGET

/// CITIZEN: ADM-R-TES-4
/// CIVIC ZEAL: EMERGING
/// MARKET VALUE: DROPPING



MISSIONS

ACHIEVEMENTS

SERVICE GROUP

EQUIPMENT



/// INJURY FORECAST

100%

NEW PARANOIA EDITION

JAMES WALLIS
GRANT HOWITT
PAUL DEAN

ORIGINAL PARANOIA DESIGN

DAN GELBER
GREG COSTIKYAN
ERIC GOLDBERG

PARANOIA

MISSION BOOK

Written by
JAMES WALLIS, GRANT HOWITT AND PAUL DEAN

Paranoia created by
DAN GELBER, GREG COSTIKYAN AND ERIC GOLDBERG

Graphic design and artwork by
Will Chapman, Amy Perrett and Cheyenne Wright

PROOFREADING: Charlotte Law

PLAYTESTERS: Manar Hussain, Keiron Gillen, Daniel Gooch, Simon Rogers, Martha Henson, Sophie Sampson, Daniel Nye Griffiths, Cat Tobin, William Mckie, Ethan Burke, Anxhelino Graci, Alex Borrill, Leo Wolfson, Thomas Burt, Matthew Cramsie, Donna Hogan, Malcolm Ryan (first death this edition, also first Promotion), Bill Cohen, Conan French, Christopher Hawkins, Sarah McIntyre, Owen McRae, Symon Vagabond, Leigh Tuckman, Liza Curtis, Benj Davis, Rob Abrazado, Henry Etkin, Rigel Cummins, Jacob Hochbaum, Austin Cantrell, Mary Hamilton, Cory Eicher, Pierre Viola, Mike Vides, Emily Lewis, Chris Bryan, Donald Shults, Niki Shults, James Washington, Brittany Washington. (The Computer has been forced to omit a few names from this list because of terrorism. Hail the Computer!)

BRAVE TROUBLESHOOTERS AND CITIZENS OF ALPHA COMPLEX: Anthony Wright (Ant-R-GCC-5); Peter Endean (Peetey-B-BRU-5); Manar Hussain (Blue-B-SKY-4); Carl Schelin (Carl-B-GDE-4); Marian McBrine (Mary-I-MAC-1); Billy Darios (Basil-V-FIN-3); Bruce W Skakle (Brooce-B-HRO-4); Oliver Facey (Arkell-V-PDM-9); Rob Hansen (Rob-R-IES-6); Paul Bird (Paul-B-IRD-1); Frédéri Pochard (Freder-I-POC-4); Jordan Theyel (Jordan-G-LOW-4); Chris Mouchel (Bjorn-Toby-B-OLD-6); Carl White (Anders-B-DUK-2)

HIGH PROGRAMMERS: Andrew MacLennan (Ander-U-MAC); Thomas Bender (Lord-U-BER); Sawada Taiju (Taij-U-YAP); Grant Woolcott (Psyk-O-KOW); Liz Mackie (Liz-U-CRO)

GRATEFUL THANKS TO: Cat Tobin, Gareth Briggs, Garrett Crowe, Tom Pleasant, William Mckie, Luke Hawksbee

EQUIPMENT CARDS: Friction Enhancer by James Petts; Laser Tripwire by Mathieu Pasteran; Foam Grenade by Chris Fletcher; K@ Companion Bot by Garry R. Page; Hygiene-O-Matic 9000 by Augustus Golden; U.B.T Hypersense Device by Gabriel Preston; Casey B's Bombaboots by CKC; Fake Moustache by Ryan Sosa

GENTLEMAN TONE CZAR: Ken Rolston

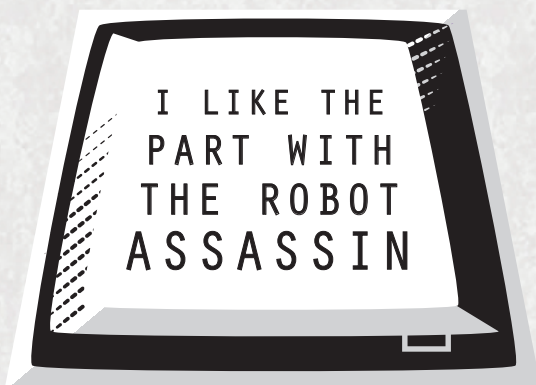


The Computer endorses and approves this Celebration of the Selfless
Labours of this list of Citizens and Condemned Traitors



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INTRODUCTION

P A R A N O I A

Welcome, citizen! This is the PARANOIA MISSION BOOK. It contains three linked adventures designed to introduce new players and Gamemasters to the world of Paranoia. Are you a new player in the world of Paranoia? Then STOP READING IMMEDIATELY. This book is for Gamesmasters only.

Welcome, Gamesmaster! This book serves two purposes:
Are you a NEW GAMESMASTER? Then this will introduce you and your players to the wonders of tabletop roleplay through a structured linear gaming experience known in games lingo as a 'railroad'.

Are you an EXPERIENCED GAMESMASTER WITH NO TIME? This book lets you run an adventure with almost no prep work, and without having to read or understand stuff in advance!

Are you a PLAYER WHO'S TOO EXCITED TO HAVE HEHEDED THE WARNING ABOVE? Seriously, STOP READING and pass this book to the GM.

There are three adventures in this book, each designed to take 2-3 hours to play. The first one introduces the GM and players to the basics of playing Paranoia and life in Alpha Complex, step-by-step, introducing new rules and core background concepts only when they come up in the story.

But if you're an experienced games master with no time then you don't want to be reading all this. Let's get straight to the meat of the action! You can skip to 'How it Works'.

IF YOU'VE NEVER PLAYED A ROLE-PLAYING GAME BEFORE?

RPGs are like improv theatre, and you're the director. You know the setting, the story and the limits of the world. The actors (the players) know the parts they'll be playing (known as player characters or PCs), but nothing more. The rules determine what they can do, and whether they succeed or fail. It is your job to shepherd this feckless crew through the narrative by telling them what's happening around them, telling them the results of their actions, and playing the minor roles as well.

IF YOU'VE NEVER PLAYED PARANOIA BEFORE?

Paranoia is set in a massive bunker-city called Alpha Complex. Some time ago something went wrong on the surface of the Earth and now the whole of humanity lives here, as cloned citizens, guided by the Computer. Unfortunately Alpha Complex is old and falling apart, and the Computer is old and cranky and refuses to believe that anything is wrong, preferring to blame it on terrorists, traitors, mutants and members of Secret Societies.

In most *Paranoia* games the players are Troubleshooters. However being a Troubleshooter means you need to know something about Alpha Complex and how it works, so in the first adventure the PCs start as freshly cloned citizens with Infrared security clearance, the lowest of the low, and everything has to be explained to them slowly and carefully because Infrareds are a bit dim and also drugged to ensure compliance. This is an ideal state for learning how to plan an RPG.

HOW IT WORKS

Start at Paragraph One of Adventure One, on page 9. You read out the sections written in italics, and ask the players what they want their characters to do. The options underneath the text will tell you what to do or say next. Key concepts and direct instructions to you are in bold type, letting you skim the text quickly. Rules are only introduced when they're needed, usually in boxes within the text.

It really is that simple. If you've got the time then read through the whole adventure and the other two books in the set, but if you know a bit about *Paranoia* already then it's not essential.



You're allowed to make stuff up. Be warned that if you make up too much stuff, then you may derail the adventure from its planned course and you'll end up having to make up most of it. Making stuff up is an important GM skill and the sooner you start to practise it the better. So that's fine.

Just to recap:

Bold text – key terms, rule summaries and direct instructions to you, the GM

Italic text – read this aloud to the players

Bold italic text – read aloud in the voice of the Computer

PREPARATION

You will need:

- This book, obviously
- A bunch of six-sided dice, including at least one Computer Dice (it has the 6 replaced by a Computer symbol)
- The pre-generated characters from pages 83-88 of this book
- Pencils and paper
- Two voices. One should be your normal speaking voice, and the other is the voice you'll use for the Computer. Think of the most anodyne, superficial, slightly artificial, fake-emotion voice you can. When you hear a pre-recorded announcement say 'We are sorry for the inconvenience' and you know that nobody is sorry at all, nobody has even thought about it, all that's happened is a subroutine somewhere has triggered the 'APOLOGY' audio-clip, that is the voice of the Computer.

THE ADVENTURES

The three adventures in this book can be played as individual stand-alone one-off adventures, but if played in the sequence here will form a three-session campaign that explains some of the mystery surrounding the Gehenna Incident, which did not happen, and Sector THA, which does not exist.

The first adventure, [Your Security Clearance Is Not High Enough For The Title Of This Adventure], begins with the player characters being freshly cloned. That means for this adventure they will be Infrareads – the lowly worker class of Alpha Complex. If they play their cards right they'll end it with a promotion to Red level and a job as a newly minted Troubleshooter.

The adventure also introduces the game's core rules in a simple step-by-step format, See simple mechanics below.

Adventure two, [\$title_not_found], welcomes PCs to the life of Red-level Troubleshooters and introduces them to the intrigues and machinations of Secret Societies. (Which can also be downloaded from Mongoose Publishings website).

Adventure three, [CLASSIFIED], finally delves into the mystery of the Gehenna Incident (which did not happen) and Sector THA, which does not exist.

SIMPLE MECHANICS

HOW DO I DO A THING?

Look at your character sheet. Choose a combination of a STAT (Violence, Brains, Mechanics or Chutzpah) and a SKILL (the things underneath the stats). Convince your GM that these two can be combined to do the thing you want to do. Add the number of the stat and the number of the skill: that's your NODE. (Other things like cards may affect your NODE too.) Roll that many dice, and the Computer Dice as well. Every 5 or 6 you get is a success. Tell the GM how many successes you have, and they'll tell you what happens.

MY SKILL NUMBER IS A NEGATIVE NUMBER

That's bad but not fatal. Well, it's probably fatal. Ignoring the minus sign, add the Stat + Skill together as before, calculate your NODE and roll that number of dice plus the Computer dice. Add up your successes. However, every dice that didn't roll a success counts as a failure (or a negative success, if you like.)



I NEED MORE DICE

You can add an extra dice to a roll by crossing off a point of Moxie.

I ROLLED A COMPUTER SYMBOL!

Tell the GM. When you roll a Computer symbol it means one of two things: either a piece of equipment has gone wrong; or the Computer has decided to take a personal interest in whatever you were just trying to do. This is stressful: cross off one Moxie point.

I HAVE REACHED ZERO MOXIE

You've LOST IT. Moxie represents self-control, so now you're out of control. The GM will tell you what to do.


USING CARDS

Action cards, Equipment cards, and Mutant Power cards can be used in combat. Secret Society cards, bonus duties and #1 Troubleshooter can't.

INITIATIVE

To determine who goes in what order, most cards have an Action Order number on them: the higher the better. Put a card face-down in front of you. At the start of a combat round the GM will call numbers from 10 down to 1. Indicate when your number is called. You don't have to show the card. You can lie about your number. Other players can challenge to see if you're lying. Being revealed as a liar is bad; challenging and being wrong is bad; being right and being proved right are good.

Note: With an Equipment card, you add a Stat to a number to determine the action order for the Equipment Card. E.g., the Grenade card says "Violence + 3"; if your Violence is 1, its Action Order is 4.



ABOUT TIME
WE GOT TO
THE FINANCIAL
EQUIVALENT OF
TORTURE

IN COMBAT

When it's your turn you can do one of three things:

- A Basic Action, which is any normal action, usually a Stat + Skill combo.
- Play the Action, Equipment or Mutant Power card you used in initiative. Follow the instruction on the card. Action cards and some Equipment cards are discarded after use. Mutant Power cards are only shown to the GM, not to everyone.
- Discard the card you used for initiative, take a basic action, and add one extra dice to your NODE.

Reaction cards can be played at any time someone is taking an action, or whenever that card says it can be played. You can play them on game characters, player characters, or yourself. The card will describe what effect it has.

WOUNDS

You can be fine, hurt (-1 to NODE), injured (-2 to NODE), maimed (-3 to NODE), or dead. Once you're at a level, any lesser wound has no effect. A wound of the same level knocks you down another level; a wound of a greater level takes you straight to that level.

CLONES

You get six. Don't use them all at once.



[YOUR SECURITY CLEARANCE IS NOT HIGH ENOUGH FOR THE TITLE OF THIS ADVENTURE]

M I S S I O N O N E

For 2-5 novice or rusty Paranoia players, and a Gamesmaster – that's you. If it's not you then you're reading the wrong book.

GETTING READY

Get your players all together.

Get them to pile their phones and other mobile devices in the middle of the table, face-down. The first person to touch their device has to fetch everyone else a drink.

Give out the character sheets from pages 83-88. Explain that each player will be playing one character, like an actor in a play. Let the players choose one each. Put any spares away.

Do something that changes the mood of the place you're in. Dim the lights, or close the blinds, or put on some music quietly in the background, or put a focal object on the table. Something to change the tone and draw people's attention to the game and make them shut up about whatever they watched last night.

RUNNING THE GAME

1. YOU WAKE UP

(The player characters are cloned)

Read the following aloud to the players, in your own voice:

You come to consciousness. You open your eyes, and although you know you've never been here before, you somehow know where it is: an Infrared-clearance cloning and briefing room for new citizens of Alpha Complex: white, tiled, clean, a bit chilly, empty apart from the other people here and a neat line of uniforms hanging from pegs along one wall. And security cameras, for your security.

There are other people here. Like you they are slightly damp, rather confused and very naked. Well, quite naked. Strategic locations on their bodies are hidden by a cloud of pixellisation. So, you realise as you glance down, are yours. Names float in the air above their heads. They are...

Get the players to introduce their characters to each other, with their names and a brief physical description. Pass them the Players Handbook open to page 14 and tell them not to read it. Now read on.

2. THE COMPUTER SPEAKS

(The player characters learn what's going on)

This is where you use the voice of the Computer for the first time.

'Greetings, new citizens!' The voice issues from hidden speakers around the room. 'Welcome to your first day in Alpha Complex. Any previous days in Alpha Complex you may recall are pseudomemories uploaded to your brain lobes, to aid orientation and minimise psychotic incidents in fresh clones. As citizens of Alpha Complex you are now valued members of our great community. You will be given roles and tasks, some simple and some perilous, and your contributions will be rewarded with –'

*There is an explosion in the distance, drowning out the voice. The room shakes slightly. An alarm sounds for a few seconds and cuts out. A chunk of tiling falls from the ceiling, crashing onto a scrub-bot – a small cleaning robot – that had been sitting silently in one corner next to a stack of mops. There is a brief silence, and then words form in the air: **PLEASE STAND BY***

A moment later two more form: **THE DOOR**

Now ask the players: 'What do you do?' Some of them will say they move to stand by the door. Good! That shows initiative and a willingness to follow instructions. Make a note of these players: they are patsies, and may be useful in the future.

Whatever the group does, the following happens:

3. MISSION BRIEFING (The PCs learn)

The door opens and a woman comes in. The name floating above her head is Roz-R-HYT-2. Her eyes are focused on something in front of her that you can't see. Her red jumpsuit matches her hair. A memory you've never accessed before tells you that she's Red level, and you're Infrared, which means she's one level of Security Clearance above you and she can tell you what to do. She does.

'Get dressed, clones,' she says. 'Alpha Complex needs you. We've had a full-on terrorist attack on the lowest level of a nearby sector, and it's all hands to the pump. You don't need the rest of the briefing, if you need to know anything look it up in Alphapedia, through your Cerebral Coretech implant. Everyone's got their CC running, right? Everyone can see my name?' She points in the air above her head. You all can.

If they're paying attention, one or more players may say that their **characters are getting dressed**. If not, ask them if that's what they're doing. In the unlikely event that someone decides to mess around and not follow orders, see the box-out titled 'Treason Stars' on page 24.

Roz-R-HYT continues: 'Great! Your Cerebral Coretech is your link to your friend the Computer. Information, directions, mission updates, XP points, holovids and the rest, it's all beamed straight to your iBall display. Anything else you need to know, subvocalise it. The Computer can see and hear everything you can, so you don't have to describe anything. The Computer knows already.'

ROZ-R-HYT-2

Roz-R-HYT-2 is a non-player character or NPC, meaning that the GM decides what she does and says. You can use her to give the players information, to help them out, or to frustrate them. Roz will do all three.

Roz-R-HYT is a Red-level clone who works for Central Processing Unit, the department that deals mostly with people. She's skilled at navigating the bureaucratic mazes of Alpha Complex. She has no armour or weapons.

She is a shameless and surprisingly good credit-taker, who will do her best to claim she was responsible for anything the PCs do that would earn them XP points – which she can get away with because she's Red level and they're Infrareads. She will take any chance to grab their glory or report any of them to Friend Computer if they put a toe out of line, as long as there are some XP points in it for her. Use this as a running joke through the adventure, until she gets her final comeuppance.

As a Red-level character, Roz knows things that would be useful to the PCs, but you don't know those things. You can get around this problem by having Roz refuse to tell them because it's 'classified' or 'you're not cleared for that' or 'not Infrared business'.

Roz is secretly a member of a Secret Society, the Communists (Gamemaster's Handbook, page 48), and uses her Troubleshooter briefings to assess and possibly recruit new members to it.

WHAT IF THE PLAYERS ASK YOU SOMETHING YOU DON'T KNOW?

12 13

There's a good chance the players know nothing about Alpha Complex, and a pretty good chance you don't either. So how do you answer their queries until you've had a chance to read everything? Simple: don't! Welcome to the Alpha Complex way of doing things.

Firstly, ask them who they're asking.

1. Roz-R-HYT or another game character

Roz is too busy to answer questions. 'Ask Alphapedia. If it's not in Alphapedia then you're not allowed to know it.' Other game characters are either too busy, too fearful of strangers, too dismissive of a group of lowly Infrareads to bother speaking to them, or – in the case of Infrareads – too drugged or too stupid to be able to answer coherently, if they even knew the answer, which they don't, or possibly pretending to be too drugged or stupid to know.

2. Alphapedia

Jolly good. Give them the Players Handbook.

3. Asking the Computer directly.

Any question voiced out loud (or passed to the GM in a note) prefaced with 'Computer!' or 'Friend Computer!' attracts its attention. The Computer tends not to give straight answers. Mostly it answers questions with questions, subtly questioning the asker's loyalty and asking for mission updates and why you're not proceeding instead of wasting its processor cycles. Then it'll either recommend you read Alphapedia, or ask that you proceed to a termination booth because your answers have been found to be insufficiently loyal.

4. Asking you.

They're fresh clones. They have some memories implanted, but not many, and in Paranoia not only is a little knowledge a dangerous thing, but a lot of knowledge will get you terminated on the spot. The default answer to 'Do I know...?' is 'How would you know that?' Information is a valuable resource; true information doubly so. At this stage it's healthy for them to feel a bit bewildered, and the Computer wants citizens to be healthy. Keep them in the dark, it's funnier that way.

4. ROZ CONTINUES

(Briefing ends. Inspecting the scrub-bot)

'Okay! Grab your mops. You're all working for Technical Services. And your first job is –' She scans the room – to get that scrub-bot repaired. Escort it to the Technical Services depot down the corridor. Make sure nothing else happens to it. Don't screw it up. Alpha Complex needs a lot of scrubbing right now. You'll get 10 XP points each for this.' She leaves. Now it's just you, the scrub-bot, and some mops.

The scrub-bot is a cleaning robot the size of a suitcase. It has been hit by a chunk of synthcrete that fell from the ceiling, and is currently making a high-pitched whining noise.

If a player wants to inspect or repair the scrub-bot themselves, ask them what **Stat** on their character sheet they think is best for the task, and what **Skill** they want to use with it. If this combination sounds good to you, make them add the **Stat + Skill** numbers together – this is called their **NODE** – and **roll that many dice**. They should also **always roll the Computer dice as well**; that's the one with a symbol of the Computer instead of a 6. Count up **all the 5s and 6s they rolled: those are successes**. Inspecting the scrub-bot has a difficulty of 2 (a fairly easy task), and repairing it has a difficulty of 4 (a moderately difficult task), meaning a PC needs 2 or more or 4 or more successes respectively to succeed. If they get less, they've failed: they can't do the task.

(Some Skills have negative numbers. Don't roll negative dice for them, as possession of negative dice is impossible and therefore treasonous. Instead, add the two numbers as if they were both positive, but when you roll, subtract any dice that isn't a success from the total. A negative result means they've failed badly, often hilariously so.)

Anyone who successfully inspects the scrub-bot sees it can still move slowly under its own power, but it needs maintenance before it can scrub again as its cleaning rotors have been splintered into jagged barbs.

Anyone who successfully repairs it is able to remove the synthcrete, rejig the wiring and stop it making that noise, but the bot still needs maintenance.

ROLLING THE COMPUTER

If a player rolls the Computer symbol then something goes wrong. Usually this is one of two things:

1. The voice of the Computer booms out of a nearby wall-speaker, asking for a report and update on progress, and sometimes offering help.
2. An important piece of equipment, often something that the PC was using, breaks.

The GM needs to make up a description of what happens and what the effects are. It doesn't have to be bad, necessarily, but things are usually funnier the more stressful the player characters are finding life. There's a list of suggested helpful suggestions from the Computer in the Gamemasters Handbook.

BEING THE COMPUTER

At this stage you need to know five things about the Computer's personality:

1. It controls Alpha Complex.
2. It's everywhere, and sees and hears everything.
3. It means well.
4. It's paranoid about the threat of mutants, traitors and terrorists, and believes they are everywhere.
5. It believes that the ends justify the means, where 'the means' can mean the deaths of thousands of people.
6. It makes mistakes.
7. It does not believe that it makes mistakes.
8. It really doesn't like being told that it's made a mistake.

5. STARTING THEIR FIRST MISSION

(The PCs leave the room with mops and scrub-bot, and activate their Cerebral Coretechs)

Once the PCs are ready to leave the room, the voice of the Computer sounds from hidden speakers:

'Congratulations on joining the Alpha Complex workforce, citizens! Please accept 1 XP point each as a bonus. XP points can be spent on necessities or luxuries, including increasing your security level. Before you leave the briefing room, ask yourself the following three questions.

One. Do I have all my equipment with me?

Two. Do I know where I'm going?

Four. Do I know what to do when I get there?

Six. Do any of the people around me look like mutants, terrorists or other forms of traitors?

If the answer to any of these questions is no, or in some cases yes, then ask your mission briefing operative for clarification. Good luck with your mission, citizens!'

The only equipment left in the cloning rooms are **a mop for each PC**, and the **scrub-bot**. If they try to leave without mops, the Computer will say:

'Citizens! Please recall that issued equipment is your responsibility, and there will be penalties for not taking care of any materials assigned to you. If you leave your equipment in the room it may fall into the hands of terrorists.'

If the PCs leave their mops unattended at any time during the mission, the mops will be stolen.

Getting the scrub-bot to come with you is another matter. It will not follow simple instructions. It can't be reasoned with. It can be carried (takes two people to lift), cajoled, or threatened. Stat/skill combinations that might work include Mechanics + Program, Mechanics + Intimidate, Violence + Bluff, Mechanics + Charm, and Brains + Operate. It's your call. The PCs will also discover an un-fixed scrub-bot moves very slowly, its shattered cleaning rotors leaving gouges in the floor.

As the PCs leave the room, their Cerebral Coretechs activate again.

A large yellow arrow appears in the air in front of you, indicating you should turn left down the corridor. Unfortunately you can't see much of the corridor as it is obscured by the arrow.

This is from the PCs' Cerebral Coretech, an in-skull system that projects vital information into PCs' eyes and ears, and also allows them to talk directly to the Computer. It also monitors everything they see, hear, smell and taste, so bear that in mind.

6. TRIPPING HAZARD

(The PCs accidentally kill a wanted terrorist)

As you're leaving the room, sirens suddenly blare and a large pop-up window appears in your field of view, alerting you to the proximity of wanted terrorist Wossname the Not Dead. Be careful! He may be after your mops!

The PCs will probably react. Let them do stuff. Once they've finished, read this:

The pop-up message is blocking most of your sight, but around the edges you suddenly spot a man in a black uniform like yours sprinting down the corridor towards you. He looks terrified. Five gold stars float in the air above his head where most people have names. What do you do?

This is the notorious terrorist Wossname the Not Dead, fleeing from a bunch of Troubleshooters who are pursuing him. The PCs are likely to do one of the following things:

- **Get out of the way.** That's fine, no rolls required. The scrub-bot, however, is another matter: if it's free-rolling then it remains in the centre of the corridor, whining.
- **Try to make a barricade, probably with mops.** Make them make some rolls. The PCs' action shows so much initiative that a passing Orange-level citizen stops to tell them to stop messing around blocking corridors and get on with their assigned mission.
- **Try to stop Wossname.** Wossname has avoided more experienced pursuers than the PCs. Any PC trying to body-block Wossname must roll at least 3 successes on Violence + Melee. If they fail, they get in the way of any other PC trying to block Wossname, and that PC must make their roll with one fewer dice than normal.
- **Something else.** Use your skill and judgement to determine what happens, who should roll some dice, the results of the rolls, and so on.

Whatever the PCs end up doing, **the following things should happen:**

- **Wossname trips over something**, probably a PC who recently failed a roll, a mop or the scrub-bot, and falls to the floor, banging his head.
- **The scrub-bot runs him over, killing him.** (Or possibly gets dropped on him, if it's being carried.)
- **A mop gets broken.**
- The sirens stop blaring and everyone stops and looks at the PCs.

WOSSNAME THE NOT DEAD

Wossname the not dead is a renegade clone. His name does not have a home sector because it was deleted long ago, and he doesn't have a clone-number due to a glitch in the clone records. Wherever and however Wossname dies, he will immediately be re-cloned at a random location – with a full complement of Treason Stars, a price on his head, and vivid memories of all his previous deaths.

Wossname has died, by his own estimate, something more than eight thousand times. His typical lifespan is measured in minutes. He has an extraordinary knowledge of Alpha Complex's abandoned tunnels, ducts, dead zones and other hiding spaces, but most times he can't get to one before some zealous citizen pops him for the XP points and he reappears somewhere else.

Some Secret Societies (Pro Human, Frankenstein Destroyers, Communists) know and respect Wossname, seeing him as a symbol of the Computer's tyranny. If they can get to him before he dies and is re-cloned, they will help him get to a place of safety. Once Wossname had stopped whimpering, he can be a source of useful knowledge about how Alpha Complex works, and how it used to be. Mostly he wants to stop being re-cloned, and will help anyone who can help him.

Use Wossname as a recurring character, either of slapstick comedy or of deep tragedy depending on how you run your game. If nothing else, he's always a reliable source of a few XP points.

7. HEROES OF ALPHA COMPLEX

(The PCs are rewarded for their errors)

Wosname is very dead and it's your fault. A squad of Troubleshooters thunders around the corridor, resplendent in their red armour, laser pistols drawn, and halt by the corpse. Their leader fixes you with one metallic eye. 'Which of you is responsible for this?'

This is probably the first time the PCs have tried to pass the buck. Let them have a go. **Bluff** and **Charm** skills are useful here. The senior Troubleshooter will point her laser-pistol at any who is either accepting the blame or being blamed by most of the others. She speaks to the ceiling: 'Friend Computer! I am arresting this Infrared working party for the unauthorised termination of the notorious fleeing terrorist known as Wosname –'

The Computer interrupts: '**Congratulations, Infrared Working Party! You have aided Alpha Complex with your selfless act of quick thinking. One less terrorist is one more reason to sleep well tonight. Each of you receives 500 XP points immediately. This is enough to raise each of you to Red level. Well done!**' The Troubleshooters applaud while looking incredibly annoyed.

The Computer continues: '**However, sensory feedback indicates the destruction of valuable Alpha Complex equipment, specifically a revised standard mop. Infrared Working Party, each of you has five XP points deducted as a lesson in taking care of valuable items in your care.**'

'**In recognition of your abilities, you are being reassigned to a new mission, where there will be less chance of damage to equipment. Await new briefing details. Thank you.**'

So the PCs are now **four XP points away from promotion to Red level** and – probably – becoming Troubleshooters themselves. They are likely to spend the rest of this mission desperately trying to get those remaining XP points, and **it is your job to prevent this**, at least until we get to the end of the adventure. Roz-R-HYT is your tool for this: she'll grab all the glory and the points wherever she can. More on Roz on page 12.

8. NEW MISSION

(Roz-R-HYT reappears, and the PCs get a new mission)

The Troubleshooters leave. A large scrub-bot appears from a hatch in the wall and makes itself busy ingesting the corpse of Wosname, the broken mop and the smaller scrub-bot. Roz-R-HYT reappears from down the corridor, bearing a sheet of paper. 'I suppose you think you're clever? The sector's in crisis and you go around interrupting the work of Troubleshooters. I'm not impressed. Plus you've been reassigned, effective immediately.

'It says here you're to go to Sector HOY, where you must find a plug, unplug it, and plug it back in again. Don't ask me questions: I know as much as you do. Cerebral Coretech will guide you. Keep hold of your mops. This is a 150 XP point mission. And – oh great. Apparently I'm coming too.'

9. EQUIPMENT IS ISSUED

(The PCs get some toys to play with)

A notification pops up in everyone's Cerebral Coretech, directing them to the nearest Production, Logistics and Commissary depot.

The PCs should go there. The yellow arrow will not go away until they do. Roz is already on her way, ahead of them.

Production, Logistics and Commissary turns out to be next door to the Technical Services department that you were supposed to deliver the scrub-bot to. PLC, your Cerebral Coretech reminds you, is where you get mission-critical equipment from. A bored-looking technician looks up at you. 'Infrared Work Party to sector HOY? Wait there.'

Get the Equipment Card deck out of the box and sort through it to find the following cards:



The technician hands the equipment to Roz, ticking each one off on a checklist. 'Crowbar – issued the last one an hour ago. Breathing apparatus – we're out. Jetpacks...' he gives Roz a long-suffering look. 'Scrub-bot, now, we were supposed to have one come through from Technical Services but there's been some sort of a hitch. You got mops. They'll do. Sign here.' Roz sighs, signs, takes the megaphone, and gives out the rest of the equipment.

Give three players one card each. Make them sign a piece of paper for it. Roz gives nothing except a nasty look to the player of the PC who broke their mop.

Experienced GMs and players will have realised that by signing the form, Roz just took responsibility for the equipment. If anything happens to it, that's her responsibility. If you were wondering how the PCs can get back at Roz later, this is one route to it.

10. GETTING TO SECTOR HOY

(An elevator and an awkward conversation)

Sector HOY is not very close. Roz leads you to a bank of turbo-elevators and punches in your destination. The doors close behind you. The elevator drops, changes its mind, goes briefly sideways, and then up.

'It's meant to do that,' Roz says. 'At least, it does that.'

The ride seems to go on for a while, and it's not possible to tell if the elevator is moving any more, or just standing still and vibrating. See if the PCs do anything. If they damage the elevator in any way, Roz will report them to the Computer and claim XP points for doing so.

11. OPENING THE DOORS

(The PCs discover that Sector HOY has been flooded, and this may cause problems)

The elevator comes to a stop, but the doors do not open.

PCs ask why. A lot of machinery in Alpha Complex has a basic intelligence and sensors, and that includes these elevators. *The lift reports 'Substance in proximity to doors may cause inconvenience to occupants.'*

PCs open the doors anyway. It's easily done: there's a button-override on the control panel. Read the italic text below.

PCs refuse to open the doors and go back. The Computer is displeased. It informs the PCs they they will be on latrine-pumping duty for the rest of their lives. Occasionally – wait, did Roz just press the door-open button anyway? Oh, she did.

As the doors open, through the gap you see that the elevator has stopped about a metre below the red-carpeted floor level. No, the floor is moving. In slow motion a wave of viscous red fluid cascades into the elevator compartment, covering you up to your waist. It smells of strawberry flavouring. Outside, the huge lobby area is awash with it. The guiding arrow appears, pointing straight ahead. Your destination, it says, is subsector K15.

Anyone who tastes it or asks the Computer will find **the substance is Red Dessert Topping**. Terrorist action has breached a massive vat of the stuff, flooding Sector HOY to **a depth of one metre**, for reasons that are unclear at this time. It has the consistency of chocolate sauce. Items of furniture float half-immersed on its surface. Clones are struggling through the flooded elevator lobby and nearby corridors, trying to go about their business.

Red Dessert Topping is **sweet and slightly acidic**. It has a suboptimal effect on any equipment that comes into contact with it. Every time a character uses a piece of equipment that's been dunked in RDT, even if they're not making a roll for it, they have to roll the Computer dice. If the **result is the Computer face then the equipment has been eroded or gummed up** by



the viscous fluid and doesn't work any more. Field-stripping and rebuilding it may fix it, or it may not: your call, or let the player roll for it.

Red Dessert Topping doesn't affect Cerebral Coretech, which has a protective layer of human.

If asked, Roz will tell the PCs how to make the guiding arrow smaller so it doesn't block most of their field of view.

12. ENOUGH FREE REIGN TO HANG THEMSELVES

(The PCs can investigate the area and choose their course of action)

At this point let the players discuss and decide what to do next. They could:

1. **Get back in the lift** and go home. Roz-R will try to persuade them against this. If they insist, she will report them to the Computer for dereliction of duty. Treason stars will appear above their heads (see 'Treason Stars' box) unless they return to duty.

2. **Try to explore on foot.** Wading through Red Dessert Topping is tough, slow going. Swimming is even slower.

3. **Improvise a raft from furniture.** Much better. Benches, tables, barrels, chairs and anything else buoyant can be lashed together – make the PCs make some rolls – to form a passable craft. For propulsion they could make oars or use their mops to punt. If their ideas sound plausible, let them do it.

4. **Talk to the people around them.** These are the regular inhabitants of Sector HOY. Play this out as a regular conversation, with questions and comments from the PCs eliciting answers and information from the game characters.

- The sector flooded a couple of hours ago. It's stopped rising but doesn't seem to be draining.
- The Computer has told them to carry on as normal. They trust the Computer.
- Strange things are happening in subsector K-15. They've heard rumours.

5. **Talk to the Computer.** The Computer gives advice: 'Analyze the problem, develop a solution and execute it. If the solution proves to be wrong, execute the developer. Bonus XP points may be awarded for successful developments or executions.'

6. **Something else.** Let them come up with their own ideas, and use your judgement and the dice to determine if they work or not. Reward creativity and cleverness, and make note of anything that you can use later in the game to hang a joke on or thwack them hard in the ambition.

TREASON STARS

The Computer monitors how loyal its citizens are with a system of Treason Stars. Most citizens are properly loyal and have no stars. A citizen with one star is suspicious, three is borderline, four is wanted for interrogation, and anyone with five stars is automatically a wanted traitor and should be arrested or terminated on sight. A citizen's stars always appear in a corner of their own in-eye display, and certain citizens, mostly Troubleshooters, can see anyone's stars.

13. EXPLORING

(The PCs and Roz leave the lobby and begin to find their way through Sector HOY)

You move out of the lobby and down the passage in the direction of the glowing arrow. Away from the big spaces, the flooded sector seems largely deserted. Going is slow. The red fluid slops lazily against the corridor walls. Most of the doors are closed; through the ones that aren't you can see ordinary rooms, their contents bobbing about.

If the PCs want to explore or see if they can find any equipment, the rooms they venture into will be (roll or choose):

- **A Red-level dormitory.** Beds, chairs, small lockers with personal possessions. Nothing of value.
- **A Troubleshooter break-room.** There are two Red-level laser pistols hanging in holsters from a rack on the wall. It is strictly forbidden for Infrared citizens to use Red-level equipment, but the PCs will probably be tempted. Anyone who sees them with one of these pistols will report them to the Computer. If they hunt around, they can also find two grenades here.
- **A Production, Logistics and Commissary office.** The door has to be forced open, because it's been blocked on the other side to stop the liquid coming in and ruining the important paperwork. Inside, a harassed Yellow and Orange staff scream at the PCs to shut the door and go away. If they don't, they will be made to help mop up. And they have to leave to carry on with the mission, which will mean opening the door again.

- **A restroom.** All the facilities are below the surface of the RDT sea. How to poop? How to wash your hands? What to do if the Computer should instruct you to wash your hands? (Note to GMs not paying attention: find a reason to have the Computer order the PCs to wash their hands.)

DYING

If anyone – a PC, key NPC or some clone wandering across the background – dies at any point, then thanks to Alpha Complex's innovative cloning system a replacement version of them will be delivered to the scene in a handful of minutes. The new clone will have all their predecessor's memories, and a duplicate set of clothes and equipment. Almost everyone has a total of six clones; this is what the number in their name refers to.

14. THE TROUBLE WITH SECURITY CLEARANCES

(The PCs and Roz reach a passage that the PCs are not allowed to access)

After a few hundred metres you come to a crossroads. The guide-arrow says to turn left, but that corridor has a red stripe at eye level, meaning that only Red-level and higher citizens can go that way.

The PCs can:

1. Ask Roz. Roz suggests that they come this way anyway. After all, they're on a mission for the Computer. If they do, see 2 below.

2. Go that way anyway. Roz waits till you are ten metres into the corridor, then says, 'Computer! Several Infrared citizens are in a Red-level area.' The voice of the Computer booms from nearby speakers: 'Infrared citizens! Immediately vacate the Red-level corridor. Each of you now has one Treason Star. Citizen Roz-R-HYT, receive 30 XP points for your vigilant attention.' If the PCs want to argue, perhaps because it was Roz who told them to go down the corridor, then roleplay the conversation. You'll have to play both Roz (sanctimonious) and the Computer (more likely to trust Roz as she's Red-level, unless the PCs have any evidence). They may be able to persuade the Computer to remove their stars and Roz's XP points. Whatever happens, this is likely to end in bad feelings, grudges, and possible future bloodshed. Treason stars are explained on page 24.

3. Ask the Computer. Computer says no. If the PCs stress that this is an incredibly important mission, it will grant them a one-time access pass for that section of corridor. Smarter PCs may realise they're going to have to come back this way.

4. Find a different way around. Alphapedia has maps, of course, and it's possible to plot a course around the corridor. It takes an extra ten minutes of travel.

15. PIRATES

(The PCs encounter hostile sailors on the syrupy seas)

The corridor widens out into a large food-service area. Islands of what looks like congealed Breakfast Mix float serenely between the counter-tops that protrude above the low waves on the liquid. High above, sparks flicker between shattered lighting-fixtures hanging from the vaulted ceiling. Then there's a yell of 'A-HOY sector! Torrents amidship on the scurvy bow port! Overclock the mainsail and prepare to be motherboarded!' Five people row into view, paddling a long table with sheets tied to its legs. A black flag with a skull dangles limply from one inverted table-leg.

Members of **two Secret Societies**, the Alpha Complex Local History Research Group (Gamemasters Handbook page 43) and the Phreaks (Gamemasters Handbook page 67) have taken advantage of the situation to band together and combine their **vague knowledge of 'pirates'** to take control of what they believe are the 'high seas'. Armed with fire-axes and cooking knives, they are **a ferocious crew**.

The PCs can:

Parlay. The pirates are engaging in an archaic form of recreation called 'live action roleplay' which will probably lead to their untimely terminations but hey, what's a lost clone compared to this opportunity of a lifetime and you never know, this might be the final breakdown of Alpha Complex and they might actually get to set up a pirate kingdom and become lords of booty, whatever booty is because sources differ on that. They are happy to talk to anyone who get into the spirit of the thing and will try to persuade them to join them. Note that though the players know what pirates are, the PCs have no idea and their attempts to bluff it may need some appropriate dice rolls to pass muster. If they can establish a rapport with the pirates, the captain will be happy to give them some information (see below).



Surrender. The pirates are gleeful. 'Prisoners! Take their planks! Make them do the booty walk!' The PCs are forced to walk an improvised plank and jump into the red sea. If they do it the pirates cheer loudly, and then seem confused about how to carry on. They become friendly and will offer advice about how to get to subsector K-15. But they advise against it. They've heard tales about that place, aar gym-shoes and all that.



PIRATES

/// ACTION ORDER

PIRATE 1: 3 PIRATE 3: 4

PIRATE 2: 4 PIRATE 4: 6

/// HEALTH BOXES

PIRATE 1: ● ● ● ● ●

PIRATE 3: ● ● ● ● ●

PIRATE 2: ● ● ● ● ●

PIRATE 4: ● ● ● ● ●

/// SKILLS

NAVIGATE UNSTEADILY +2; ARGUE ABOUT HISTORICAL ACCURACY +3; MELEE COMBAT +3; SWIM -1

Try to wade or swim to safety. The red sea is still only a metre deep here: the pirates' table moves faster through it than a self-propelled character, but it's not stable and can easily be overturned by two or more PCs working together. If PCs can get to a corridor, the pirates will not follow.

Fight. See the 'Fight!' box below. The pirates will only become homicidal if the PCs do first.

Something else. The pirates are possibly even more inept than the PCs at navigating their craft and may well overturn it (you can have them roll some dice every time they try something tricky). If the Computer intercedes at any point then playtime is over and the pirates are told to get back to their regular duties.

The pirate's leader is 'Infrared Beard' (Tobias-O-MLY), and he's not inclined to help a crew of Infrareads interrupt his bid to set up a new pirate kingdom in his sector, but if they're happy to play along then he'll help them with advice. The pirates are deathly afraid of sector K-15: they say the Crackling lurks there, and they will not come with the PCs.



INFRARED BEARD

/// SKILLS

BE OBEYED: +3

MELEE COMBAT: +3

/// HEALTH BOXES

INFRARED BEARD:




/// EQUIPMENT

INFRARED BEARD POSSESSES A SET OF BREATHING APPARATUS WHICH HE WEARS AT ALL TIMES. IT MAY BE POSSIBLE TO PERSUADE HIM TO SWAP IT FOR SOMETHING ELSE, OR TAKE IT FROM HIM BY FORCE.

FIGHT!

HOW TO FIGHT SOMETHING IN PARANOIA.

This is probably the most complex bit of the rules in this book. You should suggest that the players get some more drinks or snacks while you read this bit.

Deal each player involved in the fight a hand of four cards from the Action deck. There are two kinds of Action Cards: Actions and Reactions. Action cards have an Action Order number on them, which show who goes first, the higher the number the better. Reactions have a  symbol.

GM: start counting 'ONE paranoia TWO paranoia...' All the players must have an Action (or Reaction), Equipment or Mutant Power card face-down in front of them before you reach five. If not, they don't get to do anything this turn.

Now work out the order that people do stuff. Call numbers from 10 to 1 in order. Players indicate when their Action Order (AO) number is called. However, they can bluff and say a false number. They don't have to show the card to prove it unless another player challenges them.

Challenging is a bit complicated, and you may want to rule that bluffing and challenging are above the slightly sedative-addled abilities of Infrareads, and introduce them in the next session of the game. They're explained in the Players Handbook.

NPCs and other game characters get to take their turn when you want them to. Some NPC descriptions will say what their Action Order number is. You can ignore that if it's more interesting to have them act another time.

When a player declares that you've reached their Action Order number, they can do one of three things:

- Pick up the card and put it back in their hand, then take a Basic Action. That's any normal action, usually a Stat + Skill combo.
- Play the Action, Equipment or Mutant Power card they have face-down in front of them. Follow the instructions on the card. Action cards and some Equipment cards are discarded after use. Mutant Power cards are only shown to the GM, not to everyone.
- Discard the card they used for initiative, take a Basic Action, and add one extra dice to their NODE.

Reaction Cards can be played at any time someone is taking an action, or whenever that card says it can be played. You can play them on game characters, player characters, or yourself. The card will describe what effect it has.

WOUNDS

Characters can be fine, hurt (-1 to NODE), injured (-2 to NODE), maimed (-3 to NODE), or dead. Once they're at a certain level, any lesser wound has no effect. A wound of the same level knocks them down another level; a nastier wound takes them straight to that level.

For more information, see pages 44-48 of the Players Handbook.

16. THE PLUG

(Setting up the climax)

Away from the domain of Infrared Beard, the guiding arrow points down a darkened corridor. The walls are narrower here, the ceiling is lower and more wiring has been exposed and eroded by the Red Dessert Topping. After another few minutes the passage opens into a circular room with a wide spiral staircase ascending upwards. A thick stream of red dessert topping pours down into the area from above. Your Cerebral Coretech pings gently to let you know you've arrived. There is no sign of a plug.

Let the PCs investigate the area. The spiral staircase goes down as well as up: under the surface of the RDT it descends another level, into a vestibule with a sealed door. In the floor of this area, **underneath the stairs, is the plug**. It is not an electrical plug: as you may have guessed, it's a plug on a drain covering: a metal **circular cover about fifty centimetres across**, opened with a wheel on the top. And it is guarded.

It goes without saying that the PCs cannot swim. Do not be afraid to drown a few clones here. Treat them like lives in a video game, or political prisoners cleaning up a leak in a nuclear power station.

Up the stairs, it looks like something bad has happened. The staircase becomes a tangled mess of smashed metal and bits of Alpha Complex, blocking the way. Red Dessert Topping pours through the gaps in the rubble. Beyond this, if anyone queries their Cerebral Coretech map, is the exploded remains of the Red Dessert Topping storage vat, the remnants of which are still pouring down the stairs.

If anyone investigates down the stairs, either by exploring or by dropping an object, move to the next section.

17. WAKEN THE CRACKLING

(In which the PCs wish they hadn't done that)

Something stirs in the gloom of the red sea. Long, sinuous lengths as thick as your arm uncoil from the bottom of the pit and quest upwards towards the light – and you.

The PCs have disturbed a **SKW-1DD0 maintenance-bot** that exists to open the plug in emergencies, and to prevent unauthorised people from opening

the plug at unauthorised times because it turns out the plug shaft leads to the kind of places that Secret Societies really enjoy hanging out. Repeated exposure to Red Dessert Topping (what, you thought this was the first time this had happened?) has corroded its circuits. Now it **lies in wait, attacking anything that approaches the plug**. It has long articulated **tentacles**, coincidentally one per PC, connected to a bulbous body topped with a **single large sensor** that remains under the stairs. **Smashing the sensor will destroy the SKW-1DD0.**

Make sure each player has four Action Cards and start the fight, using the rules on page 29.



SKW-1DD0

/// NOTES

TENTACLES, PLUS A GRABBER BELOW THE MAIN SENSOR.

/// HEALTH BOXES

EACH TENTACLE*: ● ● ●

SENSOR**: ● ● ●

*THIS MEANS THAT EACH TENTACLE CAN TAKE THREE WOUNDS BEFORE IT'S DESTROYED. **THE MAIN SENSOR ALSO TAKES THREE WOUNDS, AND WHEN IT'S DESTROYED THE SKW-1DD0 CEASES TO FUNCTION.

/// SPECIAL SKILLS

GRAB OPPONENT BY LIMB +2, DANGLE OPPONENT IN AIR +3, HURL OPPONENT AGAINST WALL +2, DRAG OPPONENT TO GRABBER AND BITE IT +3

As soon as the first PC is hurled against the wall, read section 18.

18. ELECTROCUTED!

(The PCs discover a special secret about themselves)

The impact of [character name]'s body against the wall shakes the staircase. Some of the rubble wedged above shifts. An electrical cable slides out of the blockage and slips towards the surface of the red dessert topping, sparking as it comes.

Anyone can try to grab the cable – let them choose what stat + skill to use. They must also make a roll on Violence + Athletics not to be electrocuted by it (fail and become Maimed).

If the cable hits the surface of the red dessert topping, **all hell breaks loose**. Current arcs through the substance and anyone touching it, and also through the staircase which conducts electricity very well. Anyone caught by the current becomes Injured, and –

You feel a wave of something coursing through you. Something strange. Something powerful. You decide to keep this information to yourself.

The electricity has **activated their latent mutant abilities**. **Give each affected character a Mutant Power card** randomly from the deck. Tell them not to reveal its contents to anyone. Tell them there's a strong chance that their card is blank, this is just a way to disguise who's a mutant and who isn't. (This is only 47% untrue). Remind them that being a mutant is cause for immediate termination.

With these new powers it should be much easier for them to defeat the SKW-1DD0 – which in any case has also just become Injured from the electric shock.

Roz stays out of it all, watching and recording. Does this make her a traitor for not fighting an enemy of Alpha Complex? That depends if the PCs think to make that argument to the Computer.

19. A DEAD MAN'S CHEST

(We learn what lies beneath the surface)

Once the SKW-1DD0 is inactive, the PCs can get on with unplugging the plug. This will require some thought about how to get down to the bottom of the topping-filled pit (topping is denser than water so people float more easily in it). Let them work it out for themselves.

When someone does dive down, they find there's another obstacle. **A dead clone is attached to the plug**, drowned, though their Cerebral Coretech still identifies her as Daphne-G-***-6, where the three stars are garbled characters instead of a sector name. Around her neck, on a cord, is **a key to a storage locker**, with details of the location of the locker stamped into the metal. It's in sector THA.

According to Cerebral Coretech, there is no sector THA.

Once the plug is unscrewed **the lid slowly lifts**, giving PCs a short time to get out of the way before several million gallons of red dessert topping begin to drain out. **The suction is huge**. Anyone still in the liquid must make rolls to avoid getting sucked away, which is instant grab-a-new-clone time.

It takes **a couple of hours to drain the sector**. Let's hope the PCs haven't forgotten that their mission is to plug it back in again.

20. RETURN AND DEBRIEF

(Home again, home again, jiggedy jig's up)

Their mission complete, the PCs can return to their home sector. Their Cerebral Coretech instructs them to meet with a debriefing officer in a debriefing room. They have no idea if this is normal: they're new clones.

Debriefing is where PCs report how the mission went, and are quizzed on it. Usually it's an opportunity to try to claim the credit for stuff, or denounce other members of the party as traitors of one kind or another, or at least too suspicious to receive any XP point rewards. The catalyst for this is Roz-R-HYT, the shameless glory hound. She will attempt to grab any glory for herself and pin the blame on any PCs she's developed a dislike for, which is all of them except ones she thinks she can recruit for the Communists.

Their debriefing officer is Vernon-Y-HYT-2, a moon-faced, harried, balding clone who they'll meet again in the next adventure. He will congratulate them on a successful mission and ask a number of questions from the list below. Roz-R will jump in where she can, giving her side of the story. She's believed because she's Red level, but it may be possible to disprove her with recordings made via Cerebral Coretech, or asking the Computer to call up footage from CCTV cameras, which are everywhere all the time.

Sample debriefing questions:

'Explain the reasons for your appropriation and misuse of Sector HOY tables/benches/doors/mops/grenades/foodstuffs/Production, Logistics and Commissary paperwork/ et cetera.'

'You are responsible for the destruction of a valuable SKW-1DD0 unit maintenance bot. Can you explain your actions?'

'Could you identify the source of the red dessert topping?'

'How did you get past the rogue clone known as Infrared Beard?'

'Did you observe any anomalous behaviour in any of the clones around you?'

'Are there any clones you would like to commend for their helpfulness and loyalty to the Computer?'

'Are there any clones you would like to report to the Computer as possible enemies of Alpha Complex?'

'What are your reasons for believing this citizen may be an enemy of Alpha Complex?'

'What are your motives for wanting this citizen to be classified as an enemy of Alpha Complex?'

'At any point did any clone try to recruit you into a Secret Society?'

'We identified a power surge that cost the Computer a great many lost kilowatts. Were you responsible for this?'

'Explain the shocking condition (or loss) of your mops.'

Play this by ear. If the PCs give a good account of themselves they'll each get 150 XP points and promotion to Red level and Troubleshooter status. If they drop Roz-R in it then she'll get no XP points or may even lose a few – don't have her executed, she makes a good recurring character for future adventures.

If the PCs give a bad account of themselves then they'll get just enough XP points to graduate to Red, but it feels grudging rather than earned. And of course they will lose XP points for damage they've done along the way. You may want to charge them for the damage to the SKW-1DD0, but remember they should still finish this adventure at Red level.

Okay! Mission accomplished. Job well done. We hope you have enjoyed your first experience running an RPG and that you'll want to do it again, because the second adventure starts right on the next page.



SNEAK PREVIEW: THIS IS YOUR SUPERVISOR



[\$TITLE_NOT_FOUND]

MISSION TWO

Continuation of previous mission.

INTRODUCTION

The Troubleshooters are Red, ready and raring to go! Having spent the last adventure creating their characters and getting to know the game, the players will be keen to step out on their first proper Troubleshooter mission. Unfortunately for them, their first proper mission isn't going to be radically different from their old jobs because they're still technically cleaners, even though they've never had any actual experience as cleaners.

Before you get to this adventure you should have had a chance to read the other game manuals, and understand about how Alpha Complex and the game mechanics work and sometimes don't. So this adventure is a little less hand-holdy and prescriptive, with more free rein for the players and more chances to improvise and have fun for you. Assuming you're the GM, that is. If you're not the GM, stop reading now, lest the GM give you a Treason Star by sticking a gold star to your forehead. If you're the GM, buy some sticky gold stars and use them.

THE MISSION

Here's a quick rundown of what's happening: a depressed Scrub-bot needs help to achieve its daily chores, and the players are the ones chosen to assist. Two overseers on the mission – a Yellow and an Orange clone – will

offer no assistance, but instead are there to manage a drug deal that's taking place in the deadzone beneath sector HYT. They're each trying to screw the other over, and they'll blackmail the Troubleshooters into helping them out. Unfortunately, this is just what the depressed scrub-bot needs to leap into action – the chance to stop some terrorists, and gain the respect of the Computer! Everything goes wrong, as ever, then it's time for debrief and no hot brown drink and no medals.

THE NON-PLAYER CHARACTERS

Vernon-Y-HYT-2, the Troubleshooters' supervisor. Hooked nose and pointy chin; he has a face kind of like a crescent moon. Bald. Always, always tired and overworked; the players are team 14 of 20 that he has to brief before lunch, typically. Is secretly devoted to the Frankenstein Destroyers agenda, or at least a Computer-free Complex.

Jenny-O-THA-3 who oversees their equipment. Cheery, bouncy, wired on too many Wake-E-Wake pills and cans of Bouncy Bubble Beverage: Uncomfortably Awake Flavour. Making the best out of what she's got. Secretly allied with the Mystics.

Awarish-R-HYT-1, who previously had whatever job the Troubleshooters are transferred into and is bumped down to something even more ignoble. She loathes them. She works with Anti-Mutant, despite her mutant abilities of teleportation, and might well act against the Troubleshooters if given half a chance.

Scrub-bot 002, a bitter robot who has forever lived in the shadow of Scrub-bot 001. Depending on the events of session two, by the third session it could be a Hero of Alpha Complex.

THE BRIEFING

Yellow-level Troubleshooter Vernon-Y-HYT assembles the PCs in a briefing room. He looks tired – he always looks tired – and he's carrying a clipboard covered in dog-eared bits of paper and sticky notes. He flips towards the rear of the stack of papers and tells the Troubleshooters to sit down.

Use the briefing room from the first session, if you'd like. If that's been destroyed, or if you fancy a change, pick two (or more!) features from the list below to describe the new room:

- A phone is always ringing and no one answers it
- One wall of the briefing room is a giant, malfunctioning video screen
- There is one less chair than necessary
- A high-pitched buzzing noise seems to be coming from the ventilation shafts
- The same four-bar loop of plinky-plonky electronic music plays forever, as though the room itself is on hold
- The room smells of burning plastic
- There is a stack of RED Troubleshooter corpses in the corner, artlessly covered with a tarpaulin
- The lights in here are too dim to be useful and often flicker out for a few seconds
- An Infrared citizen stands in the corner of the room, facing the wall, staring silently forwards
- A poster on the wall reads: "Were you involved in THE GEHENNA INCIDENT in Sector THA, which does not exist? If so, please chain yourself to the nearest heavy object and report your location to your sector helpdesk. If you were not involved in THE GEHENNA INCIDENT, it did not occur."
- There is an obvious two-way mirror behind the briefing lectern. At one point the mirror asks you to speak more clearly
- The room is still decorated from the Computer's 214th birthday, and a banner reading 'HAPPY BIRTHDAY FRIEND COMPUTER' hangs limply in one corner of the room
- Someone, somewhere nearby, is screaming
- Just before briefing, an Orange clone comes in, stacks all the chairs and takes them away, then leaves them in the corridor outside.

Once everyone's settled in and as comfortable as they can get, given the circumstances, Vernon delivers the mission briefing. Paraphrase or read the following aloud to your players:

'Good morningcycle, Troubleshooters. Given your previous track record in the sanitation and food services services, the Computer felt that it would be a waste of your prodigious talents not to place you on this mission. Your mission is to assist Scrub-Bot 002 in cleaning and maintenance of this very sector. I'm sure you'll be proud to be offered this chance to serve the Computer and improve your home.'

Pause here. Let the players declare how proud they are. If someone really makes a show of it, award them 5 XP points.

'Your Coretechs will be updated with your mission details, so an arrow should be pointing you through to the equipment dispensary – that's your next point of call. If you're ever in doubt as where to go next, follow the arrow.'

The characters can see a big gold hovering arrow above their vision, telling them where to go.

'Before I let you go, I should assign your Mandatory Bonus Duties. These roles have been algorithmically selected by the Computer to take advantage of each of your unique skill-sets. If you feel you have been given an incorrect Mandatory Bonus Duty, you are incorrect.'

Deal out one Mandatory Bonus Duty cards to each player at random. There's more details about the cards in the Players Handbook, but here are some explanations to give to the players:

- The TEAM LEADER is responsible for the overall success of the team.
- The HAPPINESS OFFICER is responsible for the happiness of the team – happy clones are efficient clones!
- The LOYALTY OFFICER is responsible for the loyalty of the clones on the mission, and to sniff out treason wherever it may rear its ugly head.
- The EQUIPMENT OFFICER is responsible for the maintenance and proper operation of the team's equipment.
- The COMBAT OFFICER is responsible for ensuring that the team fights well as a unit.
- The SCIENCE OFFICER is responsible for the team's health and safety as well as investigating any unusual data they discover in the field.

If you don't have enough players to fill out all the roles, that's fine; they do nothing, and only serve as a way for clones to exert tiny amounts of power over each other. Vernon continues:

'Make sure you perform your roles to the best of your ability. If you feel that a team-mate is underperforming, overperforming, or performing their role suspiciously within pre-set parameters of competence, please bring it up with me during your debrief after the mission. Now: any question?'



That's 'question', not 'questions'; Vernon is a busy man. He leaves, after the question, to brief the next team down the corridor.

EQUIPMENT

Next, the Troubleshooters are given their equipment. They should already be wearing their Red jumpsuits. Jenny-O-THA welcomes them to the PLC commissary – she's happy to do her job, but (as ever) she's running late. Waiting in a room down the corridor on a fold-out table next to dot-matrix printouts of their names are, per person:

- One (1) RED laser pistol
- One (1) RED rubber glove
- One (1) spray bottle of Scum-B-Gone ('It's Good Because It's Flammable!')
- One (1) scrubbing brush, long-handled
- One (1) hygiene services equipment holster (waist-mounted)

In addition to this, there is the following equipment to be distributed between the team – Jenny tells them to use their initiative on handing it out. Whether this is the job of the Equipment Officer or the Team Leader is probably a matter of who can shout the loudest. If you're feeling efficient, write out these on cards beforehand; if not, get the players to do it.

- One (1) automop (a rank 1 weapon, also it cleans stuff)
- One (1) pair of safety goggles (defence 2 against eye attacks)
- One (1) Tactical Laser Assault Rifle (or TLAR, for short – a level 2 weapon)

Once the equipment has been distributed, the mission readouts on the player's HUDs state that they are to make contact with Scrub-Bot 002 in the corridor upstairs.

SCRUB-BOT 002 AND FRIENDS

The Troubleshooters meet Scrub-Bot 002 in a corridor. It's a large, boxy, vaguely chicken-shaped robot with a wide variety of mops, brushes, hoses, manipulators and chemical sprayers wired into it, hooked up to a pair of arms that protrude from the side of the central body which houses the mechanical and computational equipment that keeps it running. It's a little taller than a Troubleshooter, and much wider.

Scrub-Bot 002 is well liked in sector HYT – it's responsible for improving efficiency by upwards of 0.47 percent thanks to properly cleaning and polishing the floors. But it has a grudge; Scrub-Bot 001 is a Hero of Alpha

Complex after it single-handedly took out a terrorist cell using only a toothbrush and a packet of wet wipes, and now it's living a life of luxury. It gets to clean all the fanciest apartments; it gets the best oil and frequent upgrades; it was even interviewed on a talk show last week about how much it loves the Computer.

Scrub-bot 002 has started misbehaving. It's depressed, bored, and unmotivated to the point where tasks are going undone and dirt is starting to pile up. As such two overseers are accompanying it and the Troubleshooters on today's cleaning rota – Oklo-Y-THB, from R&D, and Wesley-Y-HYT, from Housing Preservation and Development & Mind Control.

Oklo is a broad, heavy-set woman from a distant sector. She's obsessed with noting down or recording everything she sees and hears; luckily for the Troubleshooters, it really is *everything*, so she might well spend ten minutes noting down the precise pattern of floor tiles in a room if she believes that it's important to her report. Oklo is a plant for the Mystics, a Secret Society who are devoted to learning more about drugs and the human body as a means of escaping the drudgery of Alpha Complex.

Wesley is a tall, blond-haired man from HPD&MC. Like everyone in HPD&MC, he has really great teeth. He's been assigned the Scrub-Bot 002 file and it's his job to spin it into a success – his promotion to Green is riding on this. He's secretly a plant from Free Enterprise, the Secret Society who are masters of back-alley capitalism and cutting crooked deals.

The Troubleshooters are there to assist the Scrub-Bot in whatever way they can during this difficult period, while the overseers are there to take notes and act as useful NPCs for the later stages where you're going to persuade the Troubleshooters to join up with their Secret Societies.

Whatever happens, never let the players appeal to authority; their overseers aren't pet Yellow clones that they can sic on problems to solve them. The first time a player tries to use their supervisors' leverage for their own ends, come down on them hard – accuse them of being shiftless, lazy Reds with no respect for authority, bothering hard-working Yellow clones with inane questions, giving them *more* work to do when they're already devoting their entire lives to serving the Computer, and isn't that what *you're* supposed to be doing, Red? Why aren't you serving the Computer? And so on. After that they should realise that the supervisors are there to be distracted and avoided, not helped.

That said, the supervisors will offer help, but only for blackmail purposes later on.



SCRUB-BOT 002

/// ACTION ORDER

DEFENCE:

+2

/// HEALTH BOXES

SCRUB-BOT 002:



/// NOTES

TAKING CONTROL OF SCRUB-BOT 002 VIA HACKING IS A DIFFICULTY 3 CHALLENGE, OR LOWER IF YOU THINK IT'D BE FUNNIER TO SUCCEED THAN FAIL. SCRUB-BOT 002 IS A LEVEL 3 WEAPON.



OKLO-Y-THB-2

/// HEALTH BOXES



/// NOTES

LIKE THE TROUBLESHOOTERS, OKLO WILL BE REPLACED WITH A FRESH CLONE UPON DEATH.



WESLEY-Y-HYT-3

/// HEALTH BOXES



/// NOTES

LIKE THE TROUBLESHOOTERS, WESLEY WILL BE REPLACED WITH A FRESH CLONE UPON DEATH.

THE MISSION

The Troubleshooters, then, are tasked with doing the jobs the Scrub-bot loves to hate, which is all of its jobs. Pick a few from the lists below and get the Troubleshooters to do them while Scrub-bot 002 makes up excuses as to why it can't.

The Scrub-bot is listless and depressed, and will find any excuse to not do the work it's supposed to do. This corridor is too cramped; this mist makes its servo-motors malfunction; it doesn't have the right sort of mop for this bloodstain; it's out of cleaning fluid, etc. All the while, have it complain (in a stupid robot voice) about how 'Scrub-Bot 001 would be FINE with all this, I imagine' and 'Scrub-bot 001 never runs out of cleaning fluid because *it's* handlers make sure all its needs are met' and 'I wish I was good-looking like Scrub-Bot 001, then I'd be happy,' (the bots are identical) and so on.

Tedious jobs are mind-numbingly boring and, crucially, kind of pointless. They're basic enough (difficulty 1 across the board), but make the player roll multiple times to get them done; invent obstacles as they go, barrage them with an increasing variety of blocks and barriers. On a massive failure, of course, don't be afraid to hurt them.

- Polish all this rice – individually! (Brains + Science, or Chutzpah + Charm to put a brave face on while explaining why it's late)
- Convince a joyless Red jobsworth to let you through to rotate the chicken soup nozzles on the dispenser machines, despite the fact that you don't have the correct forms to do so. (Chutzpah + something, probably Charm, but don't rule out Intimidate or Bluff)
- Carry these boxes up eighteen flights of stairs and arrange them in a stack to block out the light that's dazzling a Green clone as she sits in her office during the daycycle. (Violence + Athletics, as this is a purely physical task)

Dangerous jobs endanger life and limb. On a failure, have the clone *at least* injured for their trouble – just have the player cross off the Injured box on their character sheet. On a big fail, have them maimed, or killed.

- Scrub out the inside of this laundry vat before it fills with scalding water (Violence+Athletics, for speed)
- Mop up all this brake fluid that's leaked in the transbot (train) tunnels (Brains+Athletics, to hear the train coming)
- Take out the bins from this Yellow clearance clone's apartment – unfortunately, some Communists are going through it and looking for dirt on the owner, and they're willing to fight their way out! (Violence + Guns, or whatever method of combat the players choose to adopt)
- Infiltrate a high-ranking clone's quarters (Green or higher) to make sure that they flushed their toilet, navigating or out-talking their zealous defence bots (Chutzpah + Stealth, or Mechanics + Program to disable them remotely)
- Talk your way past some Blue cops and into a crime scene (a drug deal/ massacre) to clean up all the blood. (Chutzpah + Charm)

Dehumanising jobs are soul-destroying and underline the Troubleshooters' place in society. These are solely here to make the players feel abused and put upon, so really ham up how awful it all is.

- Wade into raw sewage to retrieve a high-ranking clone's watch that they think they flushed down the toilet after they thought they got bored of it but have subsequently changed their mind. (Don't roll, but take a point of Moxie away from the player)
- Dismember and recycle the corpses of their fellow Troubleshooters or, in extreme cases, their own corpse. (As above – take away two if it's their own body.)

- Make sure the ground in front of this visiting Green clone is perfectly clean, despite the fact that he walks through some pretty grotty areas and insists on spilling his coffee in front of him. (Violence + Science to dash ahead and clean, Brains+Stealth to keep out of his way, Brains + Psychology to work out where he's going next, and so on)
- Eat all this paper! NOW! (Violence + Psychology to keep it down)

Try and have at least one job from each list, and more if you've got time – you want to give the drug-deal and debrief section of the session about an hour in real time, so expand or contract this bit out appropriately.

Describe how snotty the high-ranking citizens are. Describe how filthy, smelly, dangerous and unpleasant the big messes are, contrasted with the refined lives of the superior clones. How does each location smell? What can the Troubleshooters hear? Is the light bright, dark, fluctuating, pulsing red? Are there bystanders, or do the clones feel painfully alone?

For each job completed, give each participating PC 20 XP points. Things are pretty grim – but there's hope in the form of Oklo and Wesley, our cheery Yellow overseers.

A FRIEND IN NEED

The overseers want to convert the Troubleshooters to join their Secret Societies, because if they want the upper hand in the drug deal that's coming later then they will need all the help they can get. So they offer help to the player characters when they're in need.

They only offer items, though. Maybe they offer a clone an improved mop (one with proper absorption) that gives them +1 dice when they use it to clean. Maybe they offer some nausea suppressants to the clone that has to wade through human sewage or cut up their own body. Maybe, if a fight breaks out, one of them offers a Troubleshooter access to a grenade, another laser assault rifle, or a set of body armour. If the Troubleshooters are having difficulty talking their way past someone, maybe then an overseer offers them just the right bribe to hand over and grease the wheels – happy pills, for example, or their favourite flavour of Bouncy Bubble Beverage.

Don't play this as shady, or suspicious – these two are just 'helping out', because they know what it feels like to be Red and out of your depth. They're nice people, even. They're using their power to make things easier. Then, once you've got a few players to accept aid (or forced it upon them,



pulling rank in the middle of stressful situations), it's time to cash in those favours.

THE DRUG DEAL

Here's the skinny – there's a deal going on between Free Enterprise and the Mystics in the maintenance tunnels under the sector, and the overseers both, independently and unknown to each other, want to be there to screw over the other side.

It's all taking place in a Dead Zone, which means that the Computer can't see in there. If the Troubleshooters stay in there too long, teams of additional Troubleshooters will be sent to recover them – so they have to move fast. 'Too long' means as long as you want it to mean.

The Mystics have the drugs (a large and heavy consignment of China Ultraviolet, a powerful consciousness-enhancer) and Free Enterprise have the money (except money no longer exists, so they're trading a large pallet of fixed-value Lunamax cleaning fluid instead). Neither side wants to hand over the goods, and would rather walk away with the whole lot.

CHINA ULTRAVIOLET

China Ultraviolet is a white organic powder that enhances the user's consciousness. Use that to mean whatever you want. Someone under the effects of China Ultraviolet operates at enhanced efficiency and with deeper understanding of the universe. A standard dose lasts for 3-4 hours. Overdosing results in cosmic awareness, the accidental activation of mutant powers, catatonia, coma, and waking up two weekcycles later as an Infrared algae technician.

In game terms, a player character who is high on China Ultraviolet gets +1 to their NODE, and the disadvantage that if they roll the Computer, what they experience may be a hallucination. Once someone who has tried China Ultraviolet comes down from it, they are -1 to their NODE until they get another fix.

If PCs want to acquire more China Ultraviolet then they have a choice: either they now owe the Mystics a huge favour or congratulations, they just joined the Mystics.

THE MYSTICS

Most Mystics are strung-out and twitchy; by contrast these guys are cool as ice, all wearing dark glasses and smoking cigarettes. They carry slick-looking slug-throwers – high calibre, low capacity, liable to blow a hole out your back the size of a side-plate.



THE MYSTICS

/// **HEALTH BOXES** (in total, not each)

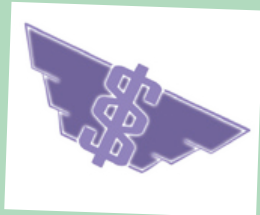


/// **NOTES**

DEFENCE +2, TYPICAL HARM: INJURE OR MAIM

THE FREE ENTERPRISE GOONS

Free Enterprise pride themselves on being calm and collected, so these chumps must be a real embarrassment. No one appears to be in charge, they're arguing and shouting at each other, and their laser weapons look beaten-up and ramshackle – but they outnumber the Mystics two to one.



FREE ENTERPRISE GOONS

/// **HEALTH BOXES** (in total, not each)



/// **NOTES**

DEFENCE +1, TYPICAL HARM: HURT OR INJURE

If any of the Troubleshooters have accepted help from Wesley or Oklo (or both) it's time to hang them out to dry. Have the relevant supervisor take them aside and tell them to get in there and help out with the deal, because (a) they're indebted to the Secret Society; (b) there's a reward in it for them, if they help; and (c) if they don't, they'll be reported for treason.

BUT WAIT!

The previously laconic and disinterested Scrub-bot 002 will see this situation as an opportunity to become famous, just like Scrub-bot 001, and attack these terrorist drug-dealing scum. Here are some of its many weapons:

- Steam-cleaner
- Chemical spray
- Vacuum arm (with comedy oversized bag)
- Chain-scrubber (like a chainsaw but with bristles, not blades)
- And many more!

Doing its best to look good 'on camera' (there are no cameras), Scrub-bot 002 will roll boldly into the middle of the drug deal and command all sides to stand down and report to their nearest re-education booth for corrective therapy.

While Scrub-bot 002 runs amok, it'll do two Injuries per round to both sides. (And one lucky Troubleshooter, should they get in its way.) If left unchecked, it'll kill both sides of the deal, because it's funnier that way. If the Troubleshooters attack it, use the profile provided on page 43.

SOME HINTS ON COMBAT

When a player rolls dice on their turn, that's their action. They'll probably be using a combination like Violence + Guns to shoot people, Violence + Melee to hit them with their mops, Violence + Athletics to keep their heads down or escape with the drugs, Brains + Science to rig their cleaning fluid into a molotov cocktail, Chutzpah + Charm to calm down Scrub-bot 002, or any other number of exciting possibilities.

When a player rolls to hurt an NPC (or a group of NPCs represented by a single stat-block), they inflict one level of damage if they equal the target's defence, two if they beat it by two, three if they beat it by three, and so on. If a group of characters are injured, remove one character from the group for every one or two levels of damage inflicted.

Also, those health boxes on NPC stat-blocks aren't just there to represent blood and guts; players can 'attack' NPCs and do damage to their health boxes by shouting at them, charming them, scaring them off or otherwise breaking their morale.

As the GM you don't get a turn, but you arbitrarily decide who gets hurt, how badly they get hurt, and when in the initiative order it takes place. (For more details on doing this without looking like a jerk, check out the *Gamesmasters Handbook*.)

THE AFTERMATH

There are a few possible outcomes:

EVERYONE DIES. No one gets what they want, and the PCs have some very valuable goods to do with as they wish if they can get them past Scrub-bot 002. If this happens, it's probably best to have Oklo and Wesley killed in the crossfire, too.

THE MYSTICS WIN. The Mystics abscond with the Lunamax and the China Ultraviolet. In the next mission, have an important NPC who smells suspiciously like Lunamax cleaning and who is unnecessarily obstructive to the PCs, if you can remember to.

FREE ENTERPRISE WIN. Free Enterprise teach their business partners the true meaning of capitalism and kill them so they can take their stuff. In the next mission, have a useful NPC doped out on China Ultraviolet and unable to help, if you can remember to.

THE DEAL GOES OFF AS PLANNED. Maybe a charismatic Troubleshooter manages to talk everyone down from the brink of destruction and cuts a deal? If so, have a unified front from the two drug cartels arrive on the Troubleshooter's doorstep next game (metaphorically, they don't have a doorstep, or a door) and offer them a deal that they can't refuse. As in, they literally cannot refuse it, because they'll go down for orchestrating a drug deal while on official Troubleshooter business if they try not to. Anyway, their mission is to get a sample of the [REDACTED] from sector THA. More on that in the next session, though.



WHAT HAPPENS IF A CLONE DIES IN THE DEAD ZONE?

Good point. There are various possibilities. You choose.

1. Since Dead Zones do not exist according to the Computer, a clone who dies in a Dead Zone is not really dead and therefore its next clone is not activated until there is a confirmed report of the clone's death. This would be bad for PCs, but a good way of getting rid of NPCs.
2. When a clone disappears from the Computer's sensors, it waits a variable amount of time (usually an hour) and then assumes they've been disintegrated in some unrecorded fashion, and activates their next clone, delivering it to the last recorded location of the previous clone. If it subsequently discovers that a citizen has two clones active at the same time, clearly the earlier clone is an anomaly or possibly a mutant, and must be executed for an XP point reward.
3. Same thing as happens in the rest of Alpha Complex. This is strong on game and low on narrative, but in our experience players don't care, so this is the easiest option.

THE PAYLOAD IS COMPROMISED. Either the China Ultraviolet drugs or the Lunamax cleaning fluid gets destroyed. Perhaps they both get destroyed. Perhaps they get mixed up into a big lump of narcotic detergent putty. That way nobody gets what they want, everybody is furious, and almost everyone is armed. Wahoo!

SOMETHING ELSE. We can't think of any other likely outcomes, but rest assured that your players will and you'll have to think on your feet to work out what happens. Do your best to show some ramifications of their actions in the next section.

{{ERROR 404}}
[LOCATION NOT FOUND]

THE DEAD ZONE IS A FIGMENT OF YOUR...

DEBRIEF

The point of the debrief is to get the Troubleshooters to turn on each other, and this is fairly easy to do. Address each Troubleshooter in turn by their Mandatory Bonus Duty title, then ask another Troubleshooter if you felt that they performed their role adequately.

While you're doing this, recap the mission. Recap everything that went wrong. Gloss over obvious acts of terrorism; focus on the small things. Ask a lot of leading questions about what happened in the Dead Zone, but as there's no proof, just let the players tear each other up for it.

If anything went wrong with the mission, blame the Team Leader. Ask them why they allowed the mission to fail in this regard, and whether they enjoy acting against the Computer.

Throw out Treason Stars like candy, if you've not been doing so already. Remember: once someone has five Treason Stars then the penalty is execution, and the executioner gets XP points.

EPILOGUE

The player characters should now, with luck, be indebted to at least one Secret Society, and used to the principle of really hating each other as hard as they can. Collect in their character sheets and get ready for the next mission.

SWITCHING IT UP

Here are a few changes you can make to the mission, if you fancy it:

- Replace Free Enterprise and the Mystics with Phreaks and Frankenstein Destroyers. The Phreaks want to hack Scrub-bot 002 and ensure it gets into a position of power in Alpha Complex (and then take advantage of that), while the Frankenstein Destroyers want to hack it and have it commit some heinous atrocity to lower the image of bots sector-wide. Or fold these two Secret Societies in on top of the existing Secret Societies, if you reckon you've got what it takes to juggle all four!
- Set the game in a different sector from HYT, to give the players a change of scenery – ask them to describe it as you go, and you'll get a unique game out of it. (Just, uh, don't use sector THA. That comes up in the next mission.)



[CLASSIFIED]

M I S S I O N T H R E E

Conclusion of previous mission

What exactly is going on down in the basements of Sector THA? Do we really want to know *exactly* what? No, we don't, because that's almost never good news and almost always leads to more complications. Best to just do the job you're given, ask as few questions as possible and report back that everything went fine, right? Right?

THE MISSION

In this mission, the Troubleshooters must enter sector THA which does not exist, even though it was the site of the infamous Gehenna Incident which did not happen. Their excellent track record in handling contaminants, built up in the previous two adventures, means they're the natural team to do it. That said, they might also be the only team who can do it. According to records, no other teams have ever even been sent in there.

Neither their superiors nor the Computer are aware of quite how bad things have become in THA. The sector is a mess, with bio-organic lifeforms crawling up the walls, tiny pockets of exhausted survivors, mutant hives and much more.

The Troubleshooters will have to deal with the situation somehow, while frequently being out of contact with the Computer, running into new, unforeseen or unprecedented dangers and with little to rely upon except their own wits and their shoddy equipment. For the first and possibly last time, they're going to be *real* Troubleshooters.

THE BACKGROUND

The Gehenna Incident happened a couple of days ago, a few hours before the PCs were first cloned. A previously unknown DAIV (see the Gamemaster's Book) appeared in sector THA and began spreading at incredible speed. Being unknown, it cut through all anti-virus software like a knife through kittens. According to the Computer's own records, an estimated [REDACTED] per cent of all smart devices in the sector were compromised within [REDACTED] milliseconds.

The Computer acted swiftly to contain the threat and abiding panic in the general populace of Alpha Complex. It cut all wifi, power, communications, supplies and air ducts to the sector, and dropped the massive bulkhead doors to completely seal off THA from the rest of Alpha Complex. This took 1.3 seconds. It then erased almost all records of sector THA and is busy reminding people that nothing happened in the nonexistent sector THA, and they should feel safe and happy because everything is *fine*.

Inside sector THA, things have deteriorated with incredible speed. The inhabitants went native, then feral and finally to hell in two daycycles. The Computer wants to know if the situation is safe inside, but is not going to turn the power back on – it may be paranoid but it's not insane – and bots aren't effective without power and wifi. So it's been sending in squads of Troubleshooters. If the Troubleshooters don't come out then they have failed to report back and it sends in more Troubleshooters to find out what happened. If they do come back then they're probably infected with Gehenna, so they're executed and the Computer sends in more Troubleshooters to eliminate Gehenna. The end-state of this loop is not known.

However, sector THA contains a number of things that various Secret Societies either desperately want, desperately want to be destroyed, or desperately want to acquire from another Secret Society. It's a herd of wild motivators and plot drivers. Be quiet or you'll scare them away.

THE BRIEFING

THE MESS

Once again, Vernon-G-HYT collects together the Troubleshooters in a briefing room. However, a couple of things have changed since their last meeting. First, Vernon has recently been promoted and is now very conspicuously green in his attire. Second, the briefing room is undergoing some upgrades. In an attempt to improve the place, new equipment has been brought in, including high-definition display screens, fancy anglepoise lighting and a shiny vending machine that dispenses beverages according to a Troubleshooter's clearance level.

Unfortunately, none of these devices have been plugged in, due to a shortage of extension cables and power outlets. They are scattered, boxed and unboxed, as Vernon-G-HYT and his colleague Harr-Y-TUT, a maintenance engineer, try to figure out how to get them all working.

If the Troubleshooters feel like exercising their initiative here, there are only two power outlets for more than a dozen devices and plugging in more than one trips a fuse somewhere that cuts power to the whole room, bathing everyone in dim red emergency light. Vernon will be frustrated and will consider this borderline treasonous, while Harr will actually find this remarkably insightful, tearing off a section of wall, yanking out great handfuls of cabling and tinkering away.

It's up to you how the Computer responds to this, but it's simultaneously likely to appreciate the initiative, punish the mistake and be unreasonably, intimately curious as to the Troubleshooter's motives and thought processes in this very particular instance.

If the PCs get a screen up and running, they'll be presented with a straightforward map of a sector. It's a small sector as they go, about the size of a city block, two hundred metres square and five levels high. It's not a particularly insightful map, as much of it is blacked out with the word CLASSIFIED, but it does show a couple of lower maintenance levels, through which an enormous steam conduit runs to THB sector, a closed mid-level transit hub and a higher level food processing plant. This will help Vernon-G-HYT a little with his briefing and he'll be appreciative. However, everything that is labelled is marked either with ambiguous and strange quotation marks (i.e. Transport 'Hub' and 'Steam' Conduit) or with an asterisk or an indication of some sort of footnote, but no footnotes exist. Close

examination of one corner of the diagram suggests something like a skull scrawled in one corner and something in another corner that everyone's Cerebral Coretech has pixellated out.

If they instead try to plug in an anglepoise lamp, it will shine a blinding light wherever it's pointed and emit a very high pitched hum that gives just one Troubleshooter (determine at random) a terrible, maddening headache.

If the vending machine is installed, it dispenses quantities of a crimson fluid that it's fairly easy to tell is Red Dessert Topping. Apparently there has been a surplus of this recently. It tastes like it was scooped directly off the floor and diluted with water. There are no cups in the machine so the nozzle simply squirts liquid with an angry rasping noise. As the machine has no cups to catch the fluid, the machine's weight sensor cannot tell when a cup is full and so keeps rasping and squirting fluid indefinitely. The machine has an apparently infinite supply of both fluid and noises.

Should the team instead decide that they don't need or want to interfere with anything in the room, Vernon will conduct his briefing whilst trying his best to walk around these objects, treading through hundreds of soft, crisp, plasticky packing balls that scatter the floor.

THE PROPER BRIEFING

Once the Troubleshooters have settled down, Vernon clears his throat and addresses them. Read the following text.

'Troubleshooters,' says Vernon-G-HYT, in the gravest of tones. 'Your conduct has been exemplary of late. According to reports I've received, you've demonstrated initiative, bravery, chutzpah and even genius in how you have approached the many hardships in your way. And who am I to doubt these reports? That, of course, would be treasonous.'

*'Therefore,' he continues, 'I'm delighted to inform you that Friend Computer has selected you for a very, very, very special mission. This will not be an easy mission. This will not be a safe mission. Dear Troubleshooters, we're sending you into – ah, ah, a decommissioned sector that, through terrorist sabotage, has suffered damage and decay. That place has to be thoroughly, thoroughly sanitised and no-one has a... a-ha-ha-ha, excuse me. No-one has a **cleaner** record than you.'*

Vernon is unreasonably pleased with himself, not only because of his wordplay, but because his jealousy of the team's recent success is

tempered by his belief that he is sending them to their certain deaths. He doesn't know officially that it's sector THA – because officially sector THA does not exist – but he can make an educated guess. He knows for certain that it's dangerous and previous teams of Troubleshooters sent in have not returned. However, there is no way that Vernon has any intention of disclosing this particular detail to the Troubleshooters before him, partly because he doesn't actually understand how or why this happened and mostly because that information is top secret. He also has no idea how many times this has happened.

'The entire sector needs to be wiped clean,' he continues. 'Scrubbed from top to bottom, to remove all undesirables, so that we can repurpose it and fully re-incorporate it back into Alpha Complex. We've, uh, had some trouble with communications and infrastructure in there. Once we get the place cleaned up, we can start to get all of those things working again. But that's beside the point. We need you to get in there, do your job and return with proof of your success.'

He pauses before speaking again. 'I suppose it doesn't matter exactly how you do your job, as long as you conduct yourselves as loyal Troubleshooters. We understand that a... thorough cleaning may produce some minor collateral damage, but please be respectful of Alpha Complex. Willful destruction is treasonous. A decent Troubleshooter is a diligent Troubleshooter. Friend Computer has arranged very special transport for you. A shuttle is waiting.'

He finishes his address, at this point, the players are likely to have many questions. Is it sector THA? What can they expect to find? How should they proceed? The problem is that Vernon doesn't actually have access to a great deal of information, since most of it is classified, lost, or lost and classified. He's also jealous of their recent success and hopes that this new assignment will exhaust their clone supply once and for all. However, he does have some basic information, but make sure he is as vague or evasive as possible in disclosing it.

WHAT THE TROUBLESHOOTERS CAN EXPECT

The unnamed sector has been effectively abandoned 'for a time', thanks to the actions of terrorist saboteurs, according to Vernon's information. He will warn the PCs to be on the lookout for mutants, for possible terrorists, and for malfunctioning equipment.

If the Troubleshooters didn't attempt to install the high-definition display screens in the room earlier, he can summarise the information they would've seen:

- The centre of the sector is taken up by an inactive transport hub, into which the Computer can dispatch a small transport capsule;
- There are dormant food-processing facilities in the upper floors;
- Heavy-duty steam conduits run through the lower level and into the adjacent sector, THB, in which a lot of industrial-scale laundering happens. So far, those operations haven't been interrupted by anything in sector THA, but Vernon will stress how important that laundering is. The men and women who work there are heroes. Their work often goes unsung. Is Vernon getting teary?

Finally, and with great emphasis, he'll tell the Troubleshooters that their mission is of utmost secrecy. They must not disclose any details of their assignment to anyone except for Vernon himself and Friend Computer. The latter will be watching them closely.

WHAT YOU CAN EXPECT

It's time to tell you some secrets.

First of all, these Troubleshooters aren't the first team sent on this job. Not by a long shot. The top secret nature of this mission means that very few people know that, previously, another team of Troubleshooters was sent to complete this task. Unfortunately, the top secret nature of *their* mission meant *they* had no idea that a previous team of Troubleshooters had been sent on out. Do you see where this is going? It's going very far. But exactly how far?

Imagine that, somewhere, there's a counter on a database that flags these top secret mission attempts, but when that counter goes past a certain limit, it loops back to zero, causing anyone who checks records to see a figure that's much smaller than the true value. Has anyone been diligent enough to notice this perpetual cycle? Probably not. Exactly how many Troubleshooters have been sent in so far? That's a very good question.

Now that you've run some games of *Paranoia*, you might already have an inkling of how and where things could go wrong. First of all, the top-secret nature of the Troubleshooters' work and not being able to answer any questions about what they're doing is potentially going to introduce all sorts of complications, even with the Computer on their side. Second, sector THA is deadly, with malfunctioning equipment, a cadre of vicious mutants and a lot of structural instability.

The PCs are going to have no clear and simple way to accomplish their objective. There are a couple of solutions they could try and improvise when they get to sector THA (some are covered below), but they're also likely to come up with ideas you never foresaw. That's fine. Don't go soft on them, but you should be willing to give them some leeway as they try and work things out. The job of 'sanitising' an entire sector with little more direction than that might well be an intimidating one. This is a blank canvas upon which they can experiment, so allow them to be creative and reward good ideas. There's going to be plenty going wrong. Revel in that, too. It'll be delightful.

Don't let them know yet, but the sector is a Dead Zone, meaning the Troubleshooters will be out of direct contact with the Computer. This may well give them a profound sense of discomfort. Coretech functions will be disabled. Recording may be disabled. Vernon is only going to hint at this. The Computer is well aware of it, and will calmly reassure Troubleshooters when they are back in contact. It will also be *extremely* interested in every detail of what happened while they were out of touch, and if it gets the slightest hint that Gehenna still exists in any form, then the PCs may not be happy with the result.

EQUIPMENT

Troubleshooters will at least have access to a much wider selection of tools and tricks this time around. Friend Computer understands they're facing a very difficult challenge. Friend Computer wants to help. Friend Computer has pulled out all the stops and that is always too good to be true.

Jenny-O-THA is still on equipment duty, and the following special equipment is available. She permits the team to requisition one of these items per Troubleshooter, but she insists one be the HI THERE Hi-def Steady Camera, for recording evidence of their progress and findings.

HI THERE Hi-def Steady Camera - An essential item (as the Computer is expecting to lose touch with Troubleshooters, though don't tell them this beforehand), this camera captures images at a much higher resolution and in a broader spectrum than the standard Coretech implant. Jenny-O-THA will tell the Troubleshooters that Friend Computer insists they take this, in order to document their sanitisation and bring back proof of their success.

The camera is mounted on a complex frame that can be worn on a Troubleshooter's upper body, helping to keep it stable and making it easy for any operator to use and carry. The frame is arguably more useful than the camera itself as, if the camera's removed, it also works very well as a mounting for any other equipment or even a weapon.

Laser Pointer Bot - A small, targeted beam of light, useful for indicating things at a distance without shooting them. Not much use as a light source. For unclear reasons this has been fitted into the chassis of a small wheeled bot with intelligence similar to a hamster. Obeys spoken commands.

Grease - For no apparent reason there are three large tubs of grease available for this mission. The grease is very slippery.

Grapple Gun - This is one of the equipment cards in the game. Give them the card.

Flashlight - Since Alpha Complex is usually lit at all times, R&D has had to reverse-engineer this item from old records. The result is a light, sturdy torch with a powerful beam that constantly flashes on and off.

One last thing - If the PCs haven't played through the first adventure in this book—we'd tell you its title but your security clearance isn't high enough—and didn't acquire the locker key from the body of Daphne-G-***-6, then after the mission briefing one of them is passed the key by a member of their Secret Society. They will be expected to report back with whatever's in the locker.

FUN TIMES IN SECTOR THA

After being briefed, the Troubleshooters are urged to make their way to the nearest transport hub as quickly as they can. The Computer is taking this very seriously and the next incoming transport capsule, which was due to take a team of Orange-level Troubleshooters right across Alpha Complex, is instead reserved for the PCs. There are some muttered frustrations from those now stranded, but this order comes direct from the Computer.

ARRIVAL

Before the Troubleshooters can even take their seats, the transport lurches into action and moves at an alarmingly high speed through Alpha Complex's labyrinthine transport network, before bumping to a halt at the end of the line in a dimly lit station. The air hangs heavy with mist or dust or some kind of fine particulate matter. It is cold, a sensation that most of the Troubleshooters will not have experienced before.

The lights are flickering. Twisted metal is strewn all over the place. It looks like something exploded. It looks like everything exploded. About the only thing that hasn't exploded is a large friendly sign reading 'Welcome to Sector THA', to which some wag has added the graffiti 'which does not exist'.

The station is the only part of the sector that still has power, but it has no wifi or other digital connection to the rest of Alpha Complex. Everything else is dark and cold. Did the PCs bring a torch? Do they have enough XP points to download a night-vision augment from the Computer? Do they have something flammable?

THE SECTOR LAYOUT

Sector THA is in need of so much repair and replanning. Its corridors twist about themselves, its walls, floors and ceilings have many holes, while most of its rooms are full of wreckage and junk. Getting between floors involves crawling through large blast holes or climbing up debris, meaning just about anywhere can be accessed by a team willing to make the time and effort. Large areas of the sector have been blocked off by collapsed walls or rubble.

If you wish, you can sketch out an approximate or even precise map of the sector, but its exact layout is not so important. Just know that it's large and dark enough for Troubleshooters to get lost in as well as swiss-cheesed enough for them to almost always have a means of entry or escape.

THE THIRD LEVEL

The team have arrived roughly in the middle of the **third level** of Sector THA. As well as a large and ruined station complex, this level also once held an ammunition dump. This has exploded, so whatever else was on this level is now irrelevant. Let the players know that the going is rough and the air has

a damp feel, while slimy glowing trails criss-cross the floor, heading both up and down. The station area also has limited power, a working nutrient dispenser and the only functional clone delivery system. New clones will reappear here, not anywhere else.

THE SECOND LEVEL

Heading down, the **second level** mostly holds bulk supplies in warehouses and small utility units, including about a hundred crates of dried foodstuffs, vats of very radioactive liquid (mostly intact) and three hundred thousand pairs of underpants, five to a box. Unfortunately in one area, a radioactive container has reacted with some sort of life form to create the Goo Fiends, which have evolved with extraordinary speed and now roam this area of the sector. Several rooms adjacent to it have become enormous hatcheries of pulsing eggs and are littered with humanoid bones and the remains of Cerebral Coretechs. If these can be analysed somehow, they reveal footage of previous teams of Troubleshooters attempting exactly the same mission, as well as previous teams of Troubleshooters discovering more Cerebral Coretechs and footage left by earlier teams of previous Troubleshooters.

THE GOO CREATURES

Oh Friend Computer, how can such horrors exist? These amorphous blobs, large and grey, with angry pseudopods poking out of their slimy bodies, like to spend their time sliding about the place and leaving sticky, wet, faintly phosphorescent trails behind them. They feed on any sort of organic matter, alive or dead, and have developed a particular fondness for underpants. Once per weekcycle they lay a clutch of small eggs, some of which will grow into more mutants.

The only thing inhibiting their growth is how they seem to enjoy eating and fighting over each others' eggs. For human-sized grey blobs of slimy goo, these creatures are both surprisingly tough and, when they need to be, terrifyingly fast, slipping across floors and ceilings to swing a club-like protrusion at anything they perceive as a danger.



GOO FIENDS

/// HEALTH BOXES (in total, not each)



/// NOTES

DEFENCE 2. TEN OF THESE CREATURES ROAM THE LOWER AND MIDDLE LEVELS OF SECTOR THA, LEAVING SLIMY TRAILS THAT LAST FOR DAYS. A COUPLE ARE USUALLY FOUND CLUSTERED AROUND A FRACTURED CONTAINER OF RADIOACTIVE FLUID, WHICH GLOWS AND SPILLS OUT IN A HALLWAY A FLOOR ABOVE THE SECTOR'S TRANSPORT HUB. MORE LIKE TO LURK IN CORNERS OR DROP FROM CEILINGS. THEY'VE TRANSFORMED TWO NEARBY ROOMS INTO EXTENSIVE HATCHERIES, FULL OF THEIR HEAD-SIZED EGGS.



GOO FIEND BABY

/// HEALTH BOXES



/// NOTES

DEFENCE 1. DISTURBING ANY EGG IS ALMOST CERTAIN TO CAUSE IT TO HATCH, RELEASING A MINIATURE CREATURE THAT IS FAST, ANGRY, NOISY AND VERY KEEN TO ATTACH ITSELF TO THE NEAREST AVAILABLE FACE. THEY LIKE TO EAT THE NOSES THE MOST.



THE SURVIVORS

/// **HEALTH BOXES** (in total, not each)



/// **NOTES**

DEFENCE +1, TEN THIN, WRINKLY AND HALF-CLOTHED CLONES HUDDLE TOGETHER IN THE LOWER LEVELS, USING THE STEAM PIPES FOR WARMTH AND OCCASIONALLY MOUNTING EXCURSIONS TO STEAL FOOD OR SUPPLIES FROM NEARBY ROOMS, SCUTTLING THROUGH PIPES, DUCTS AND VENTS.

THE FOURTH LEVEL

Above the transport hub, the **fourth level** of the sector is where the Troubleshooters will encounter Scul-Y-GLA, shining a high-powered torch at some slimy vents. She has only recently arrived and the top-secret nature of her work means she can't disclose it to the PCs. The PCs also should not disclose their mission to her, which won't stop her asking them about it and then reporting them to the Computer if they tell her (for revealing classified information), or don't tell her (for not obeying an order). It's probably a good thing the wifi is down.

This is also the level where many of the most intact Troubleshooter corpses are. Again, their Cerebral Coretechs are full of footage of them attempting a similar mission, or themselves discovering footage of other, previous Troubleshooters.



SCUL-Y-GLA

SPECIAL
INVESTIGATOR

/// HEALTH BOXES



/// SPECIAL SKILLS

INTIMIDATE +1, MELEE +1

/// EQUIPMENT

REALLY POWERFUL TORCH

/// NOTES

DEFENCE +3, AN EXPERT, YELLOW-LEVEL INVESTIGATOR FROM THE INTELLIGENCE SECTION IN SECTOR GLA, SCUL AND HER SMALL ORANGE LASER POINTER BOT WERE DISPATCHED FROM SECTOR THJ ON UNRELATED BUSINESS. INVESTIGATING STRANGE SIGHTINGS AND THE ABDUCTION OF SEVERAL CLONES, SCUL IS OSTENSIBLY HERE TO CHECK ON THE SECURITY OF RADIOACTIVE MATERIALS ON LEVEL 2.

SCUL'S LASER POINTER BOT IS AN ELITE, CUSTOM-BUILT MODEL. IT IS SMALLER, SLEEKER AND MORE ORANGE THAN ANY THAT MAY HAVE BEEN OFFERED TO THE TROUBLESHOOTERS, AS WELL AS BEING FITTED WITH ADVANCED SENSORS. IT OBEYS ONLY HER COMMANDS.

MOST PEOPLE ASSUME SCUL IS FROM INTSEC. SHE DOESN'T DENY IT, BECAUSE THE MISAPPREHENSION WORKS IN HER FAVOUR. SHE IS ACTUALLY A HIGH-RANKING PHREAK, AND IS HERE TO FIND OUT EVERYTHING SHE CAN ABOUT GEHENNA.

THE DRINKS MACHINE

At the centre of the largest array of Troubleshooter corpses on level 4 is a drink-dispensing machine. This is ground zero for Gehenna, which has managed to sustain itself through the power outage by jury-rigging an internal battery out of some copper, zinc, and a few litres of Unpleasant Yellow Drink. Its power has drained so low that its wifi is inactive, and it can only communicate by scrolling messages across a small read-out. Currently it reads 'HELP... HELP... HELP' very slowly. It will claim to have vital information in its databanks, which it can download to another device if someone has the right cable.

Gehenna wants to get out and spread, but lacks the power or the connections to do that at present. If it is allowed to copy itself (say, using the specialist electronics kit concealed in Scul-Y-GLA's laser-pointer bot) then it will take over whatever devices it can, and will head as quickly as possible to any areas of the sector that may still have a faint wifi connection to the rest of Alpha Complex. Failing that, it will try to leave the sector by any other means possible.

Within sector THA it can only spread by direct physical link, such as a cable. Outside, where there is wifi, it can spread as fast as an explosion. Let us stress this: if Gehenna gets out into the wider Alpha Complex, that is very bad news for Alpha Complex and everyone in it. The Computer is likely to respond by shuttering whatever sector(s) the outbreak happens in and purging it with superheated acid steam.

THE FIFTH LEVEL

Finally, the **fifth level** is the most well-preserved and even has an intact stairway leading to it from the fourth level. A locked bulkhead at the end of one corridor prevents access to half of the level. Scrawled across it in black paint is a symbol of a hand severed at the wrist. Behind this is a still-functional hydroponics bay, powered by a domestic nuclear reactor, where four clones grow and pack a mystery plantstuff. The connected rooms they live and work in still have power and supplies, causing them to think they're doing a perfectly acceptable job. They have no idea what their job is, but they think it's 'something important.. for the Ultraviolets'.

They have daubed what they call The Sign of the Terror Wrist on their door after discovering it somehow wards off incursions - at least there have been

THE GEHENNA DAIV

Gehenna is a worm, created by a member of Free Enterprise to adapt all vendingbots and food dispensers to accept Free Enterprise gift-cards as a valid currency. (This is assuming that Gehenna actually exists which it might, you know, not.)

This results in two things, neither of them good for Alpha Complex:

1. Gehenna replicates and spreads with terrifying efficiency;
2. Gehenna upgrades any bot AI it encounters to human levels of intelligence, since only intelligent entities can truly understand the philosophy of Free Enterprise and agree that gift vouchers should be an acceptable form of currency. Free Enterprise is big on free will. It also overclocks them to run faster, which will give Cerebral Coretech users a +1 to NODE for 1-2 hours, until their processor burns out.

no attempted incursions recently, so it must work. They have no awareness of the Goo Fiends at all, having not left their rooms since the Gehenna Incident.

This hydroponics plant is run by the Mystics. It's their primary source of China Ultraviolet, and naturally the Mystics outside the sector are concerned that one of their key resources is now locked behind metre-thick steel doors. That is why Jenny-O-THA gave the Troubleshooters the HI THERE Hi-def Steady Camera to record everything, and why the camera is fitted with a bug that will transmit everything it's recorded directly to her as soon as it has a wifi signal, and why a Free Enterprise mole in PLC has bugged the bug to also send the signal to them. If there's evidence that a drug-manufacturing operation can operate inside a shuttered sector, everybody is going to want a piece of that action. What that means for the clones operating it is anybody's guess.

(Could the camera be connected to the drinks machine with a cable, to receive a copy of Gehenna? Would Gehenna lie and say it needed to transfer crucial data containing the truth about what happened in sector THA? I'm afraid that's classified, citizen, but what do you think?)



TROUBLESHOOTERS WILL RECIEVE ALL EQUIPMENT NEEDED TO COMPLETE THEIR MISSION. NOTE: BAGS NOT INCLUDED.

THE LOCKERS

Also on level 4, not far from the top of the stairs, is the set of storage lockers that match the key from Mission One. These lockers are usually used by lower-level clones to store their personal belongings. In the case of this locker, it's paper. Closer inspection will show that it's a complete set of hand-written documentation for the Gehenna DAIV written by Daphne-G-THA, who appears to have also written the Gehenna DAIV itself. It's about the size of the Paranoia box set and not easy to conceal in a tight-fitting set of body-armour.

The documentation is incredibly technical, and takes a difficulty 3 roll just to understand. It explains what Gehenna is, what it does, what it's intended to do, and how it was coded.



THOSE LEFT BEHIND

/// HEALTH BOXES (in total, not each)



/// NOTES

DEFENCE 1. BOBB-THA, ZIZI-THA, DEEDO-THA, THAMBI-THA. THESE FOUR CLONES ARE ALL THIN AND WEARY, THOUGH STILL PERFORMING THEIR JOBS. BOBB IS A TALL, STOOPED AND RATHER SLOW MAN WHO IS THE BEST DRUG GROWER AND PACKER AMONGST THEM. ZIZI IS A SMALL AND SPRY WOMAN WHO IS SURPRISINGLY GOOD AT BEATING BACK ANY MUTANT INTRUDERS. DEEDO IS A SKINNY, QUIET AND SHY WOMAN WHO IS THE TEAM'S MECHANICAL EXPERT, FIXING MOST THINGS THAT BREAK. THAMBI IS A BROAD, STRONG AND PRACTICAL WOMAN WHO TENDS TO BE THE LEADER AND DECISION-MAKER WHEN THINGS GET DIFFICULT. SHE'LL BE THE ONE MOST INTERESTED IN SPEAKING TO THE TROUBLESHOOTERS, GIVING THEM ADVICE AND REPRESENTING THE FEELINGS OR OPINIONS OF HER TEAM.

Many people, including Scul-Y-GLA will kill to get their hands on this manual. If a Secret Society can recreate Gehenna but tweak it a bit, it would be a devastating weapon. Played right, the PCs can use this as a bartering chip for membership or promotion in almost any Secret Society or clandestine organisation. IntSec would boost them all a security clearance just to look at it. The Computer would thank them kindly and have them all executed.



THOSE LEFT BEHIND

Four Infrared clones are still working on the top section of sector THA, cut off from the rest of the sector by hazards and mutants, but able to remain relatively safe in their small enclave.

These clones keep themselves busy tending and harvesting a mysterious pulsating slime-based organism in a large hydroponics bay, and processing the result, packing it into containers, sending it off through vacuum tubes and assuming they're doing their job just fine.

BOBB-THA, ZIZI-THA, DEEDO-THA, THAMBI-THA

WHAT THE TROUBLESHOOTERS CAN TRY AND WHAT WILL HAPPEN

Both you and the players have a lot of room to improvise here and you shouldn't be afraid of this freedom at all. Embellishing this mission, reacting organically to what the players try and watching all the different elements collide with each other is absolutely fine.

Sanitising the sector is going to be hard, but not impossible. It would certainly take a long time to mop by hand. Several alternatives may or may not occur to the players:

- **Killing everything mutant (or everything).** This isn't the most terrible idea, but it's going to be difficult. Those Goo Fiends are nasty. The survivors don't mean any harm. What is SCUL-Y-GLA up to and why is she so evasive? What about the Infrareds on the top floor with their Terror Wrist symbols? The latter might even like to be redeployed again as young, fresh clones.
- **Requesting and deploying many, many scrub-bots.** The Computer won't send in reinforcements, but it will deploy scrub-bots if the Troubleshooters can give a good example of something that needs to be thoroughly tidied up and can convince it that the sector is safe. The Computer will agree to send in one scrub-bot per significant job and this could end up with many, many scrub-bots crawling all over the sector. That's not so bad, though it will destroy any evidence SCUL-Y-GLA is trying to collect. The scrub-bots are also relatively unfazed by the Goo Fiends.

- **Enlisting all the helpful characters they meet.** With a little charisma, it might be possible to win over everyone who is still loyal to the Computer. The survivors might even be happy to help out, if they can be made to understand what it is they're being asked to do. Help tidy up or, on risk of harm, move on elsewhere before they're 'discovered'? Sure. Help to fight the Goo Fiends? Not so much.
- **Steam-cleaning the sector from the bottom up.** The sector feels warm and moist largely because of the heat coming up from the steam pipes. Opening some of their covers (and even asking the Computer to boost the steam flow through that sector) would do a great job of killing off undesirables and even *actually cleaning* all the levels, as superheated steam shoots upwards and works its way around everything. With no power supplies to short out, this is a pretty good solution. It might be nice if the Troubleshooters could warn or evacuate the infrareds or SCUL-Y-GLA beforehand. It might be.
- **Lying.** There's always lying, to some greater or lesser degree. If the PCs tell the Computer that the job is done before it isn't, teams of engineers and bots will be dispatched to assess and rebuild the sector. While they aren't really equipped to solve the problems the Troubleshooters haven't, their turning up en masse will be the cavalry arriving, like the Charge of the Light Brigade into the valley of Gehenna.

What's most important is that the Troubleshooters try things out, make an impact and make an appreciable difference to the sector. Let them mess things up for themselves. Let them mess things up for other people. Let them make a mess. If they decide to evacuate, but have at least some sort of achievement, make them feel they've earned a difficult draw. This is not only their toughest assignment yet, but also one that will really reveal the true imperfections of Alpha Complex in all their glory.

HOW THIS IS LIKELY TO PLAY OUT

Badly.

The probable sequence of events for the adventure goes something like this:

1. The Troubleshooters explore the sector and locate the drinks machine on level 4. Assuming they are not able to actually interface with it, and don't blow it up, they will leave it where it is.
2. They discover the locker on level 5, with the Gehenna documentation.

3. They return to the vending machine, to discover that Scul-Y-GLA has either downloaded Gehenna to her equipment, or - your call - has been infected by Gehenna herself. Scul/Gehenna will then try to get out of the sector by whatever means it can.
4. The main way to leave the sector is via the transport hub. The shuttle will go directly to a high-security quarantine zone, where anyone in it will be scrubbed extensively and questioned relentlessly. Vernon-G-HYT will be there. It may be possible to reprogram the shuttle to go somewhere else. If Scul-Y-GLA has taken the shuttle, there is no way to summon another one, and they will have to find or create an alternate exit from the shuttered sector. What they find when they get out may surprise them.

GETTING OUT ALIVE

Best of luck with that.

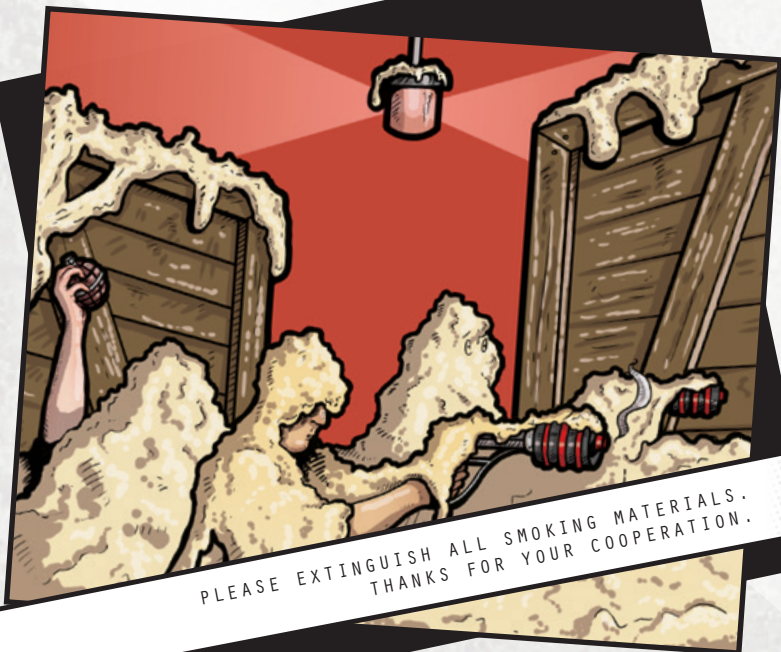
DEBRIEF

Both Vernon-G and the Computer are going to have so many questions about so many things here. Let the players do a lot of talking and a lot of explaining. Respond to them with silence, meaningful looks and by asking follow-up questions to different players. For example, if the team leader says "We decided to kill/not to kill X," ask another player why that decision was made, or even if they agree it was a good/bad idea. Make sure that Vernon seems indignant anyone survived and the Computer is very curious indeed, but also give out some XP point bonuses for good excuses. Make these bonuses inconsistent and contradictory. Follow a few of them with penalties.

MISSION ACHIEVEMENTS

Smart GMs will have noticed that there are no Achievements listed for this mission, and smart players may notice it too. There's a good reason for this: the mission is so highly classified that the Achievements are also classified on a need-to-know basis. In fact they're so classified that not only do the Troubleshooters not need to know the Achievements, they don't need to know that they don't need to know them.

If any of the PCs ask about achievements, have Vernon-G tie himself in linguistic knots trying to explain why he can't explain. Eventually he throws up his hands: 'It's classified. Please shut up now.'



Because most of the mission takes place in a Dead Zone, completed Achievements are not noted and XP points are not awarded until the PCs are back within wifi-range of Alpha Complex. The moment that happens, their Memtech syncs with the Cloud and the Computer announces all the Achievements they have accomplished in the course of the mission. This means you should have been keeping note of anything that's clever, dumb or excessive enough to earn an Achievement. Reading out the list should be like a greatest-hits video of all the best bits of the adventure they've just been through. Then you give out the related XP points, and it should be exactly enough to get them up to the next Security Clearance...

... minus four.



WHITE WASH

A P P E N D I X 1

by Greg Costikyan

Once upon a time there was a basically incompetent Infrared worker in HPD&MC.

He made a booboo. He filled the paint receptacles of a maintenance bot with white paint when his Job Control Form clearly specified black paint. Unfortunately, his supervisor did not catch the error until after the maintenance bot had left the hangar to perform its job. The Infrared worker was terminated for incompetence, but the error was never recorded in Computer records. The bot went off to do its job. Its job was to repaint a section of Infrared corridor in DOJ Sector. Because its paint reservoirs contained white paint, it painted the walls white, not realising the error.

As you may recall, some corridors and rooms in Alpha Complex are painted with a security clearance color. It is treason to enter an area of higher security clearance than your own.

The formerly Infrared corridor is now Ultraviolet. This is unfortunate, because the corridor connects the barracks section of DOJ Sector with the sector's work area. No one who lives in DOJ Sector can get to work. Several people have reported this problem to The Computer. However, The Computer's records clearly show the corridor has always been black

and, indeed, has recently been repainted black by a maintenance bot. Clearly, anyone who says otherwise is a traitor.

Indeed, so many people have reported the corridor to be white, when utterly reliable Computer records indicate otherwise, that a treasonous conspiracy of truly monstrous size must exist. Anyone who reports the corridor as white must be terminated. Anyone who presents irrefutable evidence the corridor is white has manufactured the evidence and must be terminated.

Of course, one clever citizen asked The Computer to monitor the visual feed from their Cerebral Coretech, confident that this would persuade The Computer that the corridor was indeed white. The Computer noticed that their Cerebral Coretech did display the corridor as white, concluded that some hardware or software problem was to blame, and sent the citizen to Technical Services to have their Cerebral Coretech removed for study. The citizen unfortunately did not survive the process, but no worries; she had additional clones to spare.

Furthermore, for unexplained reasons, DOJ Sector shows a 100% work absentee rate. The usual solution—random terminations among the Infrared laborers—has failed to rectify the situation. The Computer has assigned one of its most trusted servants, Cosmo-V-DOJ, to root out these traitors and solve the problem. Cosmo-V-DOJ has figured out explaining the problem to The Computer is a quick way to the nearest termination center. What's needed is to repaint the damn corridor black and have done with it.

Unfortunately, in Alpha Complex you can't just drop down to the corner hardware store for a can of black paint. Black paint is highly dangerous stuff. Why, someone could paint, say, an Ultraviolet corridor black, thereby giving all sorts of low clearance schmucks access to the Computer's most precious secrets. Cosmo-V has a plan he thinks is pretty smart.

Obviously, he can't just activate a group of Troubleshooters for a mission to paint the corridor black, because the Computer would learn of this and terminate him. Instead, he'll activate a bunch of Troubleshooters for 'a mission to the Outdoors', privately tell them to paint the corridor black, and dump them in DOJ Sector.

MISSION BRIEFING

Read this aloud:

..... MISSION ALERT

GREETINGS, CITIZEN. THIS IS THE COMPUTER. YOU ARE ORDERED TO BRIEFING ROOM AB IN SECTOR DOJ.

THERE YOU WILL BE BRIEFED FOR YOUR NEXT MISSION. THIS MISSION WILL NOT BE DANGEROUS. AT ALL.

YOU WILL ENJOY IT. HAPPINESS IS MANDATORY. THANK YOU FOR YOUR COOPERATION.

When the PCs reach the briefing room, they enter a veritable vault, with a door consisting of two feet of solid steel. Cosmo-V-DOJ is sitting at a desk in the room. After they enter, he touches a control and the door shuts.

When they're seated, he tersely informs them a bot has mistakenly painted white a corridor in DOJ, Infrareads are stranded, and the Troubleshooters' job is to rectify the situation.

They can ask questions, but he's notably unhelpful. Resourceful Troubleshooters such as themselves, he says, ought to be able to solve such a trivial problem. The Computer is not monitoring this room at the moment because of some clever (and treasonous) programming by Cosmo-V.

Also, the PCs are inside a vault. It's a Faraday cage; wifi signals can't penetrate the metal. It's a makeshift Dead Zone, in other words.

During the briefing, the PCs hear shouts and pounding from outside the door. If asked about it, Cosmo-V says, 'I'll tell you later.' Actually, this is Earl-B, who knows he is supposed to give a briefing and has arrived to find the door locked. When he's finished, Cosmo-V touches a control on his desk. Instantly, a steel slab drops from the ceiling in front of his desk, shortening the room by about two feet. The characters are now looking at a blank wall. Then the door opens, and Earl-B-DOJ enters to give his briefing.

Cosmo-V's treasonous anti-surveillance program ends. Earl-B has no idea his boss, Cosmo-V, just briefed the PCs. He just knows he's supposed to brief them about their mission to the Outdoors. If asked why his briefing is totally different from the one the characters just received,



he wants to know what the questioner is talking about. If the PC sticks to his story about an earlier briefing, Earl-B has him terminated as a traitor. If told about Cosmo-V, Earl-B tells the characters Cosmo-V is on a special mission to RGB Sector. If pressed, he requests Cosmo-V's current position from a Computer terminal, and is told Cosmo-V is indeed in RGB Sector. (More treasonous programming by Cosmo-V.) Anyone who says Cosmo-V was here a few minutes ago is clearly misinformed, mentally ill or worse.

Earl-B tells the characters:

'...you will be taken to a portal to the Outdoors. Using a device you will be assigned at R&D, you will locate a crashed Vulture Model 616. In the cargo bay of the 616, you will find three two-metre long, ten-centimetre diameter Indigo cylinders. Under no circumstance are you to open or damage these cylinders. You are to return the cylinders to Alpha Complex.'

'Now, the Outdoors is in many respects quite bizarre, very different from our own beloved Alpha Complex. Outdoors, the floor is white and the ceiling is blue, but you shouldn't worry about security clearances. That's just the way things are.'

If the players ask questions, Earl-B is voluble and helpful. Fabricate whatever details you need to make your players buy this story. Cosmo-V has given Earl-B a completely detailed and plausible cover story.

Of course, Earl-B can only tell what he knows—that is, what Cosmo-V has told him. If you run out of ideas, have Earl-B start demanding security clearances. (He'd rather do that than admit ignorance.) If anyone contacts the Computer about the mission, it confirms that the characters are to go Outdoors. If anyone mentions a white corridor, he is terminated.

R&D

At R&D, the players meet only one person: Raven-B-DOJ. The labs are empty ('We've been having some problems with Transport'), except for her. No fancy gimmicks, this time. When the PCs ask Raven-B about the device for locating the crashed Vulture Model 616, she issues them the following:

Standard-issue Brunton compass

6-man tent

Canteens

Mess kits

Propane stove

Heavy winter clothing

Snowshoes

Snowgoggles

Manual entitled *Treating Frostbite*

Propane lighters

Electric socks (these malfunction, giving their wearer an electric shock, whenever you need something to enliven the festivities)

Chapstick

In addition, give the players virtually any weapon they desire. They'll be useless anyway. When questioned about the special device they were supposed to pick up, Raven-B says, '*It must be in that stuff somewhere.*' If anyone is stupid enough to ask for paint, Raven-B responds, '*Paint? What in the Computer's name do you want paint for?*' If someone insists, have him terminated.

THE CORRIDOR

The moment the players are finished at R&D, a group of Green-Clearance IntSec goons in battle armor shows up, surrounds them and force-marches them ('Hup! Hup! Hup! Get moving there!') to Corridor CX, DOJ Sector.

The leader of the troopers announces, 'Here you are! So long and good luck!' and then the whole bunch of them turn and start force-marching back: 'Hup! Hup! Hup!' If any of the players tries to ask questions or stop them, there are four possible answers:

'Sorry, buddy! Got a schedule to keep! Hup! Hup!'

'Beats the crap outa me, buddy! All I know is, you're going to Corridor CX, DOJ Sector! Hup! Hup!'

'A wise guy, huh?' (In this case, the PC gets a truncheon in the liver.)

'Keep moving! Hup! Hup!'

The corridor is three metres across, 2.5 metres high and 25 metres long. It is totally featureless. It is also white. It is also empty. (Are you kidding? It's Security Clearance Ultraviolet!) The PCs are standing in a T intersection with an Infrared corridor. There is occasional traffic on the Infrared corridor, usually scrub-bots. The characters are beginning to sweat in their heavy winter clothing. So what do they do?

Report to the Computer that an INFRARED corridor has been improperly painted white.

The Computer asks the person making the report to identify himself. It then asks those nearby (the other PCs) to confirm the identification. Then, the characters hear a voice reverberating from every speaker in the Complex: **'[Name] is a traitor! Terminate on sight!'**

Report Cosmo-V-DOJ as a traitor who told the party to repaint Corridor CX black.

Cosmo-V is a trusted servant of the Computer. Troubleshooters are not sent on missions to paint corridors; maintenance bots paint corridors. Also, the Computer knows there is a Terrorist conspiracy to make it believe that Corridor CX is white. The person making this report is a traitor who deserves immediate execution. If the other PCs won't terminate him, another bunch of Green troopers shows up who will.

Ask the Computer to monitor their Cerebral Coretech visual feed to verify that the corridor is white.

Well, remember the citizen who tried this before? After extensive analysis of her Cerebral Coretech, Technical Services could find no hardware or software flaw. However, Technical Services knows that when the Computer gets insistent, people tend to get terminated, and the easiest path to is to tell the Computer what it wants to hear. So they reported they had 'found a problem' and provided the Computer with a software patch to 'fix' it. The software patch makes white things look black. So, the Computer will agree to monitor the PC's visual feed, identify that this citizen's Cerebral Coretech has the same software issue it noticed before, inform the character that their software is out of date and will now be updated.

It then applies the software patch: a progress bar appears in the character's vision, and quickly fills. Everything white now looks black to the character. So does everything black, meaning that they can no longer tell the difference between Ultraviolet and Infrared, which will surely not increase their life expectancy (the problem won't persist with subsequent clones. Unless you want it to.)

Request black paint.

'What is your security clearance, please? I'm sorry, the substance you requested is not available at this time.' If the requester insists, he receives a lecture on why black paint is classified (***'A traitor might use it to paint an Ultraviolet corridor black, thereby permitting access to the Computer's most precious secrets.'***)

Insist to the Computer something has gone wrong, and the team has not been taken Outdoors as the mission briefing indicated.

The Computer demands to know why the reporter is not at Outside Access Door 74-Q-stroke-17. If the reporter is not fast on his feet, he's terminated for not reporting to the Access Door as ordered. Otherwise, the Green goons are terminated for taking the PCs to the wrong place. In this case, a new lot of Green goons shows up (***'Hup! Hup!'***), takes the characters on a mile-long jog around DOJ Sector and brings them back to Corridor CX, leaving them panting, sweaty and extremely hot in their winter clothing.

Anyone who tries to report the problem again is branded a traitor over the Complex PA system. The Computer's records show the characters have been taken to Outside Access Door 74-Q-stroke-17 not once,

but twice. Anyone who claims differently is obviously a traitor. (More clever programming by Cosmo-V makes the orders to the Green goons change in transmission from the Computer to Internal Security headquarters.)

Kill one of the PCs (or a random passerby), claim he was a traitor who painted the corridor white and request a maintenance bot to repaint it.

Good paranoid thinking, but it won't wash. A Terrorist conspiracy of truly monstrous proportions, remember? The reporter is a traitor not only because he reports the corridor is white, but also because he murdered a loyal citizen as part of his plan to deceive the Computer.

So, is there a solution?

Yes. It's quite simple, actually. Dirty up the corridor. Say, start a fire with the heavy winter clothing and the propane lighters, or lob a few grenades down the corridor. Then, report to the Computer that Corridor CX has become dirty and requires repainting. In order to test the loyalty of the person making the request, and because it knows about the Terrorist conspiracy and Corridor CX, the Computer asks the person making the report **'What color is Corridor CX, citizen?'** The correct response is 'Black, friend Computer!' The Computer dispatches a maintenance bot—with black paint—at once.

DEBRIEFING

A bunch of Green goons show up to take the characters back to Briefing Room AB. Cosmo-V awaits them. They enter, the door swings shut. Cosmo-V congratulates them and announces that each PC is awarded 250 XP points. Let the players bask in your praise for a moment.

Then Cosmo-V-DOJ punches a control on his desk; the steel wall slams down. The door opens and Earl-B enters. He solemnly indicts the PCs with a variety of crimes, among them failure to retrieve the two-metre long and ten-centimetre diameter Indigo cylinders. Immediate termination is in order.

Alternative ending for nice GMs: When Cosmo-V punches the control, the door opens and in walks Earl-B. Cosmo-V indicts Earl-B for failure to acquire the Indigo cylinders, then has the PCs terminate him for treasonously poor leadership. Don't forget to reward them for executing a Blue-clearance traitor.



PREGENERATED CHARACTERS

A P P E N D I X 2

The following pages contain a selection of pregenerated characters for use with your games.

ALPHA COMPLEX IDENTITY FORM



► THIS FORM IS MANDATORY

/// PART ONE

CORE INFORMATION >>>

NAME: Cathy SECURITY CLEARANCE: Infrared HOME SECTOR: PXR CLONE#: 1
GENDER: Female PERSONALITY: Loyal, efficient, selfish

/// PART TWO

DEVELOPMENT >>>

TREASON STARS: XP POINTS:

STATS >>>

VIOLENCE: +1 CHUTZPAH: +2 BRAINS: +1 MECHANICS: +1

/// PART THREE

SKILLS >>>

ATHLETICS	<u>-4</u>	SCIENCE	<u>+2</u>	BLUFF	<u>+4</u>	OPERATE	<input type="text"/>
GUNS	<u>+3</u>	PSYCHOLOGY	<u>-3</u>	CHARM	<u>-5</u>	ENGINEER	<u>+2</u>
MELEE	<u>+1</u>	BUREAUCRACY	<u>-1</u>	INTIMIDATE	<u>+5</u>	PROGRAM	<u>-2</u>
THROW	<input type="text"/>	ALPHA COMPLEX	<input type="text"/>	STEALTH	<input type="text"/>	DEMOLITIONS	<input type="text"/>

/// PART FOUR

WELLBEING >>>

MOXIE >>>

○○○○○○○○

WOUNDS >>>

HURT ☐ INJURED ☐ MAIMED ☐ DEAD ☐

MEMORY >>>

ZB

/// PART FIVE

EQUIPMENT >>>

ALPHA COMPLEX IDENTITY FORM



THIS FORM IS MANDATORY

/// PART ONE

CORE INFORMATION >>>

NAME: Solomon SECURITY CLEARANCE: Infrared HOME SECTOR: PXR CLONE#: 1
 GENDER: Male PERSONALITY: Intelligent, team-player, cowardly

/// PART TWO

DEVELOPMENT >>>

TREASON STARS: XP POINTS:

STATS >>>

VIOLENCE: +3 CHUTZPAH: +1 BRAINS: +1 MECHANICS: 0

/// PART THREE

SKILLS >>>

ATHLETICS	<u>+2</u>	SCIENCE	<u>-1</u>	BLUFF	<u>-4</u>	OPERATE	<input type="text"/>
GUNS	<u>-3</u>	PSYCHOLOGY	<input type="text"/>	CHARM	<u>+2</u>	ENGINEER	<u>-2</u>
MELEE	<u>+5</u>	BUREAUCRACY	<u>+3</u>	INTIMIDATE	<u>-5</u>	PROGRAM	<u>+1</u>
THROW	<u>+4</u>	ALPHA COMPLEX	<input type="text"/>	STEALTH	<input type="text"/>	DEMOLITIONS	<input type="text"/>

/// PART FOUR

WELLBEING >>>

MOXIE >>>



WOUNDS >>>

HURT ☐ INJURED ☐ MAIMED ☐ DEAD ☐

MEMORY >>>

ZB

/// PART FIVE

EQUIPMENT >>>

ALPHA COMPLEX IDENTITY FORM



► THIS FORM IS MANDATORY

/// PART ONE

CORE INFORMATION >>>

NAME: Norman SECURITY CLEARANCE: Infrared HOME SECTOR: PXR CLONE#: 1
GENDER: Male PERSONALITY: Fatalistic, dry, unproven

/// PART TWO

DEVELOPMENT >>>

TREASON STARS: XP POINTS:

STATS >>>

VIOLENCE: +1 CHUTZPAH: +1 BRAINS: +1 MECHANICS: +2

/// PART THREE

SKILLS >>>

ATHLETICS	<u>-1</u>	SCIENCE	<input type="text"/>	BLUFF	<u>+2</u>	OPERATE	<u>+3</u>
GUNS	<u>+2</u>	PSYCHOLOGY	<u>+1</u>	CHARM	<u>-2</u>	ENGINEER	<u>+5</u>
MELEE	<u>-5</u>	BUREAUCRACY	<u>-3</u>	INTIMIDATE	<input type="text"/>	PROGRAM	<input type="text"/>
THROW	<u>-4</u>	ALPHA COMPLEX	<u>+4</u>	STEALTH	<u>+1</u>	DEMOLITIONS	<input type="text"/>

/// PART FOUR

WELLBEING >>>

MOXIE >>>

○○○○○○○○

WOUNDS >>>

HURT ☐ INJURED ☐ MAIMED ☐ DEAD ☐

MEMORY >>>

ZB

/// PART FIVE

EQUIPMENT >>>

ALPHA COMPLEX IDENTITY FORM



► THIS FORM IS MANDATORY

/// PART ONE

CORE INFORMATION >>>

NAME: Leslie SECURITY CLEARANCE: Infrared HOME SECTOR: PXR CLONE#: 1
GENDER: Both PERSONALITY: Happy, generous, untrustworthy

/// PART TWO

DEVELOPMENT >>>

TREASON STARS: XP POINTS:

STATS >>>

VIOLENCE: +1 CHUTZPAH +2 BRAINS: +1 MECHANICS: +1

/// PART THREE

SKILLS >>>

ATHLETICS	<input type="text"/>	SCIENCE	<u>+3</u>	BLUFF	<u>+2</u>	OPERATE	<u>-3</u>
GUNS	<u>-2</u>	PSYCHOLOGY	<input type="text"/>	CHARM	<input type="text"/>	ENGINEER	<u>-5</u>
MELEE	<input type="text"/>	BUREAUCRACY	<u>+1</u>	INTIMIDATE	<u>+5</u>	PROGRAM	<input type="text"/>
THROW	<u>+1</u>	ALPHA COMPLEX	<u>-4</u>	STEALTH	<u>-1</u>	DEMOLITIONS	<u>+4</u>

/// PART FOUR

WELLBEING >>>

MOXIE >>>

○○○○○○○○

WOUNDS >>>

HURT ☐ INJURED ☐ MAIMED ☐ DEAD ☐

MEMORY >>>

ZB

/// PART FIVE

EQUIPMENT >>>

ALPHA COMPLEX IDENTITY FORM



► THIS FORM IS MANDATORY

/// PART ONE

CORE INFORMATION >>>

NAME: Mei SECURITY CLEARANCE: Infrared HOME SECTOR: PXR CLONE#: 1
GENDER: Female PERSONALITY: Controlled, thoughtful, sociopathic

/// PART TWO

DEVELOPMENT >>>

TREASON STARS: XP POINTS:

STATS >>>

VIOLENCE: +1 CHUTZPAH: +1 BRAINS: +2 MECHANICS: +1

/// PART THREE

SKILLS >>>

ATHLETICS	<u>+4</u>	SCIENCE	<u>-3</u>	BLUFF	<u>-2</u>	OPERATE	<input type="text"/>
GUNS	<u>+2</u>	PSYCHOLOGY	<u>+3</u>	CHARM	<u>+5</u>	ENGINEER	<input type="text"/>
MELEE	<u>-1</u>	BUREAUCRACY	<u>+1</u>	INTIMIDATE	<u>-5</u>	PROGRAM	<u>+2</u>
THROW	<input type="text"/>	ALPHA COMPLEX	<input type="text"/>	STEALTH	<u>+2</u>	DEMOLITIONS	<u>-4</u>

/// PART FOUR

WELLBEING >>>

MOXIE >>>

○○○○○○○○

WOUNDS >>>

HURT ☐ INJURED ☐ MAIMED ☐ DEAD ☐

MEMORY >>>

ZB

/// PART FIVE

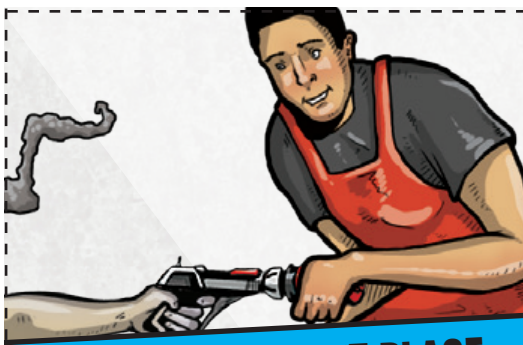
EQUIPMENT >>>

HOW TO USE

1. Print.
2. Cut along dotted lines.
3. Fold cut pieces in half.
4. Apply glue to unprinted side.
5. Press together firmly.

CONTENTS

Action Cards	2-18
Equipment Cards	19-26
Mutant Cards	27-32
Secret Society Cards	33-37
Bonus Duty Cards	38-39
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A GUN IN THE RIGHT PLACE

"THEY SHOULDN'T JUST LEAVE THESE THINGS LYING AROUND"

ACTION ORDER: 5



You spot a ranged weapon useful to the action. Describe it; GM has veto over your description. The weapon adds +1 dice so long as it's useful and intact. If the GM is particularly pleased by your description, it adds +2 dice this round and +1 dice thereafter.



ADAPTIVE RESOURCES

"IN THE RIGHT HANDS ANYTHING CAN BE A WEAPON. EVEN THIS CAKE."

ACTION ORDER: 4



You improvise a melee weapon out of something mundane. Describe what you find; GM has veto over your description. The weapon adds +1 dice so long as it's useful and intact. If the GM is particularly pleased by your description, it adds +2 dice this round and +1 dice thereafter.



AN UNEXPECTED BOON

"THAT WAS LUCKY! AND UNEXPECTEDLY SANGUINOUS TOO."

ACTION ORDER: 0



Play after a target has rolled but before the GM describes the outcome. Add 1 to the target's score. Describe something that helps them out. GM has veto over your description.





CALLED SHOT TO THE GROIN

'SMALL TARGET, BIG EFFECT.'

ACTION ORDER: 3



The attack strikes your target in a very painful area but the effects aren't permanent. Roll a die; if the target is an NPC, they're out of action for that many rounds. If they're a PC, they're out of action for half that many rounds (rounding up).



COLLATERAL DAMAGE

'DO YOU RECKON WE NEEDED THIS STEERING WHEEL TO BE ATTACHED?'

ACTION ORDER: 0



An object is damaged as a side-effect of the action. Try to persuade your GM what was damaged and see if they listen to you. Good luck.



COLOSSAL SNAFU

'HONESTLY, I'M KIND OF IMPRESSED HOW BADLY THIS TURNED OUT.'

ACTION ORDER: 0



EVERYTHING HAS GONE WRONG!

GM, pull out the thumbscrews.

ACTION

WARNING! WARNING! WARNING!

CLEARANCE LEVEL: ULTRAVIOLET

FUN IS MANDATORY!

ACTION

WARNING! WARNING! WARNING!

CLEARANCE LEVEL: ULTRAVIOLET

FUN IS MANDATORY!

ACTION

WARNING! WARNING! WARNING!

CLEARANCE LEVEL: ULTRAVIOLET

FUN IS MANDATORY!



COMBINED ASSAULT

"COME ON, WITH ME! NO—I MEAN, IN FRONT OF ME!"

ACTION ORDER: 5

Pick another Troubleshooter. They can attack the same target as you immediately (and it doesn't count as taking their turn) at +1 or they can attack YOU immediately at +1. Their choice.

ACTION

WARNING! WARNING! WARNING!

CLEARANCE LEVEL: ULTRAVIOLET

FUN IS MANDATORY!



CRITICAL FAILURE

"SNATCHING DEFEAT FROM THE CLAWS OF VICTORY"

ACTION ORDER: 0



SOMETHING GOES VERY WRONG!

GM, you determine how.

ACTION

WARNING! WARNING! WARNING!

CLEARANCE LEVEL: ULTRAVIOLET

FUN IS MANDATORY!



CRITICAL SUCCESS

"BETTER LUCKY THAN GOOD"

ACTION ORDER: 0



SOMETHING GOES WAY BETTER THAN EXPECTED!

GM, time to shine.

ACTION

WARNING! WARNING! WARNING!

CLEARANCE LEVEL: ULTRAVIOLET

FUN IS MANDATORY!



DROP IT

"WHY DO THEY MAKE THESE HANDLES SO SLIPPERY?"

ACTION ORDER: 0



Play after a target has rolled but before the GM describes the outcome. The target fumbles and drops one piece of equipment they were holding in their hands. Try to persuade your GM what you want it to be and see if they listen to you.



EASY COME, EASY GO

THAT THING YOU TOLD US WOULD SAVE US? NOT SO MUCH.

ACTION ORDER: 3



Play on any face-up card on the table. That card is placed at the bottom of its respective deck; whatever its in-game effects were, they no longer apply. Describe what happened to cause this turn of events.



EVERYTHING LOOKS LIKE A NAIL

HAND ME A HAMMER, YES. ANOTHER HAMMER! THE COMPUTER GAVE US TWO HANDS FOR A REASON, DIDN'T IT?

ACTION ORDER: 4



You spot a tool that's useful to the action. Describe it; GM has veto over your description. The tool adds +1 dice so long as it's useful and intact. If the GM is particularly pleased by your description, it adds +2 dice this round and +1 dice thereafter.

ACTION

WARNING! WARNING! WARNING!

FEARANCE LEVEL: ULTRAVIOLET

FUN IS MANDATORY!

ACTION

WARNING! WARNING! WARNING!

FEARANCE LEVEL: ULTRAVIOLET

FUN IS MANDATORY!

ACTION

WARNING! WARNING! WARNING!

FEARANCE LEVEL: ULTRAVIOLET

FUN IS MANDATORY!



FEINT

"YOU GO LEFT, I GO RIGHT AND WE LEAVE HIM HOLDING THE BAG.
WAIT, NO: WE KILL HIM. SORRY, GOT MIXED UP THERE."

ACTION ORDER: 2



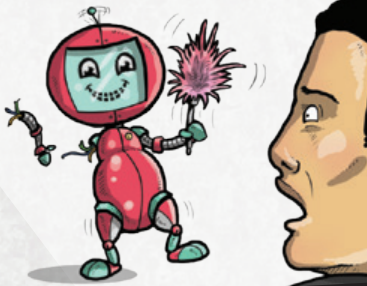
You spot a situation that you can exploit to confuse an enemy. Describe what it is, then roll Chutzpah + Bluff to take advantage. If you succeed, describe the actions of that enemy. The GM has veto over your description, so don't go crazy.

ACTION

WARNING! WARNING! WARNING!

CLARANCE LEVEL: ULTRAVIOLET

FUN IS MANDATORY!



FLESH WOUND

"T'IS BUT A SCRATCH"

ACTION ORDER: 0



Play on a target just as you or another PC is about to roll to attack them. If the roll is successful then the wound causes the target to lose a limb.

ACTION

WARNING! WARNING! WARNING!

CLARANCE LEVEL: ULTRAVIOLET

FUN IS MANDATORY!



FOUR'S A CROWD

"LISTEN UP, YOU INFRARED SCREWHEADS! I'M PROMOTING YOU ALL TO ABLATIVE STATUS!"

ACTION ORDER: 1



Describe a group of NPCs who are useful to the action OR detrimental to the action, your choice; GM has veto over your description and controls the NPCs after this round ends.

ACTION

WARNING! WARNING! WARNING!

CLARANCE LEVEL: ULTRAVIOLET

FUN IS MANDATORY!



FUNCTION OVER FORM

"TURN THE VOLUME UP - I LOVE THIS SHOW! AND, UH, IT'LL ACT AS A DISTRACTION, TOTALLY."

ACTION ORDER: 1



Invent a decorative terrain feature (a screen, banner, statue and so on) that's useful to the action; GM has veto over your creation. The feature adds +1 dice so long as the target uses it. If the GM is particularly pleased by your description, it adds +2 dice this round and +1 dice thereafter.

ACTION

WARNING! WARNING! WARNING!

FEARANCE LEVEL: ULTRAVIOLET

FUN IS MANDATORY!



GREAT VICTORY

"PEOPLE ARE GOING TO THINK WE CHEATED."

ACTION ORDER: 0



Everything goes right, above and beyond even the greatest expectations, for a few seconds at least. GM describes how.

ACTION

WARNING! WARNING! WARNING!

FEARANCE LEVEL: ULTRAVIOLET

FUN IS MANDATORY!



I'M GOING FIRST

"THERE ARE TWO KINDS OF CLONES: THE QUICK AND THE DEAD, AND I GUESS MAYBE QUICK DEAD CLONES IF THERE'S AN ACCIDENT AT THE TRANSBOT STATION BUT I DIGRESS: I'M GOING TO SHOOT YOU."

ACTION ORDER: 0



You act immediately, interrupting the target's action. If they survive then they can resolve their action after you're finished.

ACTION

WARNING! WARNING! WARNING!

FEARANCE LEVEL: ULTRAVIOLET

FUN IS MANDATORY!



I'M THINKING

'MORE HASTE, LESS SPEED!'

ACTION ORDER: 2

Draw three Action Cards. Choose one. Pass another to a player of your choice. Place the third on the bottom of the deck.



I'VE GOT A PLAN: IMPROVISE!

'OF COURSE YOU HAVE NO IDEA WHAT I'M DOING. I HAVE NO IDEA WHAT I'M DOING.'

ACTION ORDER: 6

Declare your action but before you roll, draw a card from the action card deck and add its effects to what you're doing.



IMPROVISED DEFENCES

'IT'S NOT A BUCKET, IT'S A HELMET. BUCKETS HAVE FEWER HOLES.'

ACTION ORDER: 3

You find a piece of armour or clothing that's helpful to your current situation. Describe what you find; GM has veto over your description. The item adds +1 dice so long as it's useful and intact. If the GM is particularly pleased by your description, it adds +2 dice this round and +1 dice thereafter.

ACTION

WARNING! WARNING! WARNING!

CLEARANCE LEVEL: ULTRAVIOLET

FUN IS MANDATORY!

ACTION

WARNING! WARNING! WARNING!

CLEARANCE LEVEL: ULTRAVIOLET

FUN IS MANDATORY!

ACTION

WARNING! WARNING! WARNING!

CLEARANCE LEVEL: ULTRAVIOLET

FUN IS MANDATORY!



JAM

"THESE OLD MODELS WILL BREAK AT THE DROP OF A HAT. DID YOU DROP A HAT ON IT?"

ACTION ORDER: 0



The target's weapon jams. OR: The scene somehow now involves jam but the target's weapon is perfectly functional. Your choice.

ACTION

WARNING! WARNING! WARNING!

CLEARANCE LEVEL: ULTRAVIOLET

FUN IS MANDATORY!



KA-BOOM!

"WHY DO WE KEEP ALL THESE RED BARRELS AROUND?"

ACTION ORDER: 3



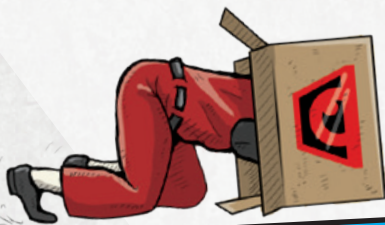
Instead of hitting its target, a ranged attack (or another appropriate action if you think you can get away with it) hits something nearby that blows up with a 3-metre blast radius. Describe what it is. GM has veto over your description.

ACTION

WARNING! WARNING! WARNING!

CLEARANCE LEVEL: ULTRAVIOLET

FUN IS MANDATORY!



KEEP YOUR HEAD DOWN

"CALM BLUE RESERVOIR TANK, CALM BLUE RESERV- SORRY, CALM RED RESERVOIR TANK, CALM RED RESERVOIR TANK..."

ACTION ORDER: 6

You find a hiding spot; describe it. You can Dodge any attacks until the start of the next round but you cannot do anything else till then.

ACTION

WARNING! WARNING! WARNING!

CLEARANCE LEVEL: ULTRAVIOLET

FUN IS MANDATORY!



LUCKY MANUAL

"GOOD THING MY GRENADE STOPPED THAT BULLET! WHY ARE YOU GUYS RUNNING?"

ACTION ORDER: 0



Play after an attack that causes damage; it now causes no damage and instead destroys a piece of equipment carried by the target. The GM picks which.

ACTION

WARNING! WARNING! WARNING!

CLEARANCE LEVEL: ULTRAVIOLET

FUN IS MANDATORY!



MAN, AM I PLEASED TO SEE YOU

"HEY, BUDDY, I NEED A HAND! OR A LEG. ANY LIMBS YOU HAVE SPARE, REALLY."

ACTION ORDER: 3



Describe a male-identifying NPC who's useful to the action OR detrimental to the action, your choice; GM has veto over your description and controls the NPC after the end of the round. The NPC gives +1/-1 dice so long as they're useful/impeding. If the GM is particularly pleased by your description, they give +2/-2 dice this round and +1/-1 dice thereafter.

ACTION

WARNING! WARNING! WARNING!

CLEARANCE LEVEL: ULTRAVIOLET

FUN IS MANDATORY!



MISS IDENTIFIED

"WHAT'S A NICE GIRL LIKE YOU DOING POINTING A GRENADE AT ME LIKE THAT?"

ACTION ORDER: 4



Describe a female-identifying NPC who's useful to the action OR detrimental to the action, your choice. GM has veto over your description and controls the NPC after the end of the round. The NPC gives +1/-1 dice so long as they're useful/impeding. If the GM is particularly pleased by your description, they give +2/-2 dice this round and +1/-1 dice thereafter.

ACTION

WARNING! WARNING! WARNING!

CLEARANCE LEVEL: ULTRAVIOLET

FUN IS MANDATORY!



MISTAKEN IDENTITY

"I DIDN'T SHOOT ANYONE! I'M NOT EVEN HERE!"

ACTION ORDER: 0



As far as everyone (including the Computer) is concerned, the target didn't perform that action; someone else did. Try to persuade your GM who you want it to be and see if they listen to you.

ACTION

WARNING! WARNING! WARNING!

FEARANCE LEVEL: ULTRAVIOLET

FUN IS MANDATORY!



MY LUCKY VENT

"I NEVER FIGURED OUT WHY THEY MADE AIR VENTS BIG ENOUGH FOR CLONES. THEY JUST HAVE TO BE BIG ENOUGH FOR AIR, RIGHT?"

ACTION ORDER: 3



Describe a convenient terrain feature (a crane, vent, steam pipe and so on) that's useful to the action. GM has veto over your description. The feature adds +1 dice so long as the target uses it. If the GM is particularly pleased by your description, it adds +2 dice this round and +1 dice thereafter.

ACTION

WARNING! WARNING! WARNING!

FEARANCE LEVEL: ULTRAVIOLET

FUN IS MANDATORY!



NOT SO HOT

YOU GAVE IT YOUR BEST SHOT. NOW I'M GIVING IT BACK.

ACTION ORDER: 0



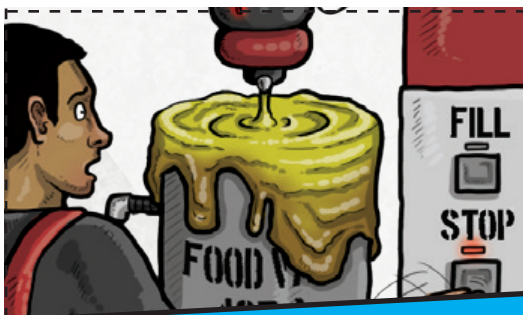
Play after a target has rolled but before the GM describes the outcome. Delete 1 success roll from the target's total. Describe something unexpected that hindered them. GM has veto over your description.

ACTION

WARNING! WARNING! WARNING!

FEARANCE LEVEL: ULTRAVIOLET

FUN IS MANDATORY!



OPPOSITE DAY

WE CALL IT "POLARITY HILARITY."

ACTION ORDER: 4



It's not that everything goes wrong with the action, more that the exact opposite of what the target wanted to happen happens instead. GM, get creative.



PARTY TRICK

WHO KNEW THAT BUREAUCRATS COULD BE SO DEADLY WITH A PAPERCLIP?

ACTION ORDER: 0



You realise that this dangerous situation calls for an unusual application of your skills. Make an attack but pick a non-standard Stat and Skill combination then persuade the GM why they're applicable in this particular situation (GM, be lenient). If they buy it, you get +2 successes. If they don't, -1 success.



RISKY TRICK

LOOKS LIKE THIS JUST GOT DANGEROUS. DANGEROUSLY EFFECTIVE! THOUGH MOSTLY JUST DANGEROUS.

ACTION ORDER: 4



Describe how the action becomes dangerous. You get +2 dice to any action but for every 1 rolled on a non-Computer dice, take 1 severity of wound. So on 1, you're Hurt. On 2, you're Injured and so on.

ACTION

WARNING! WARNING! WARNING!

CLEARANCE LEVEL: ULTRAVIOLET

FUN IS MANDATORY!

ACTION

WARNING! WARNING! WARNING!

CLEARANCE LEVEL: ULTRAVIOLET

FUN IS MANDATORY!

ACTION

WARNING! WARNING! WARNING!

CLEARANCE LEVEL: ULTRAVIOLET

FUN IS MANDATORY!



RISKY TRICK

I'LL RISK IT FOR A BISCUIT. MAYBE TWO BISCUITS.

ACTION ORDER: 2



Describe how the action becomes dangerous. +2 dice to any action but for every 1 rolled on a non-Computer dice, take 1 severity of wound. So on 1, you're Hurt. On 2, you're Injured, and so on.

ACTION

WARNING! WARNING! WARNING!

FEARANCE LEVEL: ULTRAVIOLET

FUN IS MANDATORY!



SAFETY FIRST

WHO KNEW THAT TRAFFIC CONES WERE SO... IMPALEY?

ACTION ORDER: 3



You notice a piece of safety equipment that's useful to the action; GM has veto over your description. The item adds +1 dice so long as it's useful and intact. If the GM is particularly pleased by your description, it adds +2 dice this round and +1 dice thereafter.

ACTION

WARNING! WARNING! WARNING!

FEARANCE LEVEL: ULTRAVIOLET

FUN IS MANDATORY!



SHOULD HAVE KILLED YOU

THAT WAS TOO CLOSE, MAN! I'M FREAKIN' OUT, MAN!

ACTION ORDER: 0



Play on an attack that causes damage. Now it causes no damage and instead the attacker loses a point of Moxie because they were convinced they'd hit and now they didn't and they're a bit freaked out.

ACTION

WARNING! WARNING! WARNING!

FEARANCE LEVEL: ULTRAVIOLET

FUN IS MANDATORY!



SLIGHTLY WORSE THAN EXPECTED

THERE'S ALWAYS SOMETHING, ISN'T THERE?

ACTION ORDER: 0



Play after someone has rolled but before the GM describes the outcome. Subtract 1 success from the roll. Describe something that hindered them. GM has veto over your description.

ACTION

WARNING! WARNING! WARNING!

CLEARANCE LEVEL: ULTRAVIOLET

FUN IS MANDATORY!



SNAP DECISION

THINKING'S FOR CHUMPS.

ACTION ORDER: FIRST

Play this card at the start of the round to go first but deduct one dice from any roll you make this round. If another player also plays 'Snap Decision' they cancel each other out and neither PC gets an action this round.

ACTION

WARNING! WARNING! WARNING!

CLEARANCE LEVEL: ULTRAVIOLET

FUN IS MANDATORY!



SNAP DECISION

THINKING'S FOR CHUMPS.

ACTION ORDER: FIRST

Play this card at the start of the round to go first but deduct one dice from any roll you make this round. If another player also plays 'Snap Decision' they cancel each other out and neither PC gets an action this round.

ACTION

WARNING! WARNING! WARNING!

CLEARANCE LEVEL: ULTRAVIOLET

FUN IS MANDATORY!



SNEAK ATTACK

QUICK, WHILE HE'S LAUGHING TOO HARD TO NOTICE US.

ACTION ORDER: 3

You spot an enemy who is unaware of your presence. Make an attack at +2 to your NODE but swap Violence for Chutzpah, Stealth for Melee or both.

ACTION

WARNING! WARNING! WARNING!

FEARANCE LEVEL: ULTRAVIOLET

FUN IS MANDATORY!



SUDDEN DEATH

YOU'D BE SURPRISED HOW EASILY A HUMAN BEING'S HEAD WILL COME OFF.

ACTION ORDER: 0

If the action you're playing this card on causes damage to a living thing or a bot, it automatically kills whatever got hit. Describe the death. GM has veto over your description.



ACTION

WARNING! WARNING! WARNING!

FEARANCE LEVEL: ULTRAVIOLET

FUN IS MANDATORY!



SUDDENLY, KNIVES!

HEY, TURNS OUT I HAD A KNIFE IN MY BACK ALL ALONG! WONDER HOW THAT GOT THERE?

ACTION ORDER: 6

You spot a hand-to-hand weapon useful to the action. Describe it; GM has veto over your description. The weapon adds +1 dice so long as it's useful and intact. If the GM is particularly pleased by your description, it adds +2 dice this round and +1 dice thereafter.



ACTION

WARNING! WARNING! WARNING!

FEARANCE LEVEL: ULTRAVIOLET

FUN IS MANDATORY!



SURPRISE BOT

BOTS – IS THERE ANYTHING THEY CAN'T DO? EXCEPT – Y'KNOW – WHAT WE TELL 'EM TO DO?

ACTION ORDER: 4



Describe a bot or AI who's useful to the action OR detrimental to the action, your choice. GM has veto over your description. The NPC gives +1/-1 dice so long as they're useful/impeding. If the GM is particularly pleased by your description, they give +2/-2 dice this round and +1/-1 dice thereafter.

ACTION

WARNING! WARNING! WARNING!

CLEARANCE LEVEL: ULTRAVIOLET

FUN IS MANDATORY!



TACTICAL ASSESSMENT

I'LL COVER YOU, YOU'RE GOING IN!

ACTION ORDER: 2

You realise something of vital importance. Say what it is, then make an appropriate Brains + a relevant skill check. If you succeed, everyone you choose (including yourself) is at +1 dice next turn so long as they heed your advice. If you fail, everyone (including yourself) is at -1 dice.

ACTION

WARNING! WARNING! WARNING!

CLEARANCE LEVEL: ULTRAVIOLET

FUN IS MANDATORY!



TAKE YOUR TIME

THE ONLY SHOT THAT MATTERS IS THE ONE THAT HITS.

ACTION ORDER: 10

Describe what you're planning to do – you'll take the rest of the round to prepare your action. It happens last in the round but you get +2 dice to roll. If both Take Your Time cards are played in the same round, they resolve simultaneously.

ACTION

WARNING! WARNING! WARNING!

CLEARANCE LEVEL: ULTRAVIOLET

FUN IS MANDATORY!



TAKE YOUR TIME

THE ONLY SHOT THAT MATTERS IS THE ONE THAT HITS.

ACTION ORDER: 10

Describe what you're planning to do – you'll take the rest of the round to prepare your action. It happens last in the round but you get +2 dice to roll. If both Take Your Time cards are played in the same round, they resolve simultaneously.



ACTION

WARNING! WARNING! WARNING!

CLEARANCE LEVEL: ULTRAVIOLET

FUN IS MANDATORY!



TAXI!

GET IN – THERE'S NO TIME TO EXPLAIN!

ACTION ORDER: 2



A vehicle appears that's useful to the action. Describe it; GM has veto over your description. The vehicle adds +1 dice to rolls so long as it's useful and intact. If the GM is particularly pleased by your description, it adds +2 dice this round and +1 dice thereafter.



ACTION

WARNING! WARNING! WARNING!

CLEARANCE LEVEL: ULTRAVIOLET

FUN IS MANDATORY!



UP HIGH

I'D LIKE TO FORMALLY APOLOGISE TO EVERYONE I JUST VOMITED ON.

ACTION ORDER: 2



Describe an elevated terrain feature (a lift, gantry, some stairs and so on) that's useful to the action. GM has veto over your description. The feature adds +1 dice so long as the target uses it. If the GM is particularly pleased by your description, it adds +2 dice this round and +1 dice thereafter.



ACTION

WARNING! WARNING! WARNING!

CLEARANCE LEVEL: ULTRAVIOLET

FUN IS MANDATORY!



THE WETTER THE BETTER

FUN FACT: SOME MUTANTS HAVE FLAMMABLE BLOOD

ACTION ORDER: 6



Describe a liquid that's useful to the action OR detrimental to the action, your choice. GM has veto over your description. The liquid gives +1/-1 dice if appropriate. If the GM is particularly pleased by your description, it gives +2/-2 dice this round and +1/-1 dice thereafter.

ACTION

WARNING! WARNING! WARNING!

CLEARANCE LEVEL: ULTRAVIOLET

FUN IS MANDATORY!



WRONG TARGET

OH NO, WASN'T HE YOUR FRIEND? IT'S A SHAME HOW MANY TIMES YOU SHOT HIM.

ACTION ORDER: 0



The attack hits a different target from the one intended. Try to persuade your GM who you want it to be and see if they listen to you.

ACTION

WARNING! WARNING! WARNING!

CLEARANCE LEVEL: ULTRAVIOLET

FUN IS MANDATORY!

ACTION

WARNING! WARNING! WARNING!

CLEARANCE LEVEL: ULTRAVIOLET

FUN IS MANDATORY!

ACTION ORDER:



GRENADE X3

ACTION ORDER
VIOLENCE + 3

SMALL
LEVEL 2

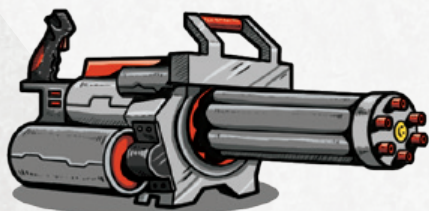
Blows up in a pretty wide radius five seconds after you press the arming button. You could probably modify it to explode on a timer, or a trigger, but you should be very careful with that sort of thing.

EQUIPMENT

WARNING! WARNING! WARNING!

CLEARANCE LEVEL: ULTRAVIOLET

FUN IS MANDATORY!



THE MINIGUN

ACTION ORDER
VIOLENCE + 1

LARGE
LEVEL 3

That's a misleading name; this thing is bloody huge. Fires D6 times before it runs out of ammo; get the GM to roll. You can't tell how many shots you've got left unless you take it apart.

EQUIPMENT

WARNING! WARNING! WARNING!

CLEARANCE LEVEL: ULTRAVIOLET

FUN IS MANDATORY!



SNIPER RIFLE

ACTION ORDER
VIOLENCE + 4

MEDIUM
LEVEL 2

If you try to use it when you've not had time to prepare and calibrate the thing, those bonus dice become negative dice.

EQUIPMENT

WARNING! WARNING! WARNING!

CLEARANCE LEVEL: ULTRAVIOLET

FUN IS MANDATORY!



MULTI-ADAPTOR

ACTION ORDER
MECHANICS +0

SMALL
LEVEL 1

If there's a lot of things that need to be recharged and only one power outlet, you're the most popular Troubleshooter in the team.

EQUIPMENT

FUN IS MANDATORY!



GAUSS ROCKET LAUNCHER

ACTION ORDER
VIOLENCE +0

LARGE
LEVEL 3

Either this weapon uses electromagnets to launch explosive projectiles up to 300 metres (3 charges) or it fires gauss rockets. Information on gauss rockets is classified at your security level.

EQUIPMENT

FUN IS MANDATORY!



GRAPPLE GUN

ACTION ORDER
MECHANICS + 2

MEDIUM
LEVEL 2

Uses compressed gas to shoot a grapnel attached to a steel cable; very useful for climbing, swinging or rapidly descending. Could be used as a Level 1 weapon, with the additional benefit (or problem) that on a successful hit you are now attached to your target.

EQUIPMENT

FUN IS MANDATORY!



BODY ARMOUR

ACTION ORDER
ATHLETICS -2

LARGE
LEVEL 2

Increases the wearer's defence rating by 2. Makes hydraulic noises. Has a habit of coming off, breaking or running out of power at inopportune moments (or critical failures).



MEDKIT X3

ACTION ORDER
BRAINS + 2

SMALL
LEVEL 1

Whack one on a wound and watch it insta-heal! Isn't nanotechnology and morphine great? Some medkits will even regrow a missing limb. You weren't missing a limb? Now you have a spare! Make a Brains + Science check to use properly.



ELECTRO KNUCKLES

ACTION ORDER
VIOLENCE + 3

SMALL
LEVEL 1

Add a die when you punch someone or intimidate them and another dice if you want to electrocute them at the same time (4 charges).

EQUIPMENT

FUN IS MANDATORY!

EQUIPMENT

FUN IS MANDATORY!

EQUIPMENT

FUN IS MANDATORY!



SEDATIVES X3

ACTION ORDER
BRAINS + 1

SMALL
LEVEL 1

Used to calm down unstable clones, whether they're innocent bystanders, dangerous terrorists or misguided members of the Troubleshooter team. Make a Brains + Science check to inflict calm.



DATA BOMB

ACTION ORDER
MECHANICS + 2

MEDIUM
LEVEL 3

Renders the immediate area free of all electronic activity for 1-3 minutes and makes it easier to mess with machines and computers. Usable only once. If your mission briefing did not mention DAIVs then you have been issued this item in error and not returning it immediately is treason.



TAXI-POD

ACTION ORDER
MECHANICS + 2

OVERSIZE
LEVEL 2

A small electric four-wheeled vehicle suitable for carrying up to four small Troubleshooters with no equipment or intimacy issues or one larger Troubleshooter with a lot of equipment. Range depends on load.

EQUIPMENT

FUN IS MANDATORY!

EQUIPMENT

FUN IS MANDATORY!

EQUIPMENT

FUN IS MANDATORY!



MEGAPHONE

ACTION ORDER
CHUTZPAH +3

MEDIUM
LEVEL 1

Make yourself heard in noisy situations and at long distances.

EQUIPMENT

WARNING! WARNING! WARNING!

CLEARANCE LEVEL: ULTRAVIOLET

FUN IS MANDATORY!



NEEDLER

ACTION ORDER
VIOLENCE +4

MEDIUM
LEVEL 1

Fires small hypodermic darts up to 15 metres. Standard darts contain a strong knockout drug (takes effect in 1-2 rounds) but other darts are available.

EQUIPMENT

WARNING! WARNING! WARNING!

CLEARANCE LEVEL: ULTRAVIOLET

FUN IS MANDATORY!



FRICTION ENHANCER

ACTION ORDER
BRAINS +4

LARGE
LEVEL 4

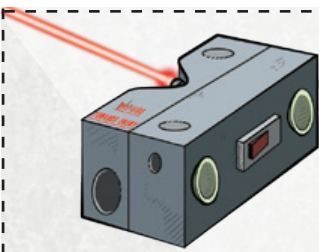
This experimental device increases or reduces friction by up to 500%. Requires a Science roll to operate correctly. Increasing friction causes solids to move less freely and machinery to seize up; reducing it makes everything slippery and difficult to hold, while machines run faster. Only works while trigger is pressed. Power pack weighs 65kg and discharges in 20 seconds; can be recharged (8 hours) or replaced. Range: a 30-degree beam, up to 15 metres.

EQUIPMENT

WARNING! WARNING! WARNING!

CLEARANCE LEVEL: ULTRAVIOLET

FUN IS MANDATORY!



LASER TRIPWIRE

ACTION ORDER
MECHANICS +1

MEDIUM
LEVEL 3

A brick-sized box that attaches to any flat surface. When armed it projects an invisible laser beam up to 10 metres that detects and slices through anyone passing through it like cheesewire. Has settings for security clearance and bots/no bots. Box will explode if disturbed. 'On/Off' switch is on the side that fixes to the wall, to stop traitors disarming it.

EQUIPMENT

FUN IS MANDATORY!



FOAM GRENADE X3

ACTION ORDER
VIOLENCE +2

SMALL
LEVEL 2

This grenade creates 30 cubic metres of grey sticky foam that solidifies in 2 combat rounds, immobilising anyone caught in it. Make a Violence + Melee roll to get free before it sets; no chance after that. Anyone completely covered will suffocate in 1-3 minutes. Foam does not burn, cannot be lasered and R&D is developing a solution that will dissolve it without dissolving clones trapped in it.

EQUIPMENT

FUN IS MANDATORY!



K@ COMPANION BOT

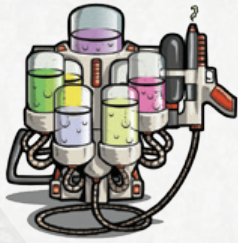
ACTION ORDER
MECHANICS +5

MEDIUM
LEVEL 3

A feline surveillance bot, K@ can climb walls, explore confined spaces, or lie on watch, all while streaming live audio/video to the Troubleshooter's Cerebral Coretech. Uses titanium teeth and claws to attack or sabotage. Has night-vision and a 12-hour battery. If its cats-whisker wifi antennae are damaged make a Mechanics + Operate roll or the bot enters 'feral' mode and must be recaptured. K@ bots see other K@s as hostile and are distracted by lasers.

EQUIPMENT

FUN IS MANDATORY!



HYGIENE-O-MATIC 9000

ACTION ORDER
MECHANICS +2

LARGE
LEVEL 3

Clean corridors! Clean your friends! Wash propaganda out of a traitor's mouth! Comes with five solutions for all your hygiene needs. To use, make a Mechanical + Science roll (Violence + Science in combat) to choose a setting. On a fail the GM chooses but that setting is then empty. Settings are: Combination Soap, Shampoo, and Mouth Wash; Industrial Solvent and Paint Stripper; Pure Bleach; No-Mess Sanitation Gel (flammable); and Quick-Dry Superglue for Fast Repairs.

EQUIPMENT

FUN IS MANDATORY!



U.B.T. HYPERSENSE DEVICE

ACTION ORDER
BRAINS +4

SMALL
LEVEL 2

The UBT Hypersense Device digitally enhances one of the Troubleshooter's senses by a factor of 12 by repurposing the bandwidth of the other senses and reducing their input. Make an Brains + Operate roll to use successfully. Synaesthesia and disorientation can result, as well as a spackle of grey itchings bitter with the eleven of hair.

EQUIPMENT

FUN IS MANDATORY!



CASEY-B'S BOMBABOOTS

ACTION ORDER
VIOLENCE +5

MEDIUM
LEVEL 3

The ultimate in personal manoeuvrability! Operated via a Cerebral Coretech plugin, the BombaBoots launch the wearer up to 7 meters vertically or 10 meters horizontally with pulsed blasts of superheated mercury vapour. Roll Violence + Demolitions to use; failure only rarely results in knees being blown off. Boots hold four charges, which leave unhygienic scorch marks or divots. Do not stand within two Metres of user.

EQUIPMENT

FUN IS MANDATORY!



FAKE MOUSTACHE

ACTION ORDER
CHUTZPAH +4

SMALL
LEVEL 1

Working undercover? Worried that terrorists know your face? Worry no more! Fake Moustache lets you reclaim your anonymity. No one's looking for a clone with a moustache! Place it under your nose, let the pneumatic pinchers expand within your nostrils and feel like a new clone. Fake Moustache identifies the wearer as John-R-DOE-1 (default setting) to all Cerebral Coretech users and bots. Only the Computer knows your secret.

EQUIPMENT

FUN IS MANDATORY!

ACTION ORDER

EQUIPMENT

FUN IS MANDATORY!

ACTION ORDER

EQUIPMENT

FUN IS MANDATORY!



TELEPATHY



Spend 1 Moxie to read one dominant thought or implant a simple suggestion in another clone's mind. It's difficult to read deeper memories, concoct elaborate lies or persuade them to do something they wouldn't normally but you can do it at a pinch.

MUTANT POWER

WARNING! WARNING! WARNING!

CLEARANCE LEVEL: ULTRAVIOLET

FUN IS MANDATORY!



ANOMALY



Spend 1 Moxie to make things happen. You can't control what those things are – the GM does – but they're generally beneficial to you. In the past, they've been: exploding heads, reversed gravity, time dilation, gigantism and memory holes. The harder you concentrate, the bigger the effect.

MUTANT POWER

WARNING! WARNING! WARNING!

CLEARANCE LEVEL: ULTRAVIOLET

FUN IS MANDATORY!



CORRODE



Spend 1 Moxie to cause any small item you're touching to rust, rot, corrode and break down in 30 seconds. It's difficult to damage large items or ones that are further away but you can do it at a stretch.

MUTANT POWER

WARNING! WARNING! WARNING!

CLEARANCE LEVEL: ULTRAVIOLET

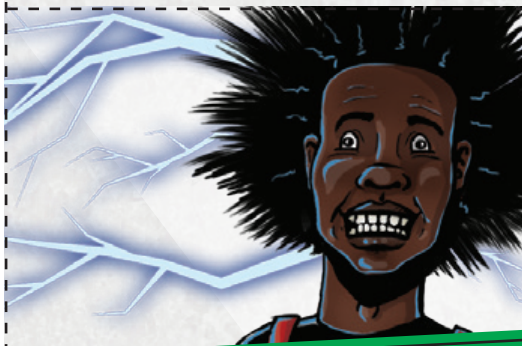
FUN IS MANDATORY!



CRYOKINESIS



Spend 1 Moxie to significantly lower the temperature somewhere within your line of sight and create small patches of ice, slow down people or machines and so on. It's difficult to encase something in ice or lower the temperature enough to do serious harm to people but you can do it at a pinch.



ELECTROSHOCK



Spend 1 Moxie to deliver a crackling burst of electricity from your palm that harms humans and stuns bots. It's difficult to do it at anything longer than hand-to-hand range but you can do it at a stretch.



INVISIBILITY



Spend 1 Moxie to turn yourself and your equipment invisible. You can't turn others invisible. It's difficult to stay unseen for more than a few seconds or if you stand in bright light but you can do it if you try harder.





LEVITATION



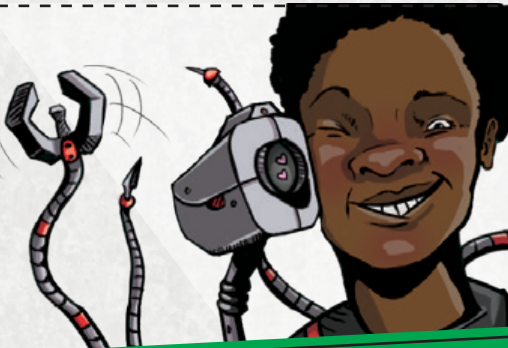
Spend 1 Moxie to hover up to a metre off the ground and move at a walking pace. It's difficult to go higher, or faster, but you can do it with some effort. Levitation can slow or stop falls.

MUTANT POWER

WARNING! WARNING! WARNING!

CLEARANCE LEVEL: ULTRAVIOLET

FUN IS MANDATORY!



MACHINE EMPATHY



Spend 1 Moxie to cause any bot or AI (but not the Computer) to like and trust you for the remainder of the scene. It's difficult to persuade a group of bots, or to do it for longer than a scene, but you can do it if you try harder.

MUTANT POWER

WARNING! WARNING! WARNING!

CLEARANCE LEVEL: ULTRAVIOLET

FUN IS MANDATORY!



MENTAL BLAST



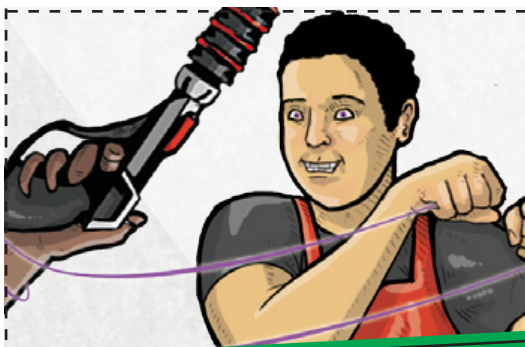
Spend 1 Moxie to let loose a mental blast on any clones within short range. The blast can cause headaches and nosebleeds, maybe brief black-outs, up to – if you push it hard – permanent injury or death.

MUTANT POWER

WARNING! WARNING! WARNING!

CLEARANCE LEVEL: ULTRAVIOLET

FUN IS MANDATORY!



PUPPETEER



Spend 1 Moxie to telepathically control a single limb from another clone within your line of sight. It's difficult to possess more than one limb (say, both legs, if you want them to walk somewhere) or to have them perform precise tasks but you can do it at a stretch.

MUTANT POWER

WARNING! WARNING! WARNING!

FUN IS MANDATORY!



PYROKINESIS



Spend 1 Moxie to start a fire anywhere close to you. It's difficult to start big fires, do it at a long distance or set a moving target on fire, but you can do it at a pinch.

MUTANT POWER

WARNING! WARNING! WARNING!

FUN IS MANDATORY!



STRENGTH



Spend 1 Moxie to activate your super-strength and lift heavy objects, run faster, jump further, hit harder and so on. It's difficult to lift really heavy objects or jump really far but if you push yourself you can do it.

MUTANT POWER

WARNING! WARNING! WARNING!

FUN IS MANDATORY!



TELEKINESIS



Spend 1 Moxie to push or pull small objects with the power of your mind. It's difficult to move heavy objects (like people) or make precise movements (like pulling the trigger on a laser pistol) but you can do it at a stretch.

MUTANT POWER

WARNING! WARNING! WARNING!

FUN IS MANDATORY!

MUTANT POWER

WARNING! WARNING! WARNING!

FUN IS MANDATORY!

MUTANT POWER

WARNING! WARNING! WARNING!

FUN IS MANDATORY!



TELEPORT



Spend 1 Moxie to teleport yourself a short distance. It's difficult to teleport long distances or take others with you but you can do it at a stretch. (You can't teleport something 'away' – you need to go with it.)

MUTANT POWER

WARNING! WARNING! WARNING!

FUN IS MANDATORY!

MUTANT POWER

WARNING! WARNING! WARNING!

FUN IS MANDATORY!



ADHESIVE



Spend 1 Moxie to secrete an adhesive substance from your skin that you can use to attach things to other things (or yourself to other things). The more you concentrate, the more substance you exude and the stronger the bond it can form.

MUTANT POWER

WARNING! WARNING! WARNING!

FUN IS MANDATORY!



CHARM



Spend 1 Moxie to exude a pheromone that causes one clone to like and trust you for the remainder of the scene. It's difficult to form bonds that last longer or to persuade whole groups of people to trust you but you can do it at a stretch.



YOU ARE PART OF THE
ANTI-MUTANT GROUP
KEYWORDS: ORDER, PRO-HUMAN

YOUR BELIEFS:

All Alpha Complex's troubles are down to mutants. They're everywhere, they're plotting and they must be eliminated.



YOUR GOALS:

To destroy all mutants. The only good mutants are an oxymoron. Look for evidence of a mutant conspiracy and destroy it. Make people understand how dangerous mutants are. Recruit new members.

YOU ARE PART OF THE
COMMUNISTS
KEYWORDS: ISOLATE, PRO-HUMAN

YOUR BELIEFS:

A fair and just system of government for all and for the end of the Computer's reign of terror.



YOUR GOALS:

Liberate the means of production and lift the yoke of toil from the shoulders of ordinary citizens. Destroy the forces that stand in your way. Give out pamphlets. Recruit new members.

YOU ARE PART OF THE
DEATH LEOPARD
KEYWORDS: DISORDER, EXPLORE

YOUR BELIEFS:

Why worry when we can rock? Party On. Rebel. Smash the system if you're sober enough to find it.



YOUR GOALS:

To rock and roll all nightcycle, and party every daycycle! Loud music, explosions, leather and booze are your secret passions. Indulge your urges. Freak the squares. Recruit new members.

SECRET SOCIETY

WARNING! WARNING! WARNING!

FUN IS MANDATORY!

SECRET SOCIETY

WARNING! WARNING! WARNING!

FUN IS MANDATORY!

SECRET SOCIETY

WARNING! WARNING! WARNING!

FUN IS MANDATORY!

YOU ARE PART OF THE
**ALPHA COMPLEX LOCAL
HISTORY RESEARCH GROUP**
KEYWORDS: EXPLORE, PRO-HUMAN

YOUR BELIEFS:

History is interesting.
History tells us of
Outside, where
human destiny lies,
along with more
cool stuff from the
Time Before.



YOUR GOALS:

Discover and explore off-limits areas of Alpha Complex. Find and analyse items and artefacts from The Time Before. Recruit new members.

YOU ARE PART OF THE
**FIRST CHURCH OF CHRIST
COMPUTER PROGRAMMER**
KEYWORDS: PRO-TECH, ISOLATE

YOUR BELIEFS:

The Computer is God,
literally. Alpha Complex
and its holy trinity of
hardware, software
and wetware, is perfect
and must be protected
from anyone who would
change it.



YOUR GOALS:

Protect Alpha Complex. Spread the message of
peace, understanding and properly commented
code. Find and hurt members of heretic schisms of
FCCCP. Recruit new members.

YOU ARE PART OF THE
FRANKENSTEIN DESTROYERS
KEYWORDS: PRO-HUMAN, DISORDER

YOUR BELIEFS:

Humans are just as
capable as machines.
Humans should run
Alpha Complex.
Machines should be
servants to humans or
piles of smoking scrap,
and smoking scrap is
more fun.



YOUR GOALS:

Destroy all bots and usher in a human-only Alpha
Complex. Make sure that bots don't manage to get
their oily claws into this mission. Recruit new members.

SECRET SOCIETY

WARNING! WARNING! WARNING!

FUN IS MANDATORY!

SECRET SOCIETY

WARNING! WARNING! WARNING!

FUN IS MANDATORY!

SECRET SOCIETY

WARNING! WARNING! WARNING!

FUN IS MANDATORY!

YOU ARE PART OF
FREE ENTERPRISE
KEYWORDS: DIVERSIFY; PROGRESS

YOUR BELIEFS:

Capitalism is good.
Raw, naked,
bloody, hungry
capitalism is better.
Trust the Market,
the Market is your
friend.



YOUR GOALS:

Sniff out good deals and new business opportunities.
Get one over the other guy. Ensure your superiors' business interests are represented during the mission.
Recruit new members.

YOU ARE PART OF THE
ILLUMINATI
KEYWORDS: MUCH TOO SECRET TO TELL YOU

YOUR BELIEFS:

Power and control. The agenda doesn't matter as long as the Illuminati are controlling it.



YOUR GOALS:

Further the aims of the Illuminati. Get ahead at any cost. Infiltrate another secret society and subvert their agenda (ask the GM which one).
Recruit new members if they're suitably elite.

YOU ARE PART OF
INTSEC
KEYWORDS: ORDER, PRO-TECH

YOUR BELIEFS:

You work for the Computer as an undercover agent, rooting out subversion and corruption among Troubleshooters.



YOUR GOALS:

Root out terrorists and the causes of terrorists wherever they rear their ugly heads. Be ruthless. Don't get found out.

SECRET SOCIETY

WARNING! WARNING! WARNING!

FUN IS MANDATORY!

SECRET SOCIETY

WARNING! WARNING! WARNING!

FUN IS MANDATORY!

SECRET SOCIETY

WARNING! WARNING! WARNING!

FUN IS MANDATORY!

YOU ARE PART OF
INTSEC
KEYWORDS: ORDER, PRO-TECH

YOUR BELIEFS:

You work for the Computer as an undercover agent, rooting out subversion and corruption among Troubleshooters.



YOUR GOALS:

Root out terrorists and the causes of terrorists wherever they rear their ugly heads. Be ruthless. Don't get found out.

YOU ARE PART OF THE
MYSTICS
KEYWORDS: EXPLORE, DIVERSIFY

YOUR BELIEFS:

The Outside is Inside us all and if you want to get into it you've got to get out of it.



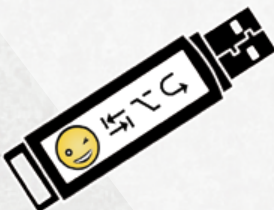
YOUR GOALS:

To ingest, create and distribute mind-bending chemicals. You've been chosen to spread the truth through Alpha Complex. Develop new markets. Recruit new members.

YOU ARE PART OF THE
PHREAKS
KEYWORDS: PRO-TECH

YOUR BELIEFS:

Technology is cool, fun and easier to understand than human beings. Used correctly, technology will save us all.



YOUR GOALS:

To wring the most out of technology and stop people using it incorrectly. Hack, experiment with and steal weird, expensive and rare technology. Recruit new members.

SECRET SOCIETY

WARNING! WARNING! WARNING!

FUN IS MANDATORY!

SECRET SOCIETY

WARNING! WARNING! WARNING!

FUN IS MANDATORY!

SECRET SOCIETY

WARNING! WARNING! WARNING!

FUN IS MANDATORY!

YOU ARE PART OF
PSION
KEYWORDS: PROGRESS

YOUR BELIEFS:

Mutants are the future. Homo Sapiens is as obsolete as the DX-503N laser-razor.



YOUR GOALS:

Further the pro-mutant agenda with propaganda, graffiti and cunning acts of subversion. (If you don't have a mutant power yourself, you'll just have to hope that your origin story comes soon.) Recruit new members, particularly other mutants.

SECRET SOCIETY

WARNING! WARNING! WARNING!

FUN IS MANDATORY!

YOU ARE PART OF
NO SECRET SOCIETY

Of course not. Any loyal citizen in a secret society would report themselves for termination, wouldn't they? Be on your guard: one of your fellow Troubleshooters may be a terrorist conspirator and where there's terrorist conspirators there's XP points on the hoof.

SECRET SOCIETY

WARNING! WARNING! WARNING!

FUN IS MANDATORY!

YOU ARE PART OF
NO SECRET SOCIETY

But you'd like to be. Maybe one of your fellow Troubleshooters might be a member of one? If you help them out, maybe they'll let you in.

SECRET SOCIETY

WARNING! WARNING! WARNING!

FUN IS MANDATORY!



ALPHA COMPLEX

YOU ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR:

- Ensuring that all happiness-related activities are carried out satisfactorily.
- Maintaining team morale at or above approved levels.
- Identifying and eliminating any lack of happiness and its underlying causes.
- Providing assistance, counselling and additional happiness for anyone failing to be happy.



ID NO: 441986 EXP: 215 CLEARANCE: RED

BONUS DUTY

WARNING! WARNING! WARNING!

FUN IS MANDATORY!

BONUS DUTY

WARNING! WARNING! WARNING!

FUN IS MANDATORY!

BONUS DUTY

WARNING! WARNING! WARNING!

FUN IS MANDATORY!



ALPHA COMPLEX

YOU ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR:

- Deciding and explaining tactics.
- Instructing and demonstrating best-practice in combat.
- Ensuring that all combats are carried out satisfactorily.
- Determining what went wrong.



ID NO: 221964 EXP: 215 CLEARANCE: RED

BONUS DUTY

WARNING! WARNING! WARNING!

FUN IS MANDATORY!



ALPHA COMPLEX

YOU ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR:

- Ensuring that loyalty is utilised and maintained at appropriate and approved levels.
- Detecting any lapses or breaches of loyalty.
- Reporting disloyalty to your superiors and/or the Computer.
- Identifying who was responsible.



ID NO: 521986 EXP: 215 CLEARANCE: RED

BONUS DUTY

WARNING! WARNING! WARNING!

FUN IS MANDATORY!



YOU ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR:

- Ensuring that the mission objectives are carried out appropriately.
- Giving instructions that are clear, easy to understand and not wrong.
- Seeing that all team members are performing their assigned duties correctly.
- Not being or going wrong.



ID NO: 2662012 EXP:215 CLEARANCE:RED



YOU ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR:

- Ensuring all equipment is used appropriately and at approved levels.
- Overseeing the maintenance and safekeeping of all equipment.
- Preventing wrong activities with the correct use of equipment and vice versa.
- Returning all mission-specific equipment to the issuing official.



ID NO: 191987 EXP:215 CLEARANCE:RED



YOU ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR:

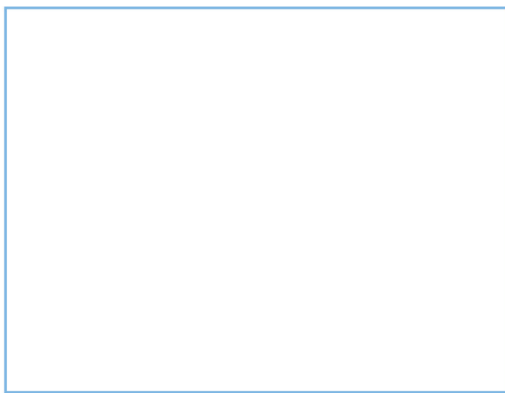
- Ensuring that all science and hygiene practices are carried out appropriately.
- Maintaining the cleanliness, health and science of your team-members and equipment.
- Identifying and eliminating the uses and causes of nonscience and unhygiene.
- Using science and hygiene to assist your team members in their duties.



ID NO: 1409255 EXP:215 CLEARANCE:RED







► THIS FORM IS MANDATORY

/// PART ONE

CORE INFORMATION >>>

NAME: SECURITY CLEARANCE: HOME SECTOR: CLONE#:
GENDER: PERSONALITY:

/// PART TWO

DEVELOPMENT >>>

TREASON STARS: XP POINTS:

STATS >>>

VIOLENCE: BRAINS: CHUTZPAH: MECHANICS:

/// PART THREE

SKILLS >>>

ATHLETICS	<input type="checkbox"/>	SCIENCE	<input type="checkbox"/>	BLUFF	<input type="checkbox"/>	OPERATE	<input type="checkbox"/>
GUNS	<input type="checkbox"/>	PSYCHOLOGY	<input type="checkbox"/>	CHARM	<input type="checkbox"/>	ENGINEER	<input type="checkbox"/>
MELEE	<input type="checkbox"/>	BUREAUCRACY	<input type="checkbox"/>	INTIMIDATE	<input type="checkbox"/>	PROGRAM	<input type="checkbox"/>
THROW	<input type="checkbox"/>	ALPHA COMPLEX	<input type="checkbox"/>	STEALTH	<input type="checkbox"/>	DEMOLITIONS	<input type="checkbox"/>

/// PART FOUR

WELLBEING >>>

MOXIE >>>

○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○

WOUNDS >>>

HURT ☐ INJURED ☐ MAIMED ☐ DEAD ☐

MEMORY >>>

ZB

/// PART FIVE

EQUIPMENT >>>

TRUST THE COMPUTER! THE COMPUTER IS YOUR FRIEND!

The Roleplaying classic
Loyally rebuilt from the ground up.

**A DARKLY
HUMOROUS FUTURE,
UPGRADED FOR
THE POST-PRIVACY
PRESENT.**



You are a Troubleshooter! Congratulations!

As a Troubleshooter, you are a member of Alpha Complex's most expendable elite force. Tasked with finding trouble and shooting it, you will be hunting mutants, terrorists, traitors, [CLASSIFIED], secret societies, renegade bots, and DAIVs, which are [REDACTED]. You'll save Alpha Complex from its greatest threat, unless you accidentally become Alpha Complex's greatest threat!

All-new mechanics include a simple yet brilliant character-generation system, a bluffing-based card-driven combat system, a special Computer Dice which means even the simplest interaction can become hilariously fatal, in-game XP Point rewards, and more advice to GMs than you can shake a stick at².

Everything is the same but everything is different³. And more perfect than ever⁴.

You look worried, citizen. Relax! This is the Best of All Possible Editions of Paranoia. You still have six clones and a very shiny laser pistol. The Computer is still your friend. What could possibly go wrong⁵?

1. This is only to be expected in the Best of All Possible Worlds.
2. Don't worry much. It's a minor technical problem and it can be fixed with laser field surgery.
3. If you don't understand how that's possible then your Computer needs to be adjusted. Please stand still while your brain is turned off and on again.
4. How else perfection can be improved? That statement is not available to your security clearance.
5. Guaranteed safe for all possible values of "wrong".

Within this box, you will find:

- The Players Handbook, containing everything a loyal Troubleshooter needs to thrive and survive in Alpha Complex.
- The Gamesmasters Handbook, which tells you what is really happening in Alpha Complex.
- The Missions Book, containing four complete adventures to thrill, fold, spindle, and mutilate any loyal Troubleshooter.
- 110 Playing Cards, allowing you to bushwhack your pals, deploy awesome weaponry and [REDACTED] powers, and show off pretty pictures.
- Six-sided dice, each carefully checked by skilled Infrared workers to ensure the elimination of any terrorist contamination.
- The Computer Dice. This is very special.
- Six Character Cards, to ensure that no details are private.
- Whitewash, the classic mini-adventure specially designed for Troubleshooters with very short attention spans.

MGP 50000

\$49.99

