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DARING TALES OF THE SPACE LANES

ROBOT RUMBLE

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PAUL 'WIGGY' WADE-WILLIAMS

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03

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BY PAUL "WIGGY" WADE-WILLIAMS

EDITING: SCOTT ALAN WOODARD

GRAPHIC DESIGN & TYPESETTING: ROBIN ELLIOTT

ART: EMPTY ROOM STUDIOS

FIGURE FLATS AND MAP TILES: JORDAN PEACOCK

TRIPLE ACE GAMES

ROBOT RUMBLE

INTRODUCTION

Robots, droids, automatons, mechanoids, constructs, artificial life forms—whatever you call them, they are common throughout much of the galaxy. To most citizens they are just machines, any apparent personality being the product of sophisticated programming rather than true organic emotions. Similarly, their intelligence is hardwired rather than the result of natural evolution. On most worlds, a robot has no more rights than a gun or a flashlight—it is a tool, to be used as the owner dictates.

The planet Lux III, however, is not like most worlds. Here droids are treated the same as other citizens, at least on paper. They earned their equal rights a long time ago, and no one quite remembers or cares, how they did. In truth, the robots of Lux are a lowly underclass.

Those with jobs perform repetitive line work in factories (work so tedious and boring even the machines get depressed), sweep streets, clean sewers, and perform the dangerous jobs, like handling radioactive waste. They earn a wage, though due to a legal loophole they earn far less than humans. While most robots are content to be members of society (they are allowed to vote, but only if they have a job), there are plenty who feel that working for biological beings is demeaning.

Centuries ago they created a haven called Robot Heights. It was supposed to be a robot paradise, where all mechanoids were equal and content, but the robots had learned well from the humans, and the majority quickly realized that their equal share wasn't quite as equal as others. The robots tried various forms of government over the years without success, before descending into anarchy. As a result, Robot Heights is a rundown, crime-ridden slum completely off-limits to biological life forms. Non-droids refer to it as "Tin Town."

Nor Angwat, a human entrepreneur, lost his business, his fortune, and his family when his robot workers went on strike over wages and adverse working conditions.

Angwat couldn't (and wouldn't if he could) meet the robots' excessive demands, and as no humans wanted to do the work (sewage processing) for the same rate the robots currently earned, rival companies quickly picked up the contracts he couldn't keep.

Angwat knew who to blame—his ancestors (and the droids, naturally). He devised a plan to bring the robot community into disrepute by using robots to do his bidding. And so began what is now a legendary crime spree on Lux III. The resident biological life forms know that robots are behind the crimes, but they are too pig-headed (or just plain stupid) to paint every robot with the same brush. To that end, Angwat is planning something that will force robots back into servitude due to a mammoth outcry of rage and disgust from all the biological life forms on the planet. All he needs is a suitable weapon of awesome destruction!

Of course, he hasn't counted on the crew of the *Blazing Star* visiting Lux III any time soon…

Characters: 30 XP.

CONVENTION PLAY

This adventure is ideal for convention play and for introducing new players to *Savage Worlds*. To help ensure the adventure fits into a standard convention time slot, the GM may wish to consider some of the following changes:

* Cut out Scene 1 entirely. While it offers an exciting start, using the second scene in its place also kicks the game off with a rush of adrenaline. Keep the initial narrative text, however, otherwise the heroes won't know they are shipping cargo for a patron.

* Remove the boxing scene from Act 2. Strong-Arm Joe is more desperate in a short version and hires the party without the need of a test.

* Getting onto the train is exciting stuff, but the scene can be dropped. Instead, the party leaps, lands, and boards as a cut scene rather than as an actual part of the scenario.

ACT 1: WELCOME TO LUX

This adventure begins *in media res*. You can read or paraphrase the information below to set up the story, but keep it brief, and then head straight into the action.

Your client from Lux III wanted high-tech computer components and you knew where to find them. Exploiting a ceasefire in the global civil war currently wracking the industrialized world of Ingenos, you successfully landed and purchased a consignment of extremely valuable crystal storage chips. Unfortunately, the religious holiday that led to the cessation of hostilities has just ended…

SCENE 1: IT WAS FINE WHEN WE LANDED

The ship shudders as a barrage of energy beams explodes just off starboard. Pointing fingers at each other over who ordered the last round of drinks (and in doing so cost you your chance to leave before the war restarted) won't solve anything. The ship rocks again and sparks erupt from the vending machine.

Out of the viewports you can see your predicament all too clearly—two immense battleships are pounding away at each other, and the Blazing Star is caught in the crossfire. If that wasn't bad enough, the all too familiar shrill of the proximity alarm has begun filling the ship—fighters are hot on your tail! You're not sure which side they're on, and it likely doesn't matter one bit!

Run this scene as a Chase. The heroes' ship is being tailed by a pair of fighters as it blasts toward the minimum distance at which a hyperspace course can be punched in. The heroes begin 3 SU ahead of the fighters, and each SU equates to 5". This scene uses our special Obstacles rules (see below).

Place 10 markers on the tabletop to represent the Range Increments. The fighters begin just off the track, while the party is on marker three. Once the *Blazing Star* moves *beyond* the 10th marker, the pilot (or co-pilot) can begin plotting the jump to hyperspace. This requires a Piloting roll as an action. With a success, the Chase is over! Otherwise, the pilot may try again on the next round.

Deal each fighter an action card. This prevents them both being hit by stray shots (see Obstacles below) and getting wiped out on the same card. In the event the fighters drop out early as a result of bad luck (as opposed to good shooting) the GM should feel free to have more ships join the fray. The chase should be exciting and nail-biting, but the party should escape.

The fighters are faster than the *Blazing Star*, so the pilots have +1 Piloting.

Since the action starts immediately, the characters likely haven't yet activated any Shield Pods *unless* they've said otherwise. As the *armor* and *deflection* options last just three rounds, it's up to the heroes to say if and when they popped a pod. Remember, though, activating a pod is an action, so they can only have popped one per round.

The fighter pilots have not yet activated their shields. They do this on the first round, selecting the *deflection* option.

OBSTACLES

The warring fleets aren't deliberately targeting the *Blazing Star*, but neither are they about to announce a ceasefire just to let civilians escape from harm's way. As such, the action takes place with shots flying across space from all sides!

If any pilot draws a numbered Club suit for his action card, check the value against the table below—the ship is in danger of being struck by enemy fire. The Piloting roll for the round is modified as per the table. Failure not only leads to a lack of movement but also to the ship taking a certain amount of damage. This counts as battery fire, so the pilot benefits from having a shield pod set to *deflection*.

A Jack through Ace indicates a special problem. These are detailed individually.

Value	Piloting	Damage
Deuce	–4	3d8 (AP 6) HW
3–6	–2	3d8 (AP 4) HW
7–9	–1	3d6 (AP 6) HW
10	0	3d6 (AP 4) HW

Jack (–2) Debris: A large chunk of battleship debris has drifted right into the ship's flight path. A failed Piloting roll results in a collision. The ship linked to this card is assumed to be moving at Top Speed unless the pilot has specifically slowed, while the debris is effectively stationary.

Queen (–2) Core Breach: A battleship's power-plant reaches critical, creating a huge explosion. A failed Piloting roll means the chasing ship takes 4d6 damage (as a Heavy Weapon). A flood of radiation also inflicts an automatic Crew Critical Hit—all crew suffer 2d6 damage as well, ignoring all armor. Shields set to *deflection* boost the Piloting roll, as this is considered an area effect attack like a barrage.

King (–1) Route Blocked: A battleship takes evasive action and inadvertently blocks the ship's path. Fortunately there is enough time to maneuver around it, but the delay could be costly. Failing the Piloting roll doesn't cause any undue problems—the ship simply doesn't make any headway this round.

Ace (0) Automated Missile: An automated defense system fails to register the ship as friendly, locks on, and fires a missile. A failed Piloting roll sets the missile at Short Range, a success places it at Medium Range, and

Long Range with a raise. Avoiding the missile (Damage: 4d8, AP 8, HW) is handled as normal.

FIGHTERS (2)

Fighters are both poorly armed and armored, but have great maneuverability. The ones presented here are the most basic model on the market.

Top Speed: 8; **Toughness:** 14 (4); **Handling:** +1; **Shield Pods:** 1; **Crew:** 1

Abilities: Piloting d8, Shields d6, Shooting d8

Notes: 1 x AMCM, Atmospheric, Fixed Weapon, Heavy Armor, Improved Stabilizer, Spacecraft

Weapons:

* 1 x forward-firing laser (Range: 12/24/48; Damage: 3d6; ROF 1; AP 6, HW)
* 1 x missile turret (Range: 20/40/80; Damage: 4d8; ROF 1; AP 8, HW), no reloads

SCENE 2: SOMETHING IMPORTANT HAS BROKEN

If the heroes check the cargo during the short trip through hyperspace, they discover it is intact. Having it damaged might cause them to reconsider delivering the consignment thus avoiding the scenario altogether.

The stars return to normal as the ship drops out of hyperspace above the planet Lux III. The Blazing Star slips into the atmosphere and begins her descent. BANG! Alarm klaxons suddenly begin screaming! The engines have stalled! The ship is plummeting toward the starport like a brick.

In order to restart the engines and land safely, the heroes must perform four tasks. Unless otherwise stated, only one hero may attempt the roll per round. Other characters may assist on any roll using the Cooperative Rolls rules. A failed roll can be repeated in subsequent rounds.

In addition to the stated task, the pilot must make a Piloting roll each round. Unless otherwise stated, the roll is made at –4. Failure causes 3d6 damage (ignoring Armor) due to internal stresses on the ship. A co-pilot may Cooperate on this as normal. At *any* time, the pilot may elect to jettison the cargo (which is currently tumbling about in the cargo hold, causing all sorts of handling problems) as a free action. Should this be done, the Piloting roll modifier drops to –2.

Unfortunately, the *Blazing Star* is falling very fast. At the end of round six, she crashes into the starport if the characters have failed to restart the engines. The pilot is allowed one last Piloting roll at –4 (regardless of whether the cargo is still aboard or not) to try and salvage some pride. Failure means the ship suffers 8d6 damage, while success inflicts a mere 4d6 damage.

* The first thing the engineer should do is recalibrate the gravity plates to limit the amount of time the heroes

spend slamming into bulkheads. This requires a Repair roll at –2. Until this is done, all other Trait rolls below are made at an *additional –2*.

Unfortunately, the emergency restart procedure requires two people if it is to be done quickly enough. An assistant must crawl down the tight access tunnel (an Agility roll at –2) to the Primary Ignition Override Switch, which lies in the belly of the ship.

* The engineer must hastily recalibrate the Engine Coil Sequencer (a Repair roll at –2).

* Whoever crawls down the tunnel must then make an Agility roll to punch in the override sequence in the correct order while avoiding being tossed around and slammed into a bulkhead. A failed roll means the character is Shaken. With success, the sequence takes valuable seconds to register but the lights go green.

Once this is done, the engineer (assuming he has recalibrated the sequencer) can try to manually activate the aerodynamic plating to provide better stability for the beleaguered pilot. This requires a Strength roll. With success, the pilot gains a +2 Piloting modifier.

* With the ignition sequence set, the engineer can now try to jump-start the engines. This requires a Repair roll at –2. From the crawl space, the second character can make a Smarts roll to Cooperate, by calling out the readings flashing on the computer screens.

SCENE 3: AN ANGRY PATRON

The narrative text below assumes the ship touched down safely. GMs should alter it as necessary for a less than smooth landing.

The retro rockets scream to life with the ground way too close for comfort. Slowly, slowly, the ship begins to settle into a landing alignment. With seconds to spare, everything falls into place and the Blazing Star shudders as she settles onto the landing platform. Unfortunately, the loud crash from the cargo bay indicates not everything went according to plan. From across the landing platform emergency vehicles rush to your aid, lights flashing and sirens wailing.

Ideally, the characters abandon the ship and await the authorities. Cautious crews might check the cargo (which is ruined) and decide to cut their losses. Don't worry if they decide to flee into the starport to avoid their responsibilities—they've invested all their cash in the cargo and the *Blazing Star* will be impounded. Sooner or later they'll have to crawl back out of the woodwork.

The starport emergency teams check the ship for radiation leaks while bureaucrats start shoving forms at the party—landing fee requests, official warnings for deviating from flight paths, reckless flying citations carrying large fines, customs and immigration forms, and so on.

A ruddy skinned human shoves his way through

the rapidly expanding crowd. As he approaches, the first of the mangled cargo crates is being dragged from the hold. He lets out a loud cry of anguish.

"I oughta' call my lawyer, you, you…" The man's red skin goes an even darker shade. Then, all of a sudden, he calms and smiles. "Actually, you may have just done me a favor. I have a proposition for you. I strongly suggest you do me the courtesy of listening before these flesh-hounds…" he gestures to the army of bureaucrats, "…eat you alive."

If the party agrees, the alien takes them to one side while promising the bureaucrats the crew won't leave the starport.

"My name is Pidi Argon, and that cargo was destined for me. I run a profitable business, but one which has run into certain trouble. No, no, this isn't going to be an insurance scam. The planet is suffering a serious crime wave right now, and my facilities have been targeted a number of times. My insurance premiums are going into orbit and the police won't help. You see, on Lux, you have to pay the police to investigate a crime. A case this big would cost me millions.

"However, I know the criminals are all robots operating out of Tin Town, a robot-only slum on the other side of the city. So here's my deal, and listen good. You'll enter Tin Town disguised as robots, infiltrate the gang, and bring down the leader. In return, I take all the glory for cracking the case, I waive the cargo damage, and I repair your ship so you can leave and forever be out of my sight.

"The alternative," he cranes his neck to look at the bureaucrats, "is a jail sentence and a hefty fine."

Assuming the party doesn't want to spend the next ten years in prison while they work off their debts, Argon's offer is likely to be accepted. The businessman smoothes over the immediate problems with the bureaucrats, promising that all fines will be settled by his company.

ROBOT DISGUISES

Argon wasn't joking when he said the heroes had to infiltrate Tin Town in disguise. During the ride to one of his factories, Argon fills in a little background information. Paraphrase the info from the first four paragraphs of the Introduction. On reaching the factory, Argon bustles them through to an old storeroom. Scattered around are various robot shells.

"If you want to survive, you'll need to wear these shells and try to pass yourselves off as robots. All the main gates into Tin Town are covered by bio-

logical detectors. They can easily penetrate your disguises, so you'll be slipping in a back way. There are a lot of disused tunnels leading into the slum, and the robots likely don't know of their existence.

"By using them you'll be able to emerge inside the walls and blend into the crowd without having to be scanned or answer any unwanted questions."

Each character is going to effectively "hide" inside a hollowed-out robot. (Just like Anthony Daniels and Kenny Baker in Star Wars.) The heroes are going to be in similar disguise.

Unfortunately, the robot parts have seen better days. There is more than enough salvage to cover the spacers' skin, but unfortunately not all the parts are in good working order. As such, deal each hero a card from the action deck and check the value against the table below. A hero with McGyver has enough bits to fix *one* of these problems, but no more (under any circumstances). Repair rolls don't work to fix these flaws—these are recurring issues. Even if a brand new part is used, the problem returns very quickly.

Unfortunately, the characters can only wear minimal clothing while in disguise. On the plus side, they have +2 Armor thanks to be robot's shell (unless otherwise stated).

As well as being used in this adventure, GMs wanting to write their own *Daring Tales of the Space Lanes* stories can use this table to create flawed robots (either as allies or enemies). If you allow robot player characters, you could even create a new Hindrance—Recurring Fault—and make the hero draw a card.

Important: Unless the heroes actively remove their disguises, no amount of damage reveals they are human. Droids aren't indestructible, but they are built to last.

Card	Problem
Deuce	**Intermittent:** Nothing appears to be wrong with the robot. However, if the hero is dealt a deuce in combat as his first action card in any round, the leg servos seize up. The character cannot move that round. This also precludes certain other rolls, such as Agility rolls to avoid an area effect attack. Whether or not it prevents the use of Dodge is up to the GM.
Three	**One Arm:** The robot was built with just one arm, positioned centrally. The character can use the limb as his dominant one. He otherwise suffers as per the One Arm Hindrance.
Four	**Squeaky:** The robot squeaks loudly when it moves. Any Stealth rolls are made at –2.
Five	**Major Leg Joints**: –2 Pace (running die d4).
Six	**Audio Sensors:** The robot's audio sensors are damaged. The hero suffers the Minor Hard of Hearing Hindrance (or Major if he already has the Hindrance).
Seven	**Visual Sensors:** The lenses are badly

scratched or chipped. The character gains the Minor Bad Eyes Hindrance.

Eight **Voice Unit:** The vox module has developed a flaw, leaving the "robot" with a high-pitched voice. He has –1 Charisma.

Nine **Industrial Robot:** The robot has no hands! Instead, it has a cutting torch (Str+d6) on the right arm and a large hammer (Str+d8) on the left. Both are melee weapons.

Ten **Minor Leg Joints**: –1 Pace (running die is unaffected).

Jack **Tracks:** The robot lacks legs, instead being joined to a tracked chassis. Pace is unaffected and the hero even benefits from treating each inch of difficult ground as 1.5" instead of 2". However, he cannot jump (unless he moves his entire Pace before making the attempt) or climb stairs easily (half Pace and no running die).

Queen **Worn Panels:** The hero has +1 Armor.

King **Exterior Arm Servos:** These work normally until action cards are dealt, at which point they begin to act erratically. If the hero draws a Club for his action card, his Strength that round is d4. A Diamond gives him Strength d6, a Heart d8, and a Spade d10. On a Joker, he has Strength d12.

Ace **Heavy Graspers:** The robot lacks the finesse to use high-tech items. The adventurer has the equivalent of the All Thumbs Hindrance.

Joker **Very Minor:** Whatever the problem is, it doesn't affect the character stuffed inside.

SCENE 4: ZAP!

Once the characters are in their robot disguises, Argon drives them to an abandoned sewage treatment plant. After opening a heavy blast door, Argon gestures inside.

"Keep walking straight. When you come to an access hatch labeled 1138 you know you're in the right place. It comes out in a back alley, so you shouldn't be spotted. Just remember you're robots and you should be fine."

After a mile or so, the heroes pass through another heavy blast door. This one seals shut behind them (and can't be opened). A mechanical voice then begins issuing warnings! *"Alert! Alert! Large vermin detected in sewers. Initiating automated laser grid Red Sector Five."*

Run this scene as a chase. Place ten markers on the tabletop to represent the tunnel. The heroes begin on the third marker and the lasers on the first. In order to escape the laser grid, the heroes must move *beyond* the tenth marker. Any "robots" who cannot run suffer a –2 penalty to their Agility rolls.

The laser grid is faulty, though still lethal. When in good working order the entire tunnel was filled simulta-

neously with cutting beams. After decades without maintenance each laser now fires up in turn. The lasers have d8 Agility and a Wild Die. They cannot use any stunts or maneuvers.

If the laser grid ends up on the same marker as a hero or moves ahead of him, the character suffers 2d10 damage (from an Extra) at the *end* of the current round. This rule exists to make the action cinematic—not reduce the heroes to a steaming mass of lacerated chunks.

After escaping the laser grid, the characters reach access hatch 1138 without further incident.

Example: The heroes begin running toward safety! At the end of the second round Ani is on the fifth marker and the lasers are on the third. Next round, she wins initiative but fails the Agility roll, gaining no distance. The laser rolls a 9, and moves two positions, bringing it level with the pilot. Ani suffers 2d10 damage when the round ends.

Next round, the lasers get a higher action card but roll a failure. Ani scores a raise! The pilot rushes ahead of the crackling beams, emerging from the grid with the robot casing scored but intact. Since Ani is ahead of the grid at the end of the round no damage is inflicted.

ACT 2: TROUBLE IN TIN TOWN

Hatch 1138 is located in a quiet back alley, just like Argon promised. The heroes can hear the roar of traffic from the main road and muffled mechanical voices.

SCENE 1: I AM THE LAW

Tin Town is a wreck. Garbage litters the streets, as do old and failed robots. Every building is dilapidated, shops are boarded up, and the roads are full of potholes and cracks. Fortunately the vehicles screaming along the main strip are anti-gravity powered skimmers. To say that Tin Town has seen better days is like saying that the universe is quite large—a gross understatement.

As you try to cross the street two robots approach you. One, a bipedal unit pockmarked with small, round dents and stained by blaster impacts, raises a hand. "Your description matches that of wanted fugitives. Halt in the name of the law." The smaller robot, which looks like a tracked garbage can, suddenly opens to reveal a mass of large guns!

The "sheriff" is self-appointed. He's an old law enforcement unit who has teamed up with a obsolete warbot to try and bring law and order to the mean streets of Tin Town. Like pretty much everything in Tin Town, the sheriff isn't firing on all cylinders. His memory banks have mistaken the heroes for a gang of criminals he arrested years ago and unfortunately, he's now extremely trigger-happy!

Check the map for the layout of the street. Garbage cans, wrecked vehicles, and other solid obstacles can be used for Cover (+2 Armor). Debris and potholes make

for difficult ground, but do not impede line of sight or provide Cover.

When dealing action cards, the GM should deal himself an extra card (see below).

You'll also need several of each skimmer vehicle flat. On each vehicle is a letter from A to D. You'll notice the map has matching letters at the top of each road. Whenever a character draws a Club for initiative a vehicle enters play. One vehicle appears for each Club suit in play. Check the value against the table below.

Pick a vehicle whose letter matches the *second* letter and place it touching the edge of the map which corresponds to the *first* letter. The letter on the flat is there as a reminder of where the vehicle is *going*, not where it came from. For instance, a skimmer appears on a three of Clubs. Pick a vehicle labeled B and position it off the road on side A. When it moves, it heads toward the edge of the map marked B. If multiple vehicles appear from the same map face, position them 1" apart.

You should vary which route the cars take. If they all drive along the exact same path the combatants will quickly be able to avoid them. One quick method is to use the suit of the skimmer's action card when placing *new* vehicles. On a Club it touches the center of the road. A Diamond means it is one inch nearer the sidewalk, a Heart is 2", and a Spade 3" (which means it actually overlaps the sidewalk!).

Card	Starting Area/Destination
Deuce	Two cars appear this round. The first is A/C and the second C/A.
Three	A/B
Four	A/D
Five	B/A
Six	B/C
Seven	B/D
Eight	C/A
Nine	C/B
Ten	C/D
Jack	D/A
Queen	D/B
King	D/C
Ace	Two cars appear this round. The first is A/B and the second C/D.

The skimmers act using the GM's extra action card (you can ignore it if there are no Clubs in play and no vehicles on the map). The cars all move the same speed—12". They drive on the same side of the street as cars in your country. When moving, the vehicles head toward their destination letter. They take 90 degree turns at the crossroad. No vehicle ever has to make a Driving roll. The vehicles block line of sight unless a hero is prone, whereupon he can fire beneath them.

The vehicles don't stop at intersections. If a vehicle is in danger of colliding with another vehicle then it screeches to a halt, avoiding a pile up. It accelerates back to 12" per round at the start of the next round.

Luckily for pedestrians, the vehicles are fitted with anti-pedestrian forcefield bumpers. These low energy shields knock anyone caught in the vehicle's path to safety, thus preventing unnecessary road fatalities. The vehicles make no attempt to avoid pedestrians.

Anyone struck by a moving vehicle must make an Agility roll at –2 as a free action. With a success, they are moved to the closest unoccupied square, having leapt to safety in time, *or* they may fall prone—player's choice. On a failure, they are knocked into the nearest unoccupied square, fall prone, and are Shaken. This counts as a physical attack. Note that an unoccupied square at the time of the collision may be occupied by a vehicle very soon after—it's called bad luck!

Note that neither the sheriff nor his deputy makes another appearance in the adventure. Use their bennies to make Soak rolls, not reroll missed attacks.

- ⭐ **Robot Sheriff Bart:** See page 17.
- ⭐ **Robot Deputy WD:** See page 17.

SCENE 2: SO YOU WANT TO BE A BOXER?

Once they've shaken off the police, the characters can get on with their mission—to find and infiltrate the robot criminal gang. Fortunately for the party, the gang operates quite openly in Tin Town. Many robots actually see them as heroes, not villains, for the criminals spread a little of the wealth they accumulate among the populace (Angwat hopes that if the robots' open support for the criminals grows it'll be easier to tarnish the entire construct community).

On a successful Streetwise roll, the heroes are given the location of a bar in which elements of the gang regularly hang out—"The Rusty Servo."

THE RUSTY SERVO

As rundown as the rest of Tin Town, The Rusty Servo is a low-grade cantina patronized by the dregs of robot society. A jukebox blares out tinny binary code as a series of low and high notes, the air is thick with the smell of heated lubricating oil and hydraulic fluid (robot drinks), and the stench of rust from the filthier clientele.

The bar droid, a former cocktail waiter unit, has eight arms for serving drinks rapidly. If asked about the gang, he gestures to a booth at the back. A collection of armed droids is clearly visible seated around the booth.

When approached, several of the goons stand up and intercept the characters. Before they have chance to react, a grumbling, deep voice comes from the booth's sole occupant, a former construction worker droid. *"Now, now, boys,"* the robot says. *"Where are you manners? I've told you before, all robots are our people. Let them through…after taking their guns, of course."*

The goons divest the characters of any hand-held guns, but have trouble working out what to do with robots with fitted weapons. Eventually they just give up and let the adventurers through.

The construction worker droid then enquires of the heroes as to their business. The characters can be as open or as secretive as they want—the droid mob boss, who goes by the name of Strong-Arm Joe, is used to robots seeking employment in the organization. Assuming the party eventually gets around to asking for a job, Joe emits a rumbling laugh.

SECONDS OUT

"You and half the droids in Robot Heights! I'm a fair droid, so I'll give you the same chance as all the other saps who come to me begging for employment. You best my boys in a little friendly sparring, and I'll give you a crack. We've got a big job coming up and you look like you can handle yourselves in a scrap."

"I'm Strong-Arm Joe, by the way. Used to work in construction. If you displease me, I shall take your scrawny bodies and twist them into a new shape." Joe clicks his fingers and a set of strange controls is placed on the table. "This is a holo boxing suite. You pick up the gloves and two holograms appear. As you move your hands, so they fight. A lot less painful than real fighting, don't you agree?"

Have the heroes make Common Knowledge rolls. Those who succeed have heard of holo boxing before. While you don't get the full impact of being smashed in the face by a hulking bruiser, the gloves do feed back sensory information in the form of powerful electric shocks. These affect biological life forms and robots equally, but only for a short while.

Joe excludes robots with no hands from fighting. He figures if they have tools they must be able to use them. All other characters are paired up with one of his goons. Run the bouts simultaneously. The hologram boxers don't move and the characters can't aid each other in any way, so it's just a matter of dealing action cards and making Fighting rolls. Combat Edges unrelated to movement work normally—these are part of the boxer's make up, not the hologram's.

Game players suffer Str+d4 damage from a hit, ignoring all armor. It can be Soaked as normal. Joe has actually rigged the holo gloves to be "more effective," so the damage isn't as temporary as the heroes might believe. Treat it as regular nonlethal damage. However, at the start of the next Act they remove two wounds inflicted in the game or one regular wound.

The GM should also take the time to put a little pressure on the heroes. Have a goon ask one character what his former occupation was or why he came to Robot Heights. Another could offer a character a smoking drink. A clever player may take the drink and just pour it into his disguise's head without it touching his real lips. Actually being foolish enough to consume the beverage causes 3d8 damage, ignoring all armor.

☆ **Strong-Arm Joe:** See page 18.
☆ **Robot Goons (2 per hero):** See page 18.

SCENE 3: YOU'RE HIRED!

Win or lose, Joe hires the characters—his boss (Angwat) has demanded he hire new help, and the heroes are the best of a very sad bunch of potential recruits.

Strong-Arm Joe cracks his mighty knuckles. "Get these guys drinks," he orders one of his goons, "and bring me the map." While one robot scurries off to fetch concoctions surely toxic to non-robots, another lays out a flimsy plastic sheet. Joe taps on the film, causing a three-dimensional holographic image to appear suspended a few inches above the table.

"This here," the mob boss grumbles pointing to what looks like a train, "--is a train. Stored in a secure baggage car is a small black box. We, or more specifically you, are going to steal the box. You'll drop onto the passenger cars at this bridge, then make your way inside and secure the box." The map flicks forward to a different stretch of track.

"At this point there are three tracks running parallel. We will have a second engine ready to run alongside the one you are in. When you have the box, you'll jump train and make good your escape. The train will take you to a warehouse in the starport, where you will be rewarded in person by the big boss. We call him Sir.

"We're planning a major expansion of our activities soon. Pull this off, and you'll be rewarded with a patch of your own to rob blind. You could become very rich droids if you play your cards right."

Joe doesn't know what is in the black box, nor does he care. His orders are to steal it. However, Joe figures it is easier on him to let the hired help take all the risks, just in case anything goes terribly wrong.

ACT 3: SECOND CLASS TRAVEL

Joe and his droids aren't exactly cutting edge technology, and are sorely lacking in the CPU department. Not only is the map they used decades out of date, they've also dropped the heroes off at the wrong bridge! The bridge should have been on the plains. Instead, it's in a low mountain range. Up ahead, the track bends out of sight.

Right on time the train comes thundering along. Strong-Arm Joe gives a snappy salute and points over the side of the bridge. "We'll see you later," he barks. "Now, time your jumps and get going!"

SCENE 1: TIGHT SQUEEZE

Dropping onto the moving train requires an Agility roll. If a robot disguise lacks legs and/or arms, then there's a flat –2 penalty. Those who fail don't slide off, but they are Shaken. This could be the difference between life and some serious pain!

Unfortunately, the train rounds the bend to reveal a tunnel just a few yards ahead! To save money, and stop joyriders, the tunnel was constructed with scant inches clearance all around—anyone on the roof or hanging from the sides is going to get hurt. Normally the wise plan would be to hang down and climb in through a window. Unfortunately the passenger cars are all state of the art, and lack windows! (They instead use holographic screens to present different scenery.)

In order to reach safety before the train enters the tunnel the characters have to perform four tasks in order. These are detailed below. The heroes can try to perform multiple actions in the same round, but the usual penalties apply on top of any listed in the text. A failed roll can be repeated in subsequent rounds.

If a hero hasn't left the roof by the end of the sixth round he suffers 5d10 damage from an Extra as he is scraped along the roof. On the positive side, he is knocked between two passenger cars, thus allowing what is left of him to enter the train and begin the hunt.

* Any heroes Shaken by the landing must recover as normal before they can try any of the following actions.

The heroes must first head toward an end of the car. As it stands, they are in the center. The train is moving fast and the platform is far from stable. Ask the heroes which way they are running—toward or away from the tunnel entrance. Those who move toward the tunnel have just *five* rounds in total. Those who run in the opposite direction have *six* rounds (in total). Regardless, an Agility roll is required.

* Unfortunately the passenger car doesn't have an accessible door (the gap between the trains is covered). The heroes must leap onto the next car to search for one. This requires a Strength roll. Anyone failing is left dangling by whatever they have for hands. A Strength roll is required on later rounds to pull themselves back up onto the train.

* Another Agility roll is required to move along the second passenger car. Because the party has to cross the entire car, rather than just half of it, the roll is made at –2. A failure allows a reroll on subsequent rounds at no penalty (the hero has crossed part of the roof).

* Finally, the heroes reach an entryway. They can either jump down (an Agility roll to land on the narrow bridge between the cars) or climb down (a Climbing roll). Failure leaves them dangling with their legs off the train! An Agility or Strength roll (hero's choice) is required to pull themselves out of danger.

Whether they make it in time or end up being a buffer between the tunnel and the train, the characters (or what is left of them) are now on the train.

SCENE 2: LITTLE BLACK BOX

Once aboard, the heroes encounter the ticket collector. This short droid is relentless in inspecting tickets, often asking the same people ten times during a journey. It cannot be bribed nor threatened, neither can it be destroyed easily (it has Heavy Armor). Either the heroes pay up 20 credits each (5 credits for a ticket plus a fine of 15 more for not having a ticket while aboard the train) or they find some way to dispose of it.

The inspector doesn't have stats—it is an obstacle to be circumvented, not blown to smithereens. Possible methods of foiling it include luring it toward a door and shoving it off the train (a Strength roll), locking it in a toilet (a Lockpicking roll to ensure it can't easily escape), or stealing a ticket from another passenger (a Stealth roll). Let the players have a little fun and light relief.

The baggage car isn't locked, nor does it appear to be guarded. There are guards lurking on the train, but they're all undercover operatives blending in with the crowd.

THE BAGGAGE CAR

Overhead storage compartments line the entire length of the car. Sitting in the center of the floor is a long, cylindrical crate. Secured tightly to one wall are a half dozen gas canisters.

The crate is locked with a fairly simple combination cipher. Cracking the code requires a Lockpicking roll. On opening the crate the heroes discover a small black box with wires protruding from both ends. There is a small computer panel inside the crate lid. Unfortunately, any attempts to take the device cause a forcefield to encase it, rendering it immovable. *A faint, tinny voice can be heard saying, "Security forcefield activated. Laser grid activated in T-minus 36 seconds and counting."*

Deactivating the laser grid requires a hero to make four successful Lockpicking rolls within six rounds. Failure has no disastrous effect—it just means they have to steal the entire crate! And to make matters worse, two squads of security guards have been alerted by a silent alarm.

The carriage is 4" wide and 14" long. The crate sits in the center of the room and measures 1" wide and 2" in length. It can be used for Cover by crouching heroes (Armor +8). At either end of the baggage car is a door. Half the security troops enter from each door. Each group has a separate action card.

The storage lockers are supposedly secure, but the ride is bumpy and the locks past their prime. On any round a deuce is drawn as a hero's first card the locker above him flops open and dumps some of its contents. It does this at the start of the round, before any actions are taken. The character must make an Agility roll at –2 as a free action or be Shaken (this is a damaging attack). In the event the security guards draw a deuce, only *one* of their number is affected. The lockers can be deliberately targeted. This requires a Called Shot at no penalty.

Anyone beneath the locker must make an Agility roll as above.

The canisters each occupy a 1" square. Activating them requires a hero to be adjacent or to blast at one. Opening one manually requires an action but no die roll. Each canister contains a gas similar to nitrous oxide (aka "laughing gas"). On release, the gas fills a Medium Burst Template. A template remains in play for three rounds. Anyone in or entering the template must make a Vigor roll or become light-headed and disoriented. Treat this as a level of Fatigue. Heroes who become Incapacitated by the gas collapse in hysterics, unable to do anything but scream with laughter. Death cannot occur as a result of this. Fatigue is recovered at the rate of one level per five minutes breathing fresh air.

⭐ **Security Troops (2 per hero):** See page 18.

SCENE 3: FOLLOW THAT TRAIN!

Once the party has the not-so-small black box in their possession they can make good their escape. Right on time a second engine pulls up alongside on the adjacent track. The driver, a droid, lowers a gangplank, which bridges the gap between the two trains. With expert ease he maneuvers the engine to match the train's exact speed. Crossing the gangplank doesn't require a die roll as it has self-extending hand rails.

Once aboard, the driver congratulates the characters and gestures to a bench in the back of the engine—*"Make yourselves at home," the droid says, "we're almost out of the woods!"*

With that, a loud explosion rocks the engine. The driver, who was standing near the door, slips and tumbles out, smashing into a thousand pieces as he hits the ground. Looking around, the adventurers see a pair of anti-grav sleds bearing down on them. Up ahead are the city suburbs and safety! The only snag is the engine is slowing, and more anti-grav sleds can be seen in the distance.

Run this scene using the Chase rules. Lay out ten markers on the tabletop. The engine begins on the second marker and the security sleds on the first . The distance between each Range Increment is 10". Note, though, that the track isn't 100" long. The distance the vehicles move each round is irrelevant—all that matters is the gap between the trains.

If the heroes move *beyond* the tenth marker, the engine enters the heavily built up starport. The sleds cannot follow due to the amount of aerial traffic and billboards.

Driving the engine uses the Driving skill. The track isn't a straight line, so the skill rolls are measures of when to speed up and slow down, as well as the use of emergency breaks due to failing to slow for a sharp bend. Trains do *not* roll on the Out of Control table under any circumstances. Instead, the next Driving roll is made at –2. No stunts or maneuvers can be used except Push.

The sleds are faster than the engine. Their pilots have +1 to Piloting rolls.

Shoveling additional fuel nuggets into the boiler makes the engine go faster (inform the players of this). A stoker who is on Hold or acts before the driver can use the Cooperative Rolls rules by making a Strength roll. Each success and raise adds to the driver's Driving roll this round as normal. Unfortunately, the extra nuggets create the risk of a boiler explosion. Draw a card from the action deck for each success and raise scored by a stoker. A Joker means the boiler is damaged. The engine's Top Speed is halved immediately.

Characters not involved in driving or stoking can merrily blast away at the security sleds, which lack heavy armor. If the attackers are within one Range Increment of each other then everyone has Medium Cover (–2) as they fire from doorways. Otherwise the narrow angle makes it Heavy Cover (–4). The engine is also considered an Unstable Platform.

Aboard the four-man sleds, one of the security staff drives while another mans the heavy laser. The gunner blasts at the engine. The remaining pair in each vehicle fire their blaster pistols at the heroes.

(M) Security Troops (8): See page 18.

SECURITY SLED (2)

These hover sleds are used by mercenary and security forces across the galaxy. They are open-topped, but provide Medium Cover to the driver and passengers. The sled has advanced stabilizers, but these really only aid the heavy laser operator.

Acc/Top Speed: 25/100; **Toughness:** 12 (2); **Handling:** +1; **Shields Pods:** 1; **Crew:** 1+3
Notes: Improved Stabilizer; Max ceiling 5"
Weapons:
* 1 x heavy laser (Range: 12/24/48; Damage: 3d6; ROF 1; AP 6, HW)

TRAIN ENGINE

The train resembles those of Earth's Wild West. However, rather than using coal it runs on low-radiation fuel nuggets. There is enough room in the engine for the driver and up to five others. The driver benefits from Heavy Cover (–4), but the passengers are exposed, having just Light Cover (–1).

Acc/Top Speed: 10/80; **Toughness:** 16 (4); **Handling:** +0; **Shields Pods:** 0; **Crew:** 1+5
Notes: Can only run on rails; Heavy Armor

OPENING THE BOX

The box isn't just sealed; it's a single piece cast out of reinforced polycarbide resin. It can be blasted apart, but that will destroy the contents as well. Let Curious characters try all they want—they won't be able to look inside.

SCENE 4: BETRAYED!

As the engine thunders through the city, a droid activates a set of switches, diverting the train onto an industrial siding that leads into a large warehouse. It's obvious from the weeds poking through the tracks and the crumbling, derelict building this area hasn't seen much care in many years. As the engine roars inside, automatic brakes kick into life, preventing it from driving straight through the far end. The large warehouse doors shut behind the engine with an ominous clang.

Waiting in the warehouse are Strong-Arm Joe and a handful of robot minions. Joe orders four of the goons to take the box from the heroes. If they refuse, perhaps demanding to see the boss first, Joe snarls, *"That ain't the way things work around here."* Should the party still refuse to hand over the loot, a fight breaks out (it's going to happen soon anyway).

Once the goons have the box they place it at Strong-Arm Joe's feet.

> *"You did real good, real good. Unfortunately there's been a slight change of plan. The boss wants you eliminated!"*

It's time for the inevitable betrayal!

The warehouse measures 12" wide and 18" long. The train track is 2" wide and runs up the center of the building. Crossing it or moving along its length counts as difficult ground.

The engine itself is 4" wide and 8" long. It blocks line of sight and can be used as Cover (+4 Heavy Armor). The engine is parked 3" from the far end of the structure. The warehouse doors are Toughness 40 (10) and have Heavy Armor—the train cannot pick up enough speed to smash its way out, though kudos to heroes who think of that as an escape route!

Break up the remaining terrain with crates and other obstacles. These make great Cover (+2 Armor) and block line of sight. Movement through small or low obstacles (like a single crate) is difficult ground.

The use of blasters startles a flock of glo-bats (so named because they glow due to radiation poisoning from leaky reactors), which begin diving, flitting, and swooping across the warehouse. Use a Large Burst template for the bats. They begin in the center of the warehouse, appearing at the start of round two. Deal them an action card as normal.

The bats move 2d6" in a random direction on their action. Roll a d12 to determine the direction, reading it as a clock face. If the swarm hits a wall, its movement for the round ends (meaning it might not move in some rounds). Any characters caught under the swarm or who enter the template must make an Agility roll as a free action or be Shaken. This is a non-physical attack—being Shaken represents the hero trying to fend off the bats and general disorientation as the dense flock flits past.

Immediately after Joe takes his third wound, a series of laser forcefields spring up around the heroes, trapping them. A robotic voice (not Joe's) calls out. *"Throw your weapons into the forcefields if you wish to live. Do not attempt to escape—the barriers are set to a level which will instantly vaporize anything touching them."*

If the heroes want to call the speaker's bluff and touch one of the screens ask the hero if he is sure. If he still wants to follow with his course of action he takes 3d10 damage from a Wild Card source. Any weapons thrown into the beams vaporize in a shower of sparks.

Parties who refuse to comply find the forcefield closes in on them slightly. Joe then demonstrates the danger of the fields, if not already known, by shoving one of the goons into the laser grid—it falls through as a mass of severed parts. *"Don't try the boss' patience,"* the hulking droid sneers. *"He'll shrink those beams and you'll be sliced into tiny components."*

The threat isn't one to be taken lightly. Give the heroes exactly three more chances to comply. After that, it's time to make new characters as the beam is squeezed in on them, giving them no hope of escape. Heroes who surrender at the very first request earn a benny. Those who resist in any way do not.

In the event the party surrender first or are all knocked unconscious, they are disarmed and manacled. Proceed to Act 4.

☆ **Strong-Arm Joe:** See page 18. Don't spend any of Joe's bennies.

☆ **Robot Goons (2 per hero):** See page 18.

ACT 4: HEAVY METAL SHOWDOWN

Still under the illusion the characters are droids, Strong-Arm and his goons manacle the characters and march them off to a small room. The surfaces are ceramic tiles, not metal plates. High above is a large iris valve. The floor tiles have holes in them. By the door is a computer panel. A second panel is on the opposite side of the room.

SCENE 1: ACID BATH

A slim, golden robot steps into the room. "They're ready, boss," Strong-Arm gloats. With a wave of his hand the boss orders everyone out of the room.

"Yes, I am the mastermind behind this organization," the droid hisses. The mechanoid reaches up and pulls off its head! No, not its head, just a face plate. The boss isn't a droid at all—he's flesh and blood!

"Yes," he smirks, "I am very much alive, in the traditional sense of the word. My name is Nor Angwat. I must thank you for aiding me in recovering the black box. What is it? Ah, that is a key component in a very powerful bomb. Years ago I was a successful businessman, you see, but you droids cost me everything with your demands

for equal rights and wages! Now I shall have my revenge!

"When this bomb detonates in the heart of the starport, our planet's economy will be broken. The criminal activity of my robot gang has already alienated a large portion of our society, and once the starport is a smoking crater I, or rather my construct persona, shall take credit. There will be a universal outcry. Droids will be put back in their rightful place and we will rebuild the civilization you tin heads destroyed!

"But you will not be here to see that. I cannot take the risk that you haven't already looked in the box. You may decide to go to the authorities with your knowledge. Alas," he says, punching in digits on the computer panel opposite the door, "in just over 30 seconds a torrent of highly corrosive acid will pour from that valve overhead and dissolve every last trace of you. At least it will be quick.

"Oh, and I've locked the computer panels. You can't escape."

With that, he dons his face mask, opens the door, and steps through. With a loud clank it seals shut.

Angwat doesn't care if the characters are droids or biological life forms—they know too much. If they do reveal any flesh, Angwat fails to look surprised (he is, but he doesn't show it). *"Yes,"* he comments without emotion, *"I already knew. The sensors in Tin Town picked you up long ago. Fortunately I had the curiosity to deactivate them so I could see what you were up to."*

This is an outrageous lie. Angwat doesn't like to be made to look stupid, so he quickly invented this cover story to save face. It also makes him appear much more influential in Tin Town.

This is another scene where the characters have to perform four tasks in six rounds to avoid a nasty fate. In this case, their destiny is to be bathed in very concentrated acid. As normal for these scenes, the party must complete each task in order, but can take a multiple action penalty if they wish to try several steps at once. The door cannot be opened by brute force.

If the heroes are still in the room at the end of the sixth round the valve in the ceiling opens, releasing a deluge of bitter-smelling acid. Fortunately for the heroes the acid is specially formulated to dissolve metal and plastic, but not other substances. While the characters lose their disguises, they don't suffer any actual damage. After a round the acid drains away and the door, which is on an automatic lock sequence, opens, freeing the heroes.

Of course, if the *players* expect to survive unscathed and don't get into the spirit of the escape, then the acid is more dangerous. The spacers suffer 3d10 damage (from an Extra), ignoring all forms of armor.

* They need to work free of their bonds. This requires an Agility or Strength roll at –2 (hero's choice) each round until successful. One roll can be made each round. Once a character is free, he may break the bonds of one other person in a round. This allows for no other actions.

* Both computer panels are locked out, but the heroes have enough sharp metal on them to unscrew the front panels. This requires an Agility roll. Each panel has four screws. For each screw a hero wants to undo in a single action

there is a cumulative –1 penalty. Up to two heroes may Cooperate on a single panel.

With success, a number of screws equal to the total the hero was trying to undo pop loose. On a failure, one less screw than the number nominated are removed. A critical failure means none were freed. For instance, a hero trying to remove all four screws in one task phase would roll at –4. With success, all four screws are freed and the circuitry is exposed. On a failure, he'd have loosened three screws, leaving one left next round.

* Once the screws are out the heroes need to study the wiring before they can begin messing with the circuitry. After all, a wrong move could open the vent prematurely.

* A Repair roll at –2 is required to rewire the circuitry. If the door is rewired, then it opens with a successful roll. Correctly tampering with the other controls locks the valve and ends the countdown. Either way, the door opens, allowing the party to make good its escape.

SCENE 2: CHASING STRONG-ARM

Angwat is long gone by the time the heroes escape. Strong-Arm Joe and a few goons can be seen departing in a hover car, which is soaring up into the traffic lanes above the city. With no chance of chasing on foot, the spacers need to find a vehicle. Fortunately, the area around town is littered with derelict hover cars.

GRAB THEIR GUNS!

The party have no weapons, no armor, and very little in the way of clothing. Three options are available. First, they can ignore it and start the chase immediately. Proceed straight to the section below in this case.

Second, they can scavenge from the junk around the warehouse. This automatically locates objects suitable for use in melee, such as lengths of pipe or a discarded wrench. All these weapons inflict Str+d6 damage. Each hero may make one Notice roll at –2. With success, they locate a blaster pistol (Range: 12/24/48, Damage: 2d6) that has been discarded for a reason—the power pack is very low. A natural 1 on the Shooting die, regardless of the Wild Die, drains the battery, leaving the gun unable to fire. Note that if the Wild Die indicates a success, the pack drains *after* that shot hits.

A hero with McGyver has the time to make one Repair roll. With success, he can either improve a melee weapon to inflict Str+d8 damage *or* get a blaster's power pack working at full capacity.

Using option two, the party will likely be very short on firepower. This means they'll need to close the range quickly during the Chase scene to follow in order to use their melee weapons or ram the escaping hover car.

Option three is for the GM to have four robot goons patrolling the area (the warehouse is part of the gang's network of safe houses). In this instance, the heroes get chance to acquire working pistols from the droids. Char-

acters who make a successful Stealth roll get the Drop on the first round. If all the spacers succeed, then they also have Surprise. Anyone failing to hide blows the chance of Surprise.

⭐ **Robot Goons (1 per hero):** See page 18.

FINDING A VEHICLE

First, the heroes must locate a suitable vehicle, one which looks like it has a chance of being airworthy. This requires a Notice roll as a free action. Getting it started requires either a Piloting roll at –2 or a Repair roll. Each attempt to fix the vehicle takes an entire round. With success, the heroes are airborne and can give chase.

Before dealing action cards, the GM should draw one card from the action deck and check the suit against the table below. During the Chase, a character can attempt to lessen the impact of the existing damage by making a Repair roll at –2 as an action. Success removes one wound, and a raise removes two wounds. Only one roll may be attempted, but the Cooperative rules may be used.

Suit	Vehicle Condition
Club	The vehicle is a wreck. It has two wounds. One is a dent, but the other has affected the aerodynamics. The vehicle's Handling is +0.
Diamond	The vehicle has two wounds, but none have caused any damage to the major components.
Heart	The vehicle has one wound, but it hasn't affected any major systems.
Spade	The vehicle is undamaged.
Joker	The vehicle looks like a heap of junk, but it has actually been heavily modified. All Piloting rolls are made at an additional +1. Better still, a quick search discovers 100 credits behind the seats and enough blaster pistols for every hero.

CATCHING JOE

Run this scene as a Chase using the special Obstacle rules. Each Range Increment equates to 10". If the heroes can find a hover car and get it started in one round, they begin just three Range Increments behind the villains (Joe hasn't been driving fast). Each additional round increases Joe's lead by one Range Increment.

Disabling Joe or his hover car through violence isn't the only option. The heroes know his boss is actually a biological entity who plans to blame the droids for bombing the starport. If they can convince the burly robot of this, they can get the same information and possibly recruit an ally.

This requires a Persuasion roll as an action opposed by Joe's Spirit. An attempt can only be made if the characters are within one Range Increment of Joe—they can't be heard at greater distances. A success earns the party a token, while a raise garners two. When they have four tokens Joe orders his driver to stop the hover car—he's

willing to listen to the adventurers, even if he isn't yet sure he totally believes their story.

If the heroes end up within one Range Increment of Joe's vehicle, the pilot tries to draw Parallel. This allows Joe to use his mighty fists to pound the adventurer's hover car.

Whatever happens, Joe should not escape. If his hover car is disabled, it crashes into a building and comes to a halt on a small landing platform. All the goons are automatically killed (thrown over the edge) and Joe is left on the verge of destruction. Proceed to the next section.

OBSTACLES

Deuce (–4) Dangerous Overtaking: A hover truck pulls out to avoid a parked car right into the path of the oncoming vehicle! Failure leads to a head-on collision. The truck is moving 10" per round.

Three (–2) Reflection: A sheet of ultra-polished glass acts like a mirror, confusing the driver. A failed roll means he takes the wrong path. The lead vehicle swerves to avoid what it thinks is a collision with another vehicle, while tailing vehicles are convinced their quarry has veered off. The vehicle loses one Range Increment due to the confusion.

Four (–2) Slow Traffic: Slow-moving traffic forces the car to dodge and weave to make any progress. On a failure, the vehicle is blocked in and drops back one Range Increment.

Five (–2) Narrow Gap: The hover vehicle plows through a very narrow gap. A failure results in a collision with a soft obstacle. This represents the hover vehicle scraping along a wall, rather than a head-on smash.

Six (–2) No Brake Lights: The vehicle in front suddenly comes to a complete stop, forcing the car to swerve to avoid a collision. A failure leads to a collision with a stationary hard obstacle.

Seven (–2) Clogged Engine: A large flock of flying creatures crosses the vehicle's path. On a failure, one is sucked into the engine, clogging it with feathers and mangled flesh. An action must be spent (by any character) to clear the mess. Until this is done, the driver suffers a –1 penalty to all Piloting rolls.

Eight (0/–2) Holo Advertising: A holographic billboard shimmers into life before the vehicle. The driver may either drive straight through it or fly around. The robots always try to go around this obstacle.

Flying straight through requires a straight Piloting roll. A failure means the vehicle's controls are ionized. The next Piloting roll suffers a –2 penalty (in addition to any others modifiers). Whether the roll succeeds or fails, any robots in the vehicle must make a Spirit roll or be Shaken from a non-damaging source.

Going around imparts a –2 penalty but there is no special penalty for failure—the detour simply costs the vehicle valuable time and distance.

Nine (0/–2) Falling Down: A citizen has fallen from a high platform and is plummeting toward the ground far below. The driver has the options of ignoring the man

(the robots always take this option) or detouring to perform a daring rescue.

Ignoring the man in no way impedes progress, however, allowing someone to die who could have been saved isn't very heroic. All the heroes lose a benny!

Heroes who opt to save a life make their Piloting roll at –2. A failure on this roll still means the falling victim is saved, but the vehicle drops back one Range Increment due to having to find a convenient place to drop him off after the rescue. Whether they succeed or fail, all characters who elected to save the victim gain one benny.

Ten (–1) Traffic Jam: Heavy traffic forces the vehicle to take a detour. Failure has no additional effect beyond the vehicle making no progress.

Jack (–1) Turbulent Air: A massive hover truck thunders past, causing the vehicle to slip and slide. A failed roll has no specific effect—the vehicle doesn't gain any distance because of the pilot having to wrestle with the controls.

Queen (0/–2) Red Light: The traffic signal turns red. Characters have the choice of stopping or running the light. The villains always try to run the light.

Stopping causes the vehicle to drop back two Range Increments due to the delay. Running the light requires a Driving roll at –2. Failure leads to a collision with another vehicle. Since this is a "T-bone" collision, only the speed of the vehicle involved in the Chase counts.

King (0/–2) Piece of Junk: The vehicle isn't exactly brand new, and the engine is overheating. Fixing it requires only slowing to a crawl for a few moments. The robots keep driving flat out if the heroes are within two Range Increments.

Continuing at full speed gives no penalty to the Piloting roll, but the vehicle takes an automatic wound if the roll fails. Slowing down incurs a –2 penalty, but failure has no specific effect beyond not moving as far.

Ace (0) Dead End: A wrong turn leads to a dead-end, not a short cut. A failed roll means the driver failed to realize it in time. His vehicle drops back a Range Increment as he turns and drives back onto the right route.

⭐ **Strong-Arm Joe:** See page 18. If Joe was Incapacitated in the previous scene, he is now back to three wounds after hasty repairs. Don't spend any of Joe's bennies!

⭐ **Joe's Chauffeur:** Treat as a Robot Goon (see page 18) except he has Piloting d8. He isn't a Wild Card, but he has a Wild Die for Piloting rolls.

⭐ **Robot Goons (1 per hero):** See page 18.

HOVER CAR

Hover cars come in a variety of shapes, sizes, and colors. These particular models are open-topped, highly maneuverable, and fast. What they lack is the option for high altitude flight.

Acc/Top Speed: 30/90; **Toughness:** 12 (2); **Handling:** +1; **Crew:** 1+4

Notes: Max height 50"

JOE SQUEALS

If Joe has been convinced his boss is a living, breathing villain with no love for robots, the party has a chance to recruit the construction droid to their cause. This requires a Persuasion roll for one character. The Cooperative roll rules may be used. With a success, Joe wants to be part of the action—he'll accompany the heroes to the final scene. A raise means he brings along robot goons totaling one per player character. With a failure, he reveals where his boss is planning to use the black box, but refuses to provide any further assistance—he's planning on skipping town as quick as he can.

If the fight ended badly for Joe, the droid is left with mangled limbs and a faulty reactor. With him unable to do much more than listen, the party gets a chance to explain the fiendish plot. A Persuasion roll could be called for, but good roleplaying should earn the heroes the information they need to know—where the bomb is going to be detonated.

Whatever the outcome for Joe, he has one last speech to make.

"He said we were going to use the money we stole to rebuild Robot Heights as a paradise, to give droids a second chance. We only ever robbed non-droids, you know? If he was here right now I'd rip his head off! I think I know where the bomb is. I saw a holo map on his desk once. I guess it wasn't meant for my eyes, because it was quickly deactivated.

"When I asked the boss about it, he said it was part of a robbery plan he was formulating. He said the target was a customs warehouse in the starport. A bomb would be set beneath an underpass. That way the emergency services would be distracted while we scooped up the loot and made good our escape. I guess there really is a bomb, but no robbery, huh?"

SCENE 3: COUNTDOWN TO DESTRUCTION

The bomb is exactly where Strong-Arm said it would be—beneath the underpass. There's no sign of Angwat, but a number of his goons are present. They're standing around a large, metallic device covered in flashing lights. There's a countdown timer as well and it reads…less than a minute!

Angwat isn't present. Having no wish to be vaporized if anything goes wrong, he has remotely activated the device. He has left behind a number of fanatically loyal goons to guard the bomb. Thanks to an internal gizmo which overrides their self-preservation programs, they cannot be convinced they are about to be destroyed.

The underpass is 10" wide and 24" long. The bomb is located at the far end. The robots all begin within 6" of the device. Rarely used by traffic thanks to an alternate route being constructed some years ago, the underpass is full of junk. Old crates and barrels, burnt out cars, and such can all be used as Cover. For ease, they all provide +2 Armor. GMs should scatter the obstacles not only to provide cover, but to break up the battlefield.

Allies: If Joe is present as an ally, he counts as a hero for the purposes of calculating the number of robot goons arrayed against the party. The goons listed below are just those on Angwat's side. Any helpers Joe recruited are controlled by the players as normal, as is Strong-Arm Joe. Ideally, the player whose character is the weakest in combat should run Joe. If you're using the pre-gens, that's Fal Takaki.

Tick, Tick: Angwat has already remotely activated the atomic bomb he has been building. Fortunately, the villain hasn't bothered to seal the bomb in any sort of protective casing. Disabling it requires a Repair roll. A success earns the hero one token and a raise two tokens. Once the character has five tokens, the bomb is disarmed. Angwat focuses his attentions on anyone trying to foil his plan.

If the sixth round ends without the characters having disabled the device, the GM has two options. First, he can have it detonate. Naturally, this kills everyone within a square mile. However, this option should only be used if the GM is particularly cruel or if the heroes are counting on the GM saving them—that is, they made no attempt to defuse the bomb.

Second, the bomb is a dud—the *Daring Tales* equivalent on the internet is not the best place to learn how to manufacture a nuclear weapon. In this instance, Angwat, if alive, goes Berserk (as per the Edge).

At the time the bomb was meant to explode, the goons begin transmitting holographic messages from their eye sockets. Should they all have been trashed, one is intact enough to broadcast the image.

A crystal clear image of Angwat's droid guise flickers into life. "You have no doubt witnessed the destruction of a large portion of the starport," he says. "This act has been committed by droids. Oppressed for too long and treated as second-class citizens, we rebel against the tyrannical authority of the biological life forms on this world. Give us total freedom or be prepared to suffer more casualties!"

Angwat is too far away to feel the explosion, and in his arrogance has jumped the gun somewhat with his declaration. If Joe is still operational, he recognizes part of the background scenery behind Angwat. He informs the party Angwat is hiding out in an abandoned fridgonium gas facility. Every hero knows fridgonium is a coolant used aboard starships to keep the reactors from overheating.

Otherwise, have the party make a Common Knowl-

edge roll to deduce the general location. On a failure they'll have to hit the streets and make Streetwise rolls to learn of the location based on a verbal description.

☆ **Strong-Arm Joe:** See page 18. Joe has two bennies.

☆ **Robot Henchmen (1):** Treat as regular robot goons (see page 18), except they are Henchmen and have the Command Edge.

☆ **Robot Goons (2 per hero):** See page 18.

SCENE 4: CHILLY FOR THE TIME OF YEAR

By the time the party arrives, Angwat has realized his plan has failed. He arrogantly remains content that he is safe in his hideout, and thus has only a handful of guards with him. There is only one route into his headquarters, which is located on a heavily armored sub-level (to prevent a fridgonium explosion affecting the rest of the structure). Hidden cameras and sensors alert the villain to the party's presence long before they enter his lair.

"So, the biological life forms have discovered my lair," Angwat sneers from behind his robot mask. "No matter! Soon you will be dead and I will be on my way to achieving my goal. One setup cannot thwart me. Already you have walked straight into my trap!"

With that he whips up his right arm, which holds a small diamond-tipped chainsaw! He swings it down, cutting through a small control panel with a shower of sparks and the scream of torn metal. "Kill them!" he roars. "Kill those who would keep robots as slaves!"

The factory floor measures 14" wide and 24" long. The GM should mark at least 30 squares as containing machinery or discarded equipment. Such items can be used as Cover (+5 Armor).

Angwat and his droid servitors begin within 6" of the far end of the room. The characters start at the opposite end.

Angwat's chainsaw has destroyed an important control panel. Fridgonium gas begins venting from the floor at random intervals and in random locations. Such events occur whenever a Club suit is used for initiative, so they are frequent. See below for details. For the enemy Extras, pick *one* Extra whenever a Club is drawn to suffer the effects, not all of them! These events occur at the start of the round, before any actions are taken.

In all instances, everyone in the template must make an Agility roll at –2 as a free action opposed by the vent's d8 Agility. Those who fail suffer the listed effect. Those who succeed in their roll should be moved just outside the affected area in a square of the character's choosing. This is free movement and does not provoke attacks due to Withdrawing from Combat.

Deuce (Powerful Jet): The powerful jet expands quickly to fill a Large Burst Template centered on the victim. The gas then solidifies, encasing any victims in ice. The gas works exactly like the *entangle* power.

3: As Deuce, except the area affected is a Medium Burst Template.

4–5: As Deuce, except the area affected is a Small Burst Template.

6–7: As Deuce, except only a single 1" square is affected.

8: The jet fills a Large Burst Template, centered on the victim. Unlike the entries above, the venting is weak. A hero who fails the roll suffers a –1 penalty to all Trait rolls and Pace until the end of the round.

9: As Eight, except the area affected is a Medium Burst Template.

10: As Eight, except the area affected is a Small Burst Template.

Jack: As Eight, except only a single 1" square is affected.

Queen: The gas solidifies quickly and produces a shower of icy shards as it erupts from the vent. These fill a Large Burst Template. If the vent wins the opposed roll, victims suffer 2d6 damage from an Extra.

King: As Queen, except the shards fills a Medium Burst Template.

Ace: As Queen, except the shards fills a Small Burst Template.

Joe's Back!: If Joe was smashed up in the Chase in Scene 2 he's repaired enough of his vital systems to come to the heroes' assistance. He saw the hologram broadcast and worked out the location. The hefty droid has two wounds. As in the previous scene, let the player with the weakest combat character run Strong-Arm. He enters play at the start of the second round.

Turning the Tables: Even if Strong-Arm Joe has switched sides, Angwat's goons aren't easily convinced their boss is out to harm robots—his speech was viewed as a move toward true liberation, something droids have demanded for centuries. As an action, a hero may make a Persuasion roll at –4. A +4 bonus applies if Angwat's face mask has been removed. Success convinces the goon nearest the adventurer to swap sides. On a raise, the two nearest goons become allies.

☆ **Nor Angwat:** See page 17.

☆ **Strong-Arm Joe:** See page 18. If he didn't take part in the previous Scene, Joe has two bennies.

☆ **Robot Henchmen (1 per 2 PCs):** Treat as regular robot goons (see page 18), except they are Henchmen and have the Command Edge.

☆ **Robot Goons (2 per hero):** See page 18.

AFTERMATH

With the threat ended, the mission is over. Angwat, if alive, can be turned over to the authorities. The characters' patron is good to his word—he takes all the glory for ending the robot crime spree, humbly accepts a huge

reward, and ensures the *Blazing Star* is fully repaired. He then arranges for the characters to be ordered off world, never to return!

If Strong-Arm Joe survived, he gives up his life of crime. He sets up a construction company using Angwat's hidden stash of stolen money and begins rebuilding Tin Town.

THE CAST

NOR ANGWAT

The loss of his very profitable business, which in turn cost him his penthouse and wife, sent Angwat over the edge. During a year spent as a lowly laborer to make ends meet (where he learned to wield a chainsaw to great effect), Angwat hatched his vengeful plan. After building a suitable disguise, he infiltrated Tin Town. A few decapitations later, Angwat was head of a criminal gang.

Using his knowledge of the greater city he sent his minions out on a crime spree. The cash was used mainly to buy the materials needed to construct his atomic bomb. All he lacked was a suitable high-yield trigger—the small black box.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d10, Spirit d8, Strength d8, Vigor d8

Skills: Fighting d8, Intimidation d8, Notice d8, Persuasion d10, Repair d8, Shooting d6

Charisma: +0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 9 (3)

Hindrances: Vengeful (Major)

Edges: Command, Dodge, Improved Sweep, Level Headed

Gear: Chainsaw (2d6+4, a natural 1 on a Fighting roll means the saw hits the user)

Special Abilities:

* **Ablative Armor +3:** Angwat's armor is tough, but ablative. Each wound he takes reduces his Armor rating by one point.
* **Cryogenic Coating:** Angwat's armor is specially coated to resist the effects of fridgonium. He gains +2 to escape the effects of being encased (deuce through seven).
* **Face Mask:** Angwat's mask can be removed with a successful Called Shot to the Head (–4). This causes no damage. Instead, Angwat is revealed to be an alien in disguise.

ROBOT SHERIFF BART

A former law enforcement droid, the sheriff was laid off during cut backs. At first it figured Robot Heights wouldn't need a lawman, what with it being a paradise and all, but on entering the slum the sheriff quickly changed its mind. Acting unofficially, and largely ignored by the population until the deputy signed on as his part-ner, the sheriff has vowed to clean up the streets. The sheriff is bipedal and lightly armored.

For reasons unknown, the sheriff calls itself Sheriff Bart.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d8, Vigor d8

Skills: Driving d6, Fighting d8, Guts d8, Intimidation d8, Notice d6, Persuasion d8, Repair d4, Shooting d6, Streetwise d8

Charisma: +0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 7 (1)

Hindrances: Overconfident, Stubborn, Vow (Major: clean up the streets)

Edges: Level Headed, Marksman, Quick

Gear: Blaster pistol (Range: 12/24/48, Damage: 2d6), stun stick (Str+d6 nonlethal)

Special Abilities:

* **Armor +1:** Toughened shell.
* **Construct:** +2 to recover from being Shaken; no additional damage from Called Shots; immune to poison and disease; Wild Cards suffer no wound penalties.

ROBOT DEPUTY WD

The deputy was once a war droid designated WD-40B. This particular model fell out of favor many years ago and WD, as it liked to be called, migrated to Tin Town. There it fell in with the sheriff and discovered a new reason to exist. Now calling itself Deputy WD, the robot uses its chain gun and two blaster pistols to back up the sheriff.

WD is barrel-shaped and has tracks for locomotion. Two spindly arms mount blaster pistols, while a heavy blaster chain gun is attached to the top of its body. Its sensors and voice unit are part of the chain gun mount, while its small brain is protected inside its armored shell.

Deputy WD is a Henchman.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d8, Strength d6, Vigor d8

Skills: Fighting d6, Intimidation d8, Notice d8, Shooting d6

Charisma: +0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 8 (2)

Hindrances: Delusion (Major: thinks it is a lawman), Loyal (to the sheriff)

Edges: Ambidextrous, Rock and Roll, Two-Fisted

Gear: Two blaster pistols (Range: 12/24/48, Damage: 2d6+1); blaster chain gun (Range: 30/60/120; Damage: 2d8; see below).

Special Abilities:

* **Armor +2:** Tough shell.
* **Chain Gun:** The deputy uses its chain gun only to conduct Suppressive Fire attacks. If it uses this weapon in the same round as its blaster pistols, it suffers a multiple action penalty as normal.
* **Construct:** +2 to recover from being Shaken; no additional damage from Called Shots; immune to poison and disease; Wild Cards suffer no wound penal-

ties.
* **Tracked:** Treats each inch of difficult ground as 1.5" instead of 2".
* **Two Fisted:** The deputy is equipped with two blaster pistols. It can fire both guns in a round. If it uses this weapon in the same round as its chain gun, it suffers a multiple action penalty as normal.
* **Wide Spectrum Vision:** The deputy has Low Light Vision and Infravision.

STRONG-ARM JOE

Joe quit his job in the construction industry to enjoy the paradise of Robot Heights. When the dream went sour Joe decided to resort to violent robbery to make ends meet. He ran a successful street gang until recruited by Angwat, who made him his lieutenant. Joe likes to hit things hard, and twist them, snap them, and grind them to dust. He's never used a gun and doesn't see why he should start now.
Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d8, Strength d12, Vigor d10
Skills: Driving d8, Fighting d10, Intimidation d10, Notice d8, Piloting d8
Charisma: –2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 8; **Toughness:** 11 (2)
Hindrances: Mean (when he wants to be)
Edges: Ambidextrous, Block, Frenzy, Mighty Blow, Sweep, Two Fisted
Gear: —
Special Abilities:
* **Armor +2:** Tough shell.
* **Construct:** +2 to recover from being Shaken; no additional damage from Called Shots; immune to poison and disease; Wild Cards suffer no wound penalties.
* **Fists:** Str+d4. Counts as a Heavy Weapon.
* **Size +2:** Joe is 8' tall and weighs a ton (literally).

ROBOT GOON

The robot goons come in a variety of models. For ease of play, all share the same common stat block, however.
Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d4, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6
Skills: Driving d6, Fighting d6, Notice d6, Piloting d6, Shooting d6
Pace: 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 6 (1)
Gear: Blaster pistol (Range: 12/24/48, Damage: 2d6)
Special Abilities:
* **Armor +1:** Metal skin.
* **Construct:** +2 to recover from being Shaken; Called Shots do no additional damage; immune to poison and disease.

SECURITY TROOP

Security troops range from rent-a-cops to hardened mercenaries. These fall somewhere in between. They're not crack shots, but they are trained to fire from moving vehicles, and they're not bad drivers either.
Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6
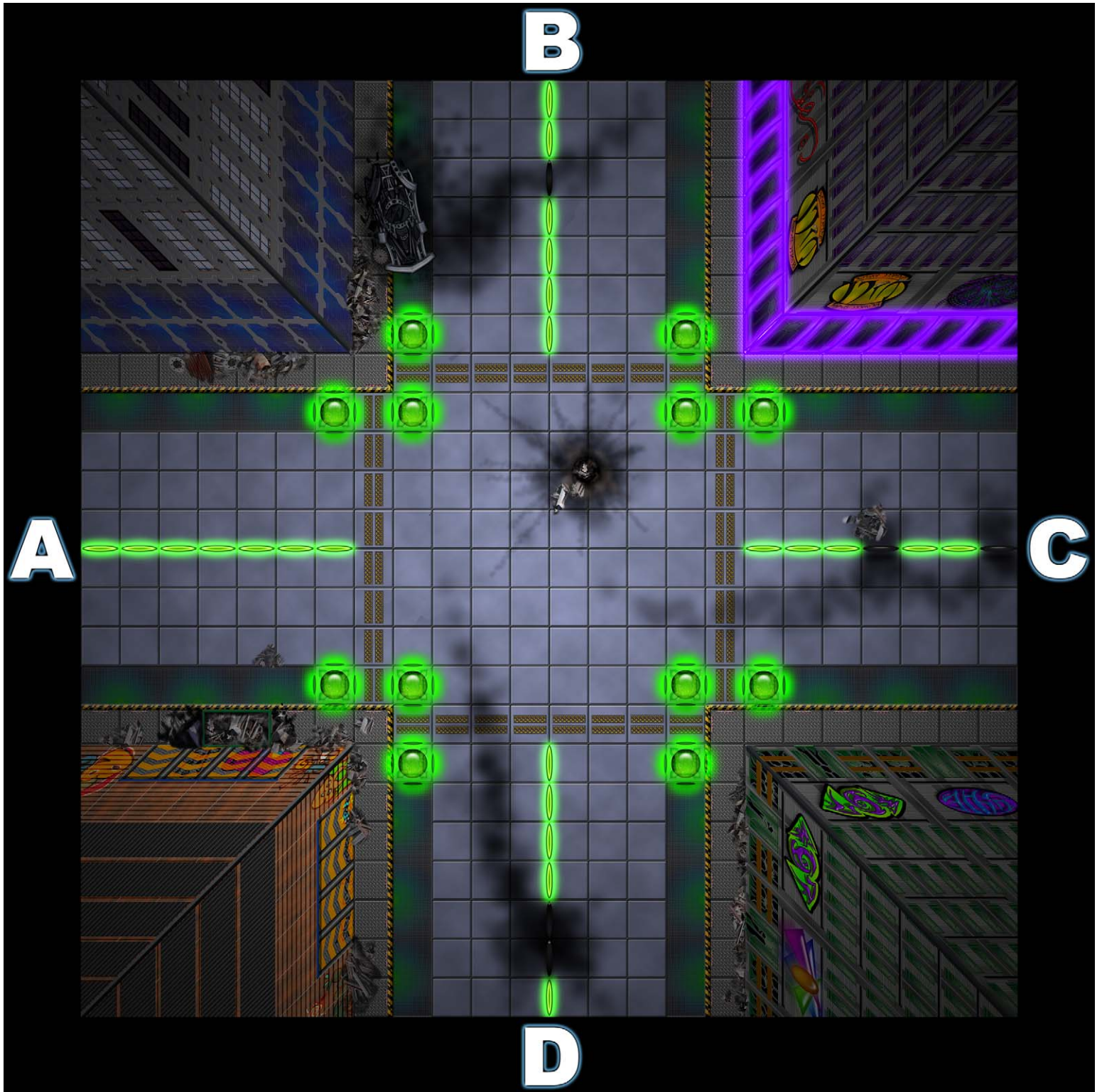**Skills:** Driving d8, Fighting d6, Knowledge (Shields) d6, Notice d6, Piloting d8, Shooting d6
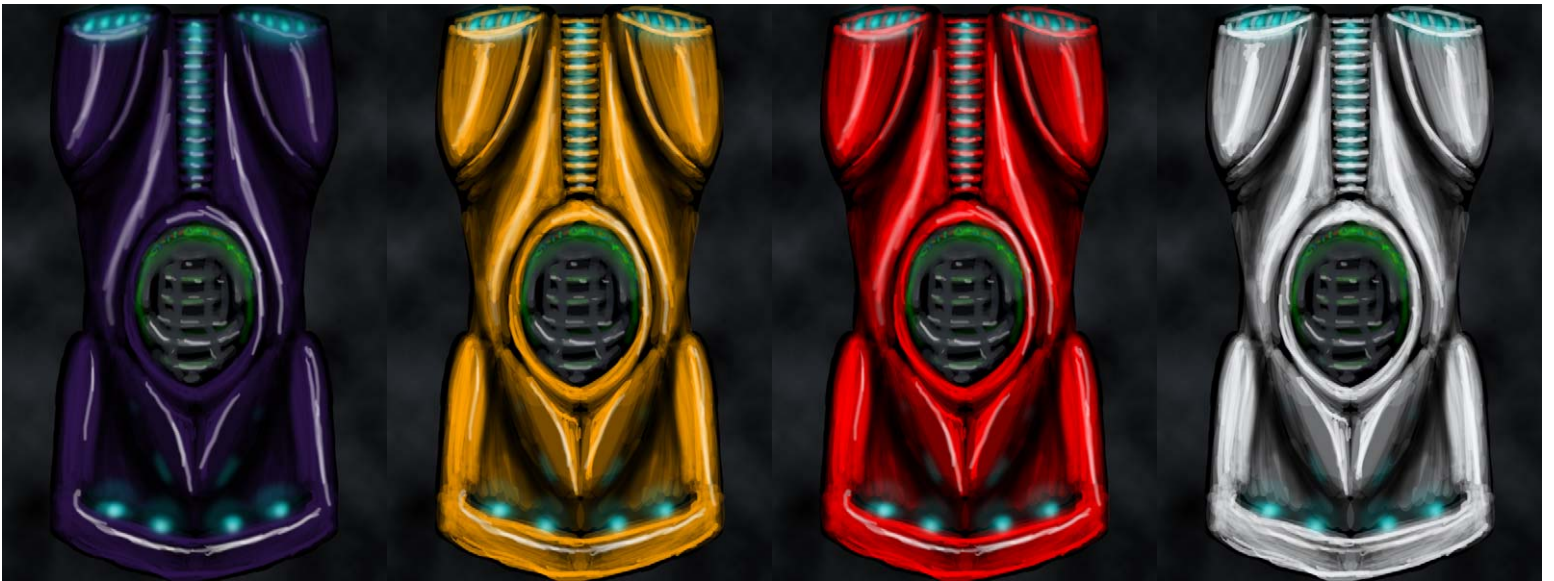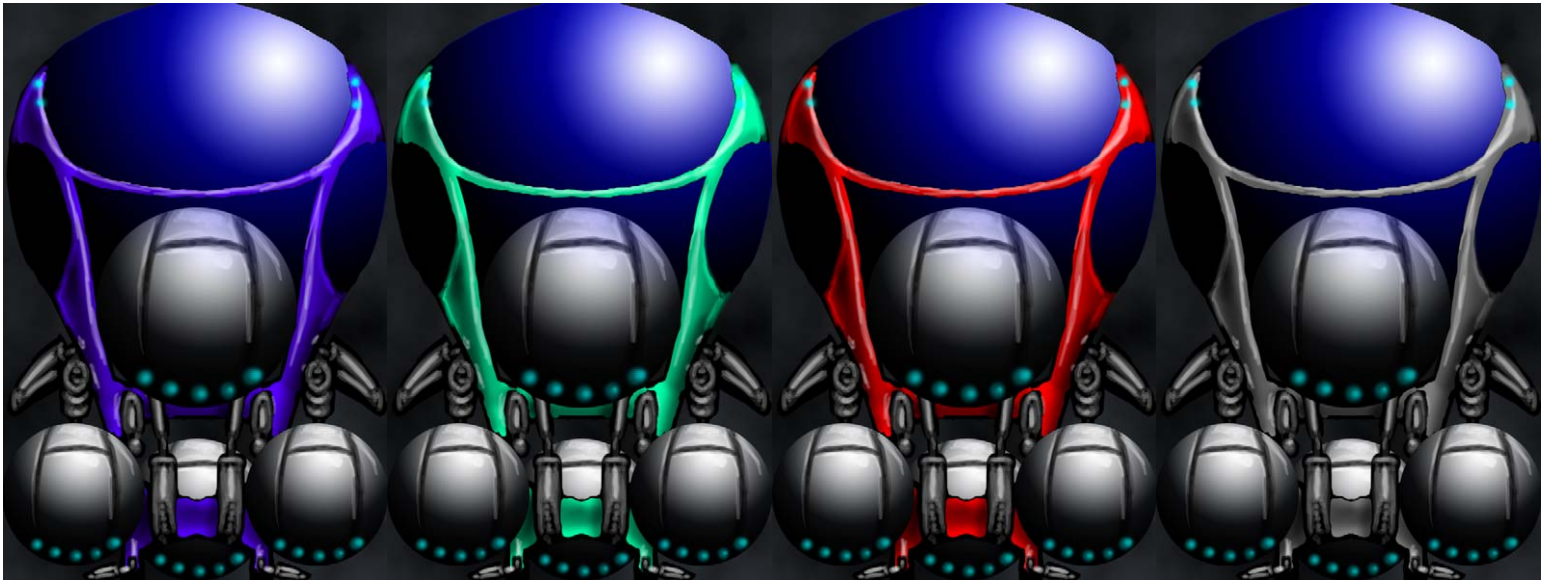**Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 6 (1)
Hindrances: Loyal
Edges: Steady Hands
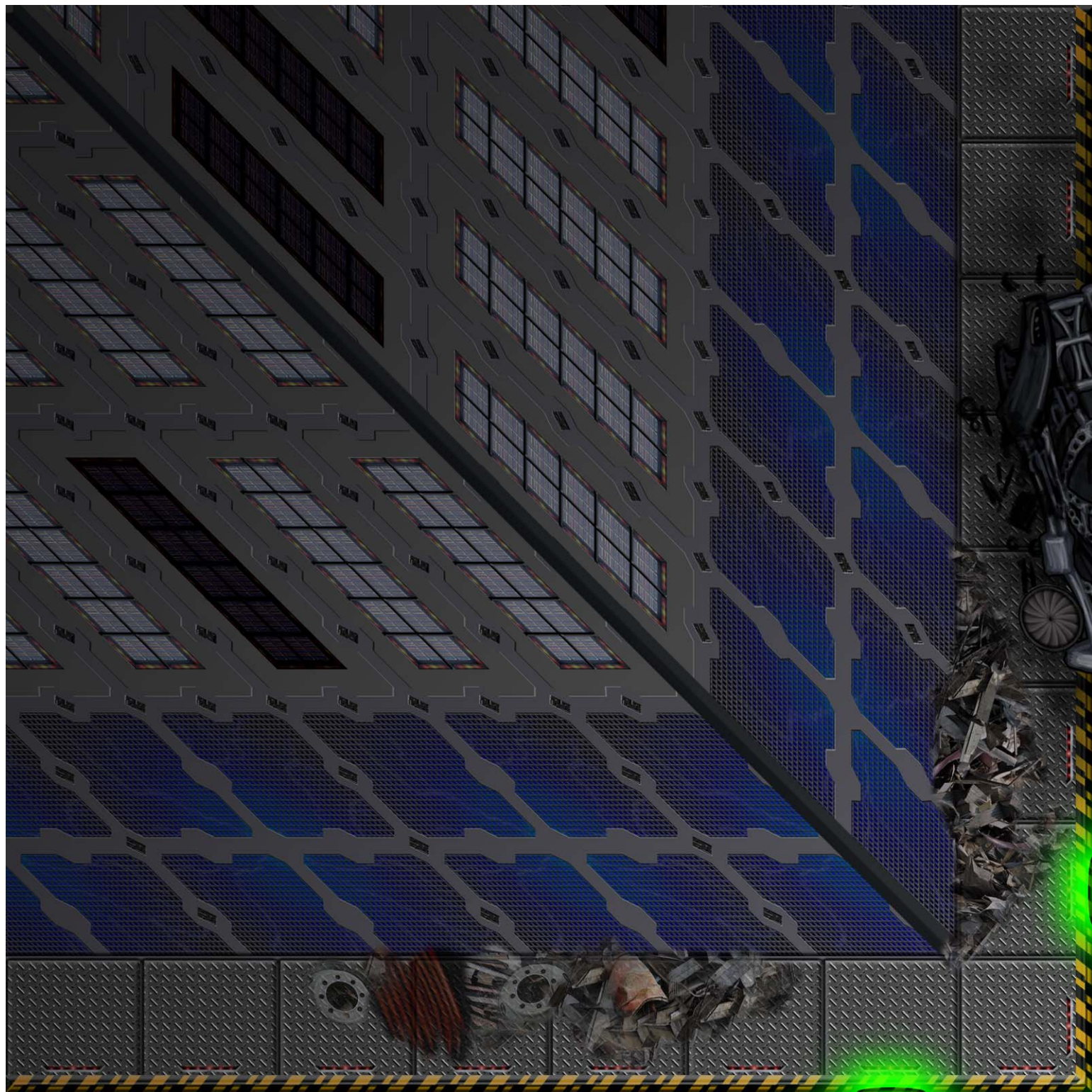**Gear:** Armored vest (+1), blaster pistol (Range: 12/24/48, Damage: 2d6)
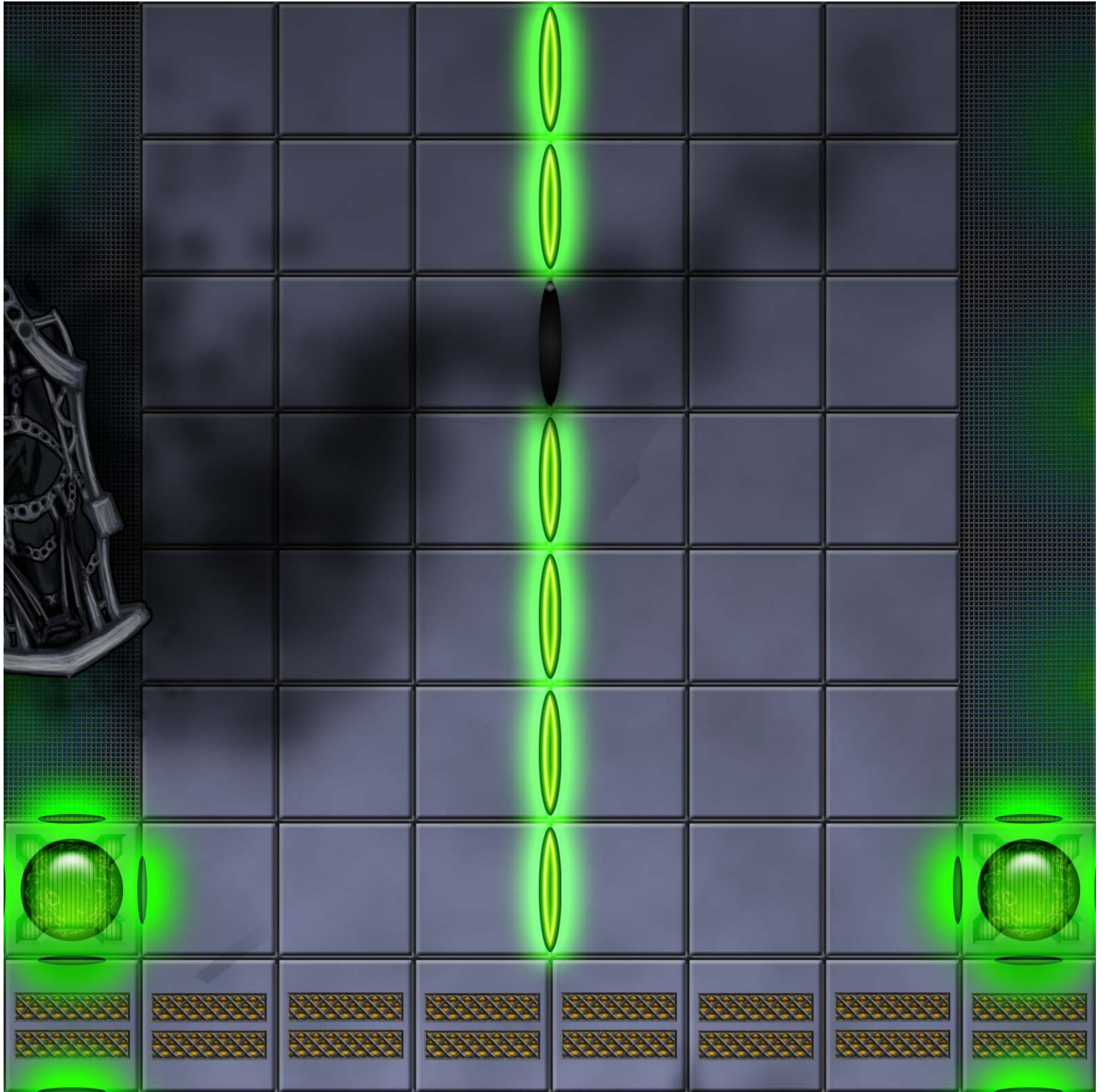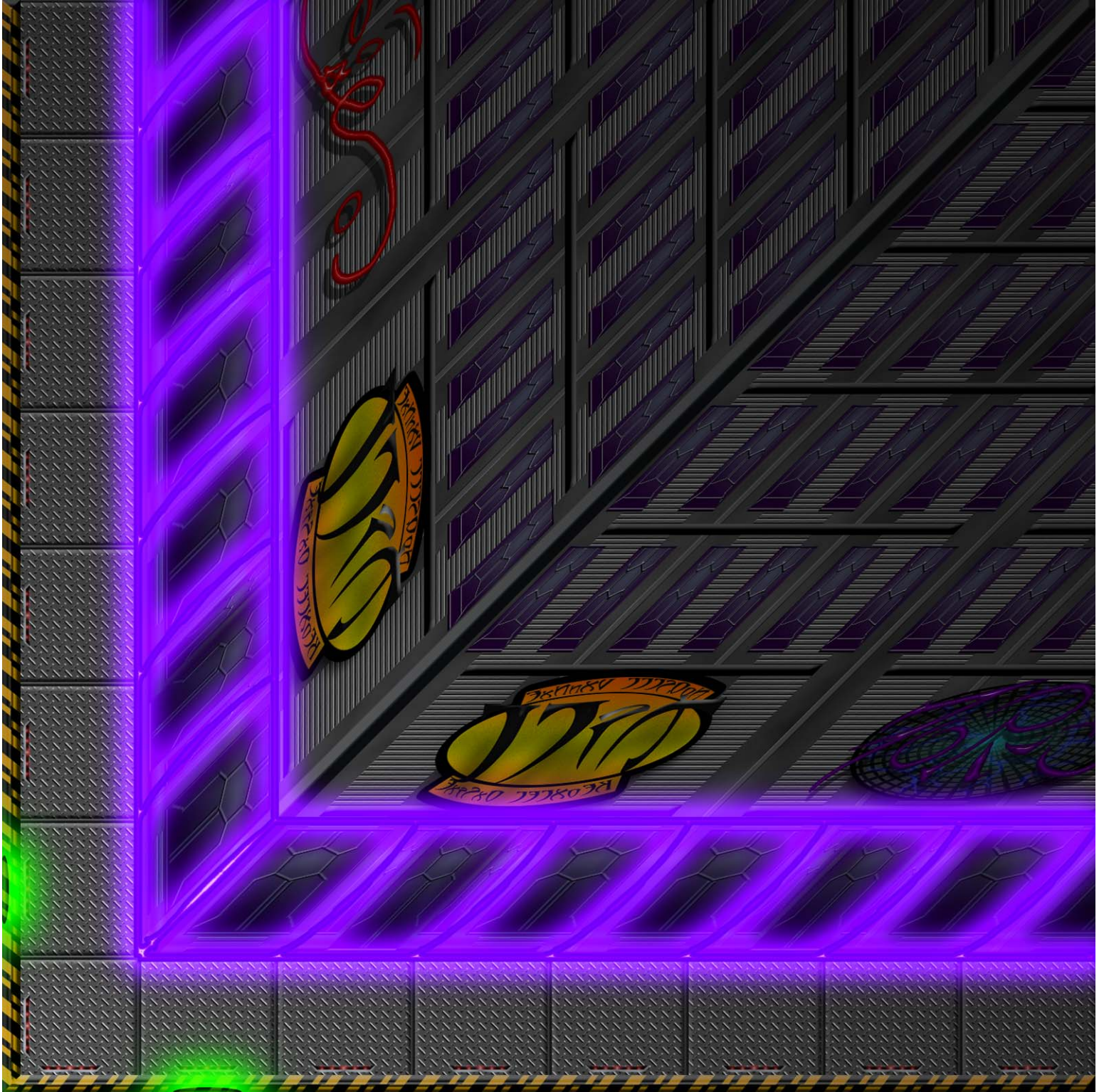
INTERSECTION MAP

HOVER CAR FLATS

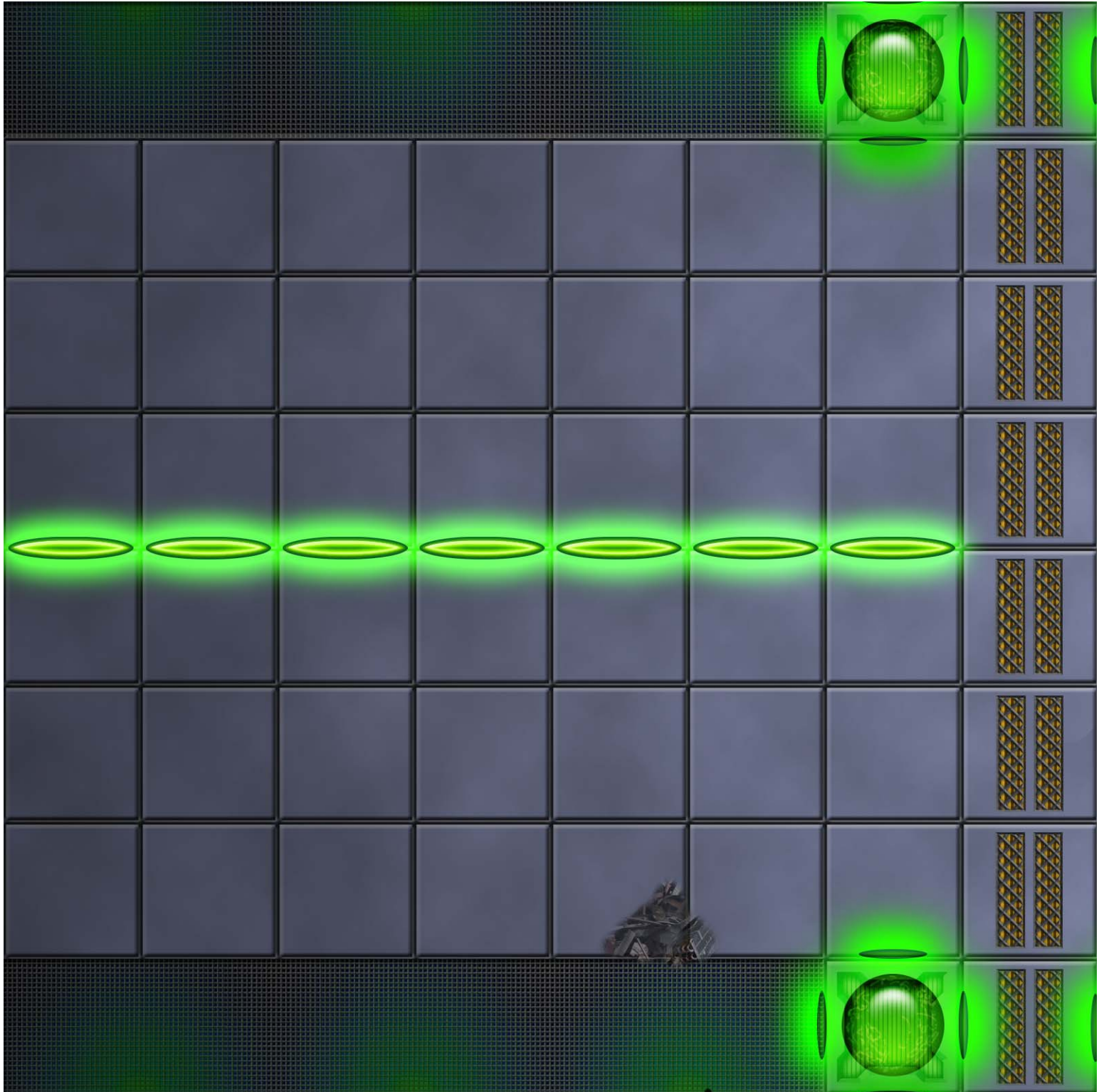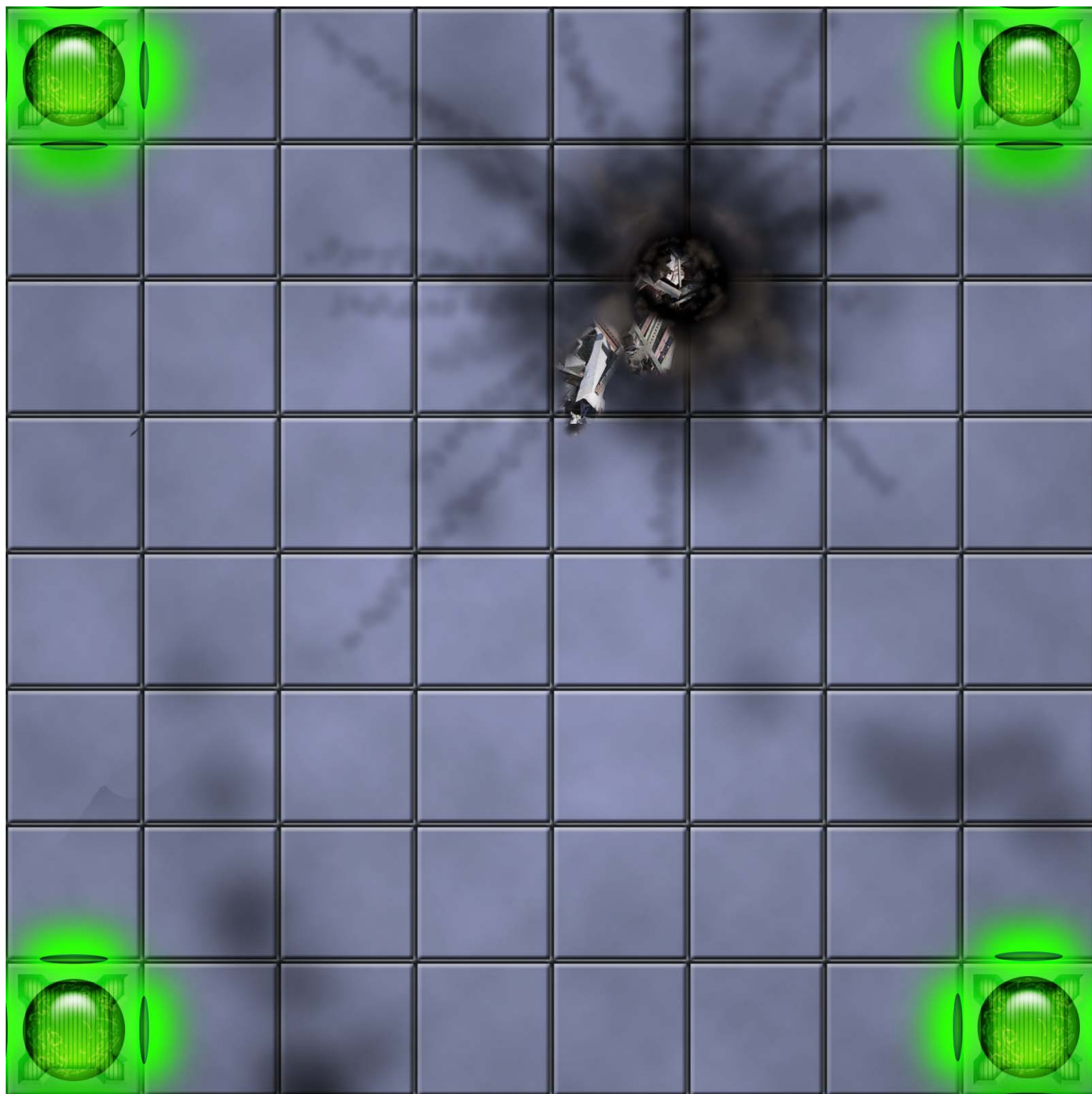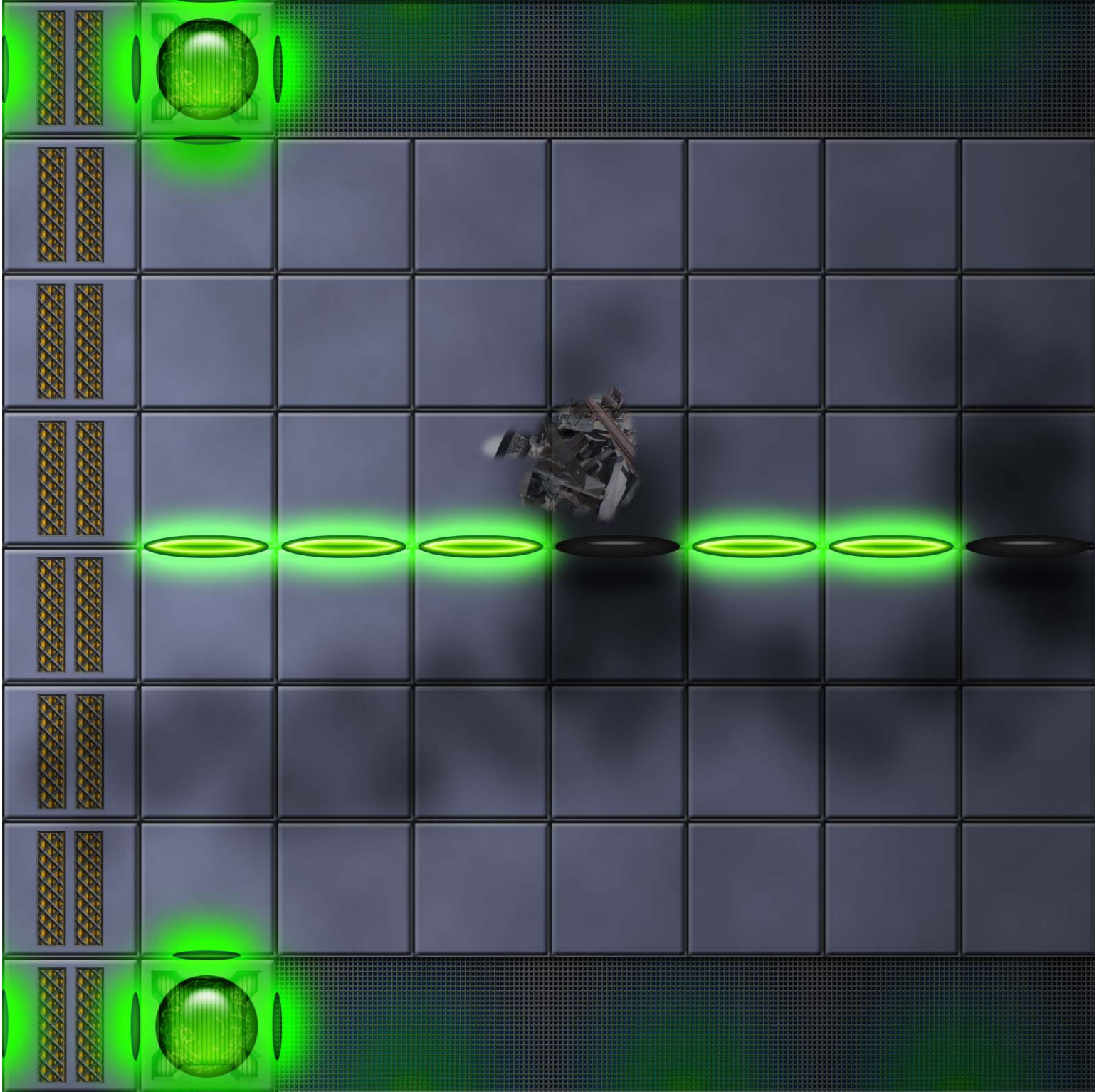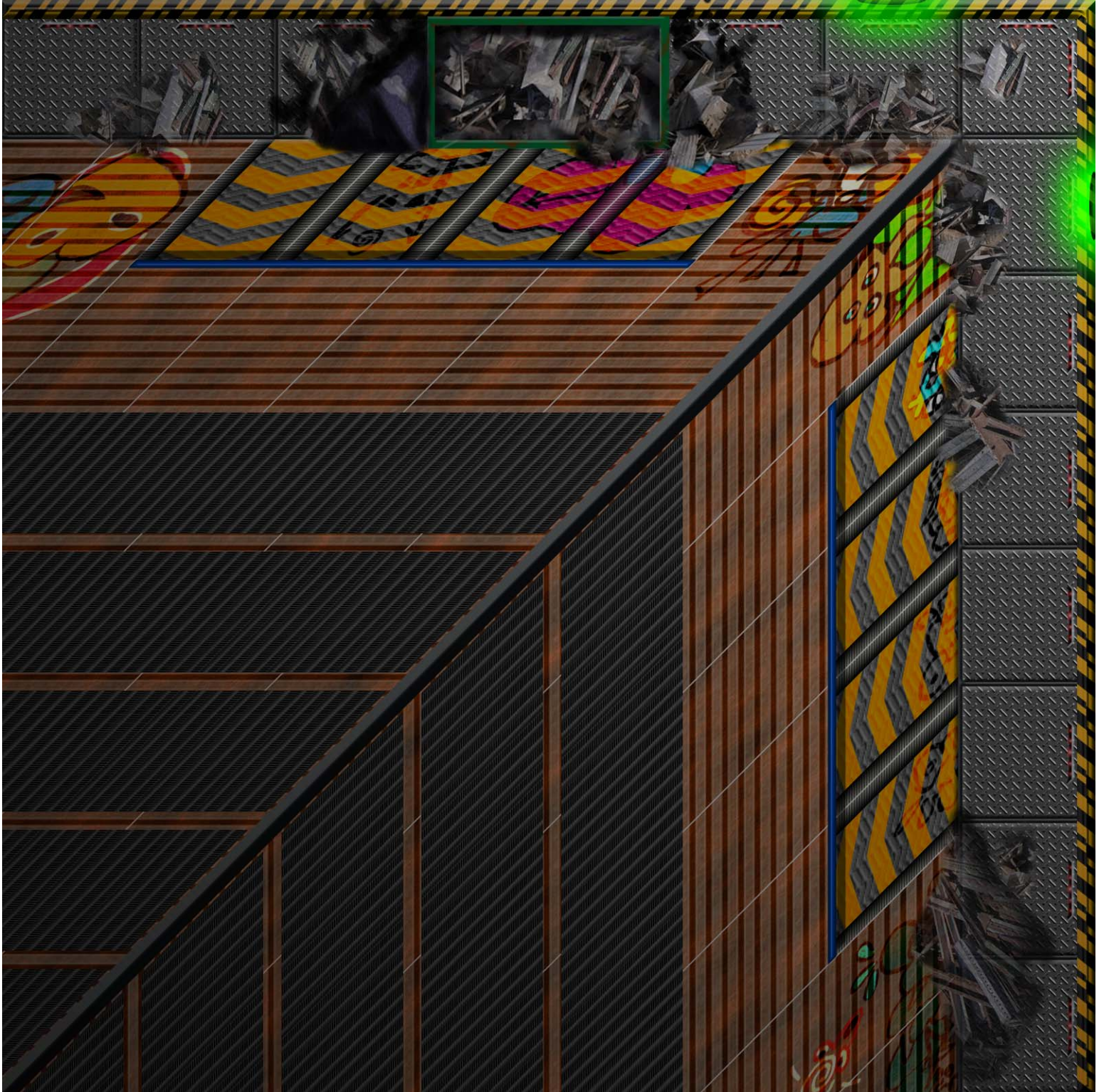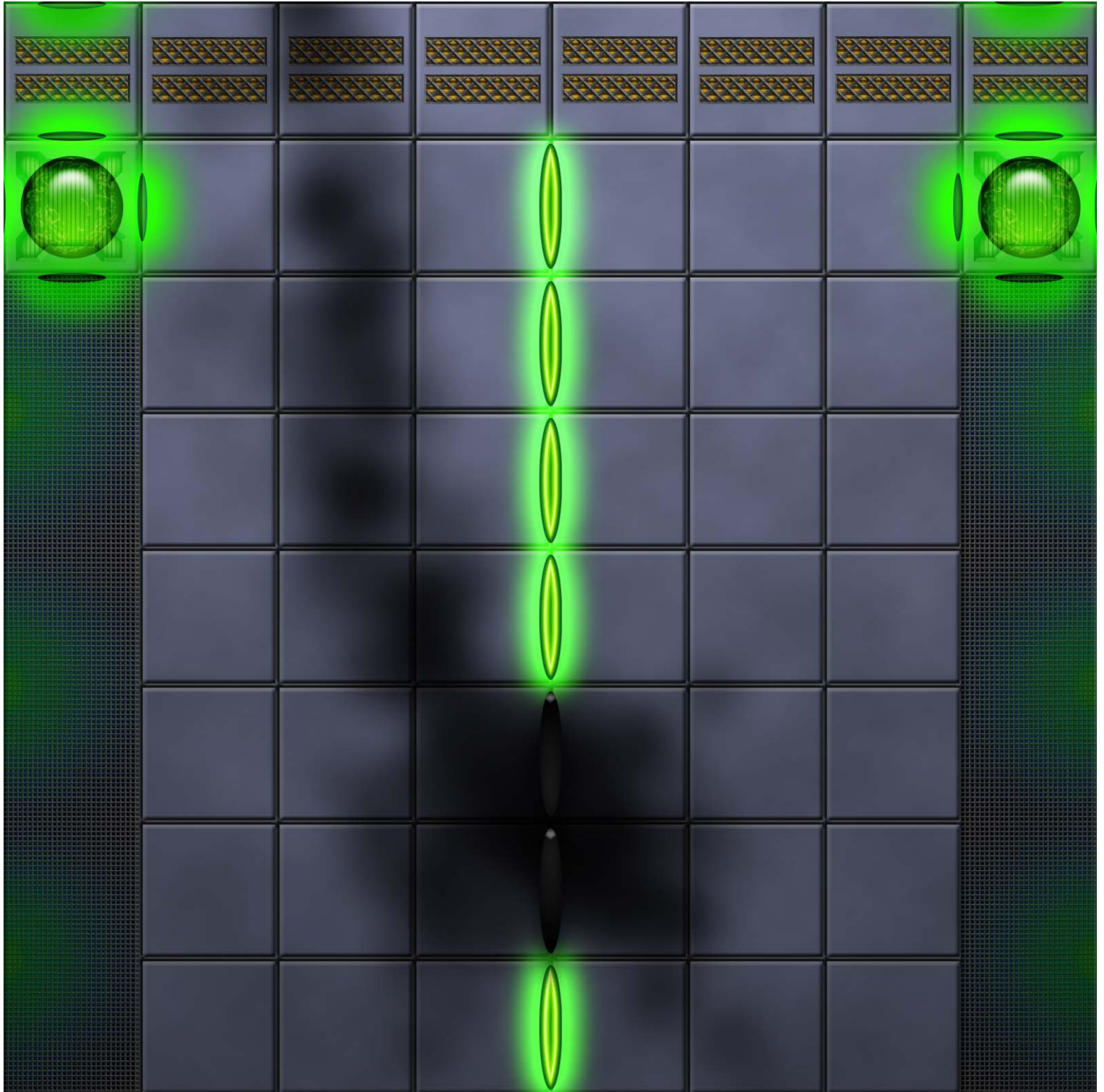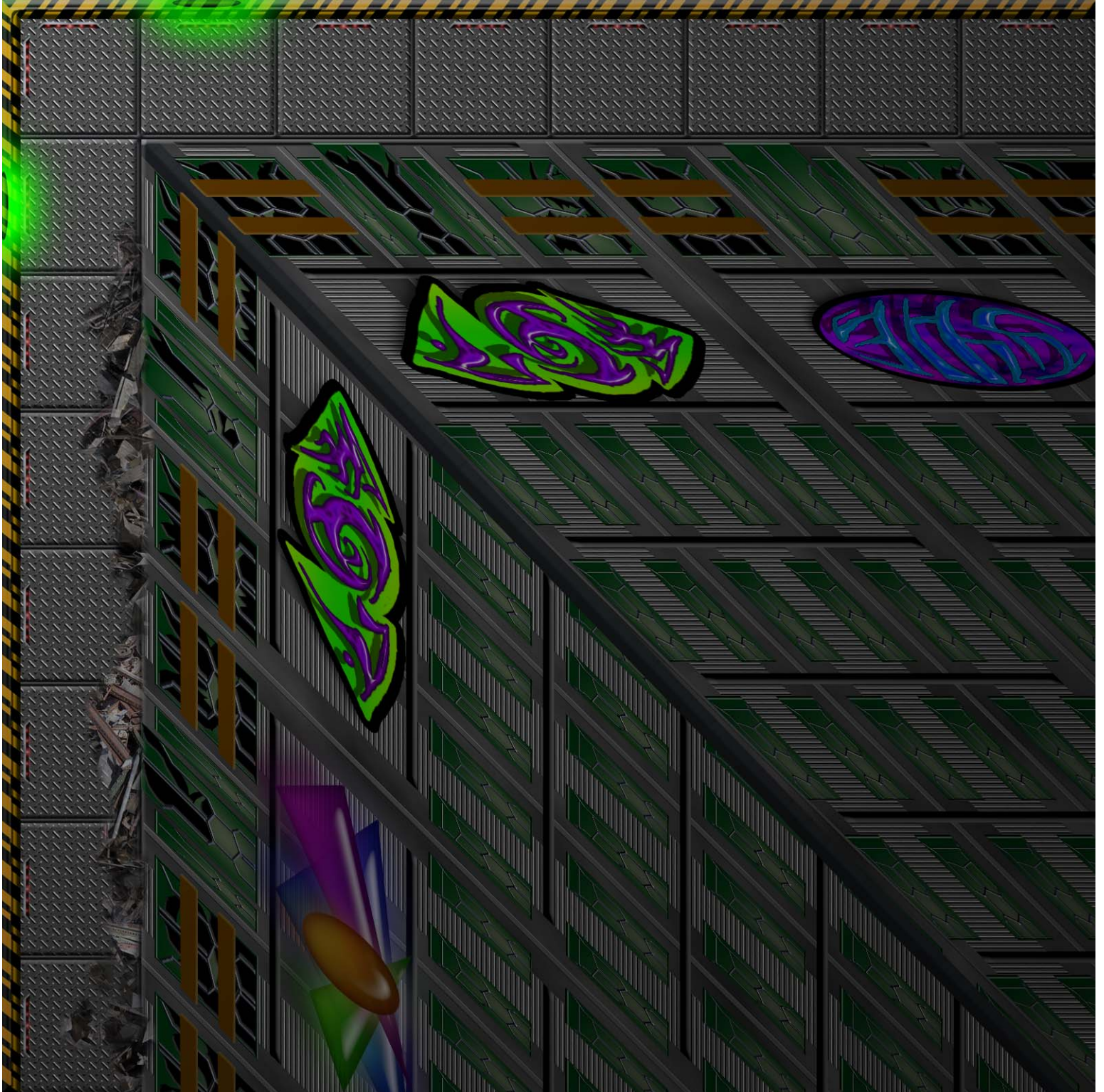# LET'S GET READY TO RUMBLE!

When your trip to Lux III hits "difficulties" your patron suggests a way you can repay him and avoid his lawyers. It's a simple enough task, on the surface; all you have to do is infiltrate a criminal gang, discover who their boss is, and put him out of business. But there's a drawback, and it's a big one. The gang operates in Tin Town, a robots-only slum, and fleshies just aren't welcome there. But fear not, for your patron has a solution; you're going to enter Tin Town disguised as robots!

Have the heroes got what it takes to be a robot and avoid detection? Can they infiltrate the gang and work their way to see Mr. Big? Or is it all going to end in one huge rumble?

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