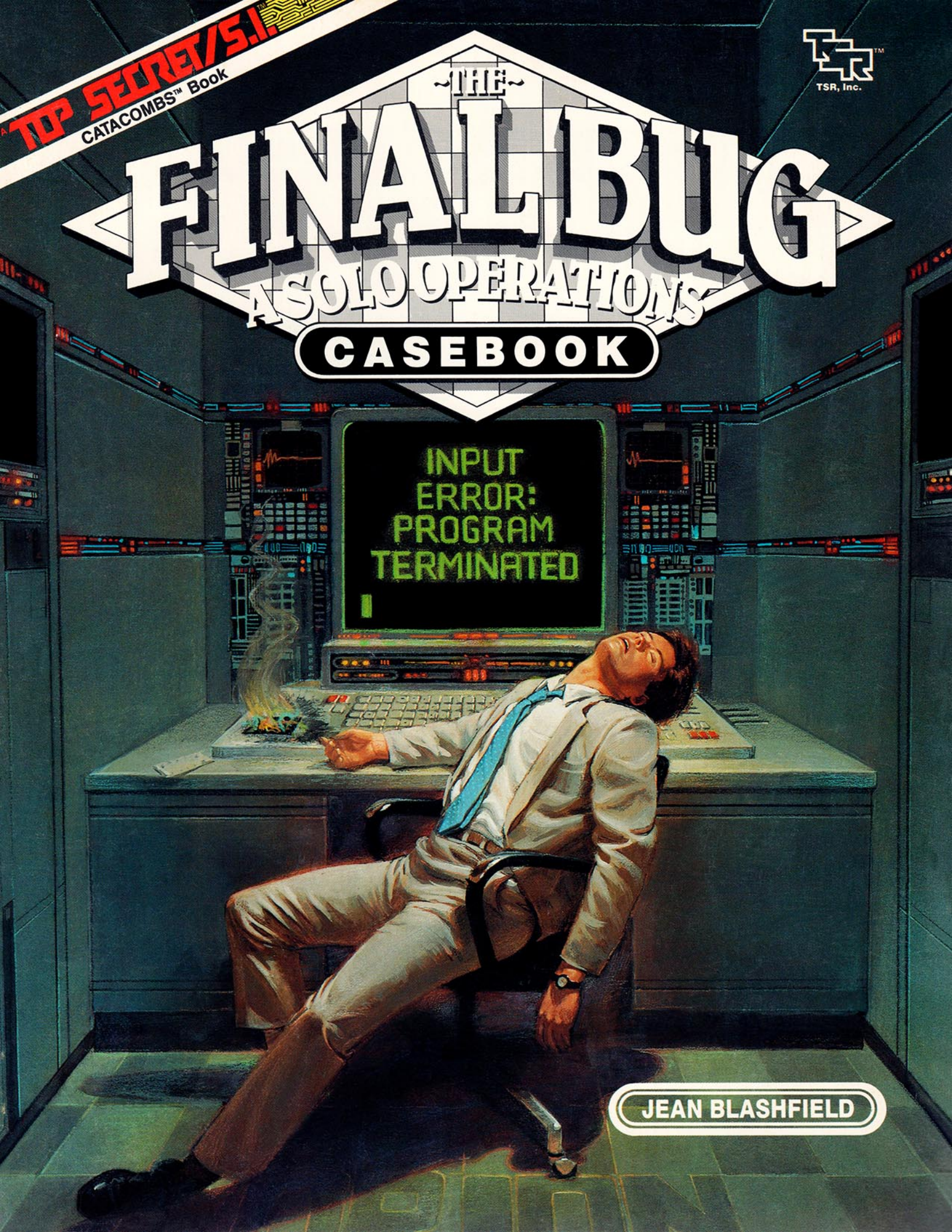


TOP SECRET/S.I.
CATACOMBS™ Book

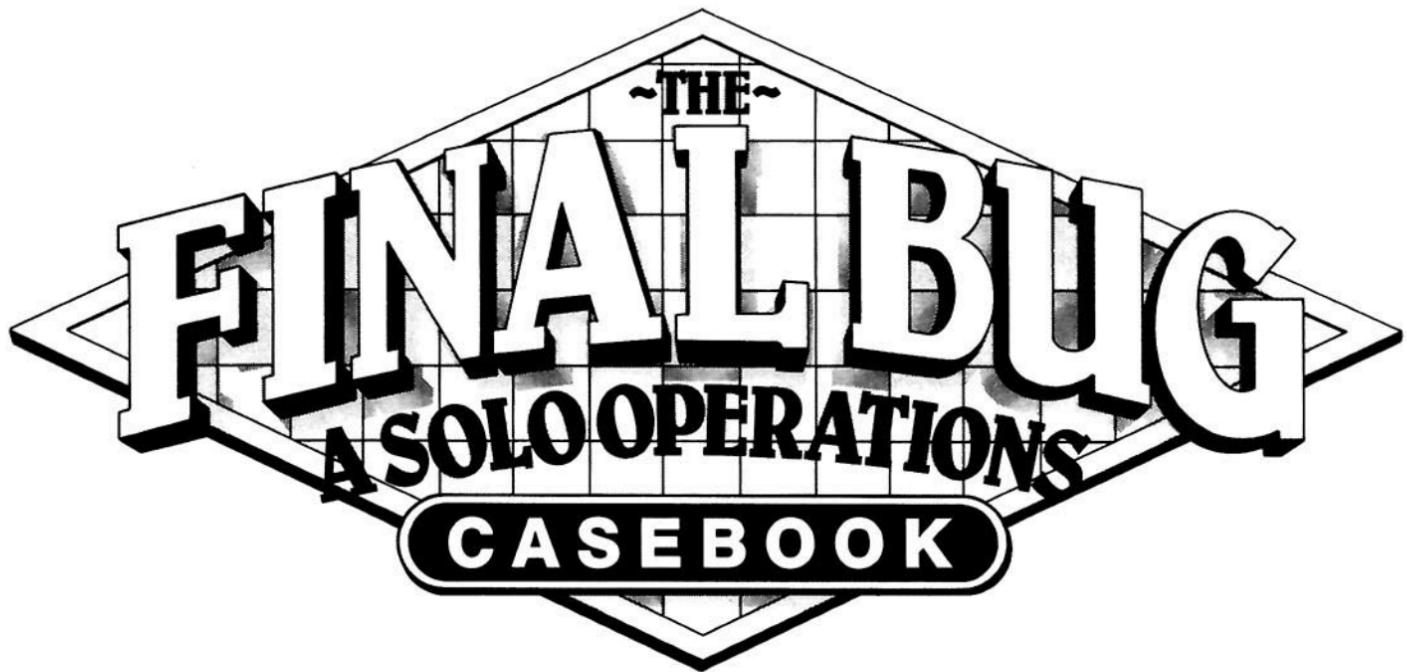
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~THE~
FINAL BUG
A SOLO OPERATIONS
CASEBOOK



JEAN BLASHFIELD

TOP SECRET/S.I.
CATACOMBS™ Book



~THE~
FINAL BUG
A SOLO OPERATIONS
CASEBOOK

By Jean Blashfield

Cover Art by Joseph Chiodo
Interior Art by Jeff Dee

**This book is for
Carol and Wendell Rawlins,
my sister and her husband,
with thanks for the "bug" idea.**

**The Final Bug
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All characters in this book are fictitious. Any resemblance to actual persons, living or dead, is purely coincidental.

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Welcome to the world of international espionage, in which you will fight in the war of good *versus* evil. You are Sebastian Cord, a top secret agent working for the Orion Foundation, the only organization that stands between the Web and its ultimate goal of world domination.

HOW TO PLAY

The Final Bug is both a game that you read, and a book that you play. You participate in making the story happen by pretending to be the main character, a Special Intelligence agent named Sebastian Cord, and making decisions all along the way. Decisions that affect the things that happen to him.

As you read the story, starting on page 6, you will be told to make a choice as if you were the character. Depending on what choice you make, you will be told to turn to different numbered sections within the book. At other times, your character will succeed or fail at doing different actions based on the roll of the ten-sided dice shown at the bottom outside corner of each page, and the scores he has for various abilities. These scores and skills are explained below. The numbers used for Sebastian Cord are already determined and given both below and on his dossier on page 156. However, you may want to play the game using a character of your own invention. In that case, you develop your own numbers as explained below.

At other times, Cord will run into people who want to prevent him from doing what he is trying to do. In those cases, he must conduct combat in order to keep going. How to do that is explained in the "Combat" section below. As he fights, Cord will take damage to his body. If he takes too much damage, he dies and, obviously, fails at his mission. Normally, in a role-playing game, you would have an opportunity for some healing of damage to take place, but *The Final Bug* happens in a very short span of time. So all you can do is restart the game with another Cord or a different character.

As you move through the plot, you will, at a certain point, be told to start using the Time Card that inside the Clue Pocket in the back cover. Remove it before you start to play. There are many occasions in which Cord enters a room and you will be shown a sketch of the room. As Cord explores the items in the room, you will need to keep going back to the illustration, which Cord himself drew, and it is handy to have the card there as a bookmark.

When you are required to use the Time Card, Sebastian Cord will be investigating a place in which the time of day determines what he finds, and deadlines will determine whether he succeeds or fails. At these times, Cord will have to decide between saving time and being thorough in his investigation. Hour after hour, the decisions made will determine how successfully you complete the mission.

Also as you move through the story, you will be told at various times to remove items from the special Clue Pocket inside the back cover. Be sure you only look at the items called for as Sebastian Cord discovers various clues in his investigation.

SEBASTIAN CORD

Sebastian Cord is a Special Intelligence (S.I.) agent employed by the Orion Foundation, a vast international organization dedicated to preventing the evil and nebulous group called the Web from taking control of the political, scientific, and economic sectors of the world.

Sebastian Cord carries with him two major weapons other than his powerful fists and keen intelligence: a modified Mauser C96 automatic pistol, which he carries in a holster under his right arm (he is left-handed), and a hunting knife with a carbon fiber blade, which makes it undetectable by airport security systems.

In addition, he, like all Orion agents, wears an Orioncomm SW1 on his wrist. This is an elaborate calculator/watch, which also turns into a two-way radio. His business-card case is another little item developed by the Ganymede Bureau of Orion, the bureau responsible for special equipment. The case is magnetic and carries an amazingly powerful explosive charge. Cord also carries inside the lining of the heel of his shoe a flexible diamond-edged saw blade that has gotten him out of trouble more than once.

USING THE DICE

You will find printed on each page of the book a number in an illustration of a 10-sided die. You will "roll the dice" by flipping the pages of the book and stopping at random. The number shown on those dice illustrated in the lower left or lower right-hand corners represent your roll.

If the instructions in the book call for rolling just one die, use the one on the left-hand page. If they call for rolling two dice, you will probably be making a *percentile* roll. Then you roll twice, first using the die on the left-hand page as your *tens* roll, flipping the pages again, and using the right-hand die as the *ones* roll. For example, if you get a 6 on your first roll and a 4 on your second, you have the roll of 64.

You will then probably be told to compare that roll with one or another attribute score of Sebastian Cord's. For example, Cord has an Intelligence score of 65. Any roll *up to and including* 65 is a successful roll. With 64, Cord succeeds in figuring out whatever it is. With 82, however, he fails, because the number is *higher* than the attribute score.

If you get zero on a roll, it equals zero if it is the tens digit and 10 if it is the ones digit. Thus, a 0 and a 7 equal 7, but a 7 and a 0 equal 70. Two 0s equal 0, not 100.

Occasionally, you will be told to roll two dice and *add* the results. Such a roll is usually used to determine how *lucky* Cord is in searching for something. Note, though, that when adding two dice, a 0 equals 10, so there can be no roll of 1. The rolls go from 2 to 20.

You can, of course, use two real ten-sided dice, preferably of two different colors, which you can obtain in any hobby store. Just decide in advance which die will be the tens digit and which the ones.

CHARACTER DOSSIER

Turn to the back of the book and carefully remove the last two pages at the perforation. These will be used in combat, which will be explained below. Now, however, the Character Dossier on page 156 is exposed. After you fill it in, following the instructions that follow, you will have all the statistics needed for your character to play the game. If you are playing the game as Sebastian Cord, Orion's top-flight operative, you will use the figures given below. These are the figures used to develop the character for TSR's *DOUBLE AGENT™* books, as well as in the explanations of rules for the *TOP SECRET/S.I.™* role-playing game.

However, if you want to roll your own character to see how the game comes out, insert the statistics you develop in the blanks provided according to rules given below.

ATTRIBUTES

Sebastian Cord is a whole person, with strengths in some areas, weaknesses in others, and abilities that sometimes aren't quite as superior as he wishes them to be.

Cord's (or your own character's) attributes are his or her basic abilities, usually determined primarily by genetic traits, though they may be modified by special training and experience.

ATTRIBUTE	DEFINITION	CORD'S	TO ROLL NEW ONE	YOURS
STRENGTH	Physical power	70	Roll the two dice. Adjust as follows:	_____
REFLEX	Agility and quickness	47	If you roll: Subtract:	_____
INTELLIGENCE	Problem solving ability	65	90-100 20	_____
WILLPOWER	Determination	39	80-89 15	_____
CONSTITUTION	Ability to take damage	54	70-79 10	_____
			0-69 0	_____
MOVEMENT	Speed, alacrity	59	Average of Strength & Reflex	_____
DEXTERITY	Coordination	56	Average of Reflex & Intelligence	_____

SKILLS

Skills are the abilities that a character acquires with experience and education. At the basic level, they generally relate directly to an attribute. With additional training, however, they can be raised to higher levels. Sebastian Cord, for example, has three skills

given in the list below that he has elevated to a greater level, indicated by *adding 5 points* to the attribute score given.

If you are creating your own character, you can choose to put his extra levels of skill with different skills.

SKILLS	CORD'S	TO ROLL A NEW ONE	YOURS
Pistol	61	Dexterity score	_____
Basic Melee	35	1/2 Strength score	_____
Knife	70	Strength score	_____
Driving/Auto	61	Dexterity score	_____
Driving/Motorcycle	56	Dexterity score	_____
Social Chameleon	70	Intelligence score	_____

ADVANTAGES

Advantages are physical, intellectual, and emotional characteristics that not everyone has. They are traits that may be helpful in achieving success. These advantages come into play on special occasions. In this book, there are 6 points worth of advantages to be used. If you use your own character, you may select how these points are to be distributed among the four advantages. Sebastian Cord's points are distributed as follows:

ADVANTAGES	CORD'S	YOURS
Sixth Sense	2	—
Social Graces	2	—
Artistic Ability	1	—
Attractive Appearance	1	—

COMBAT

It's highly unlikely that Sebastian Cord can get through this adventure without meeting one or more individuals who prefer that he does not succeed in his mission. They're going to try to stop you, and you will have to counter those attempts by combat, either armed or unarmed.

Above, you were instructed to remove the two perforated pages at the back of the book to expose Cord's dossier on page 156. Those two pages show small diagrams of a human figure, with boxes covering the head, chest, and abdomen. These are combat diagrams for the individuals you encounter during the game. Use a separate diagram for each encounter. *Permission is hereby given to reproduce those pages only for you to play this game additional times.*

Basically, combat takes place in an alternating pattern, with you determining what happens both to you as Cord and to the person he is fighting. Unless the text says otherwise, Cord always has the first blow.

Combat happens in a back-and-forth sequence of Combat Turns, with Cord's blow or shot and the enemy's response making up one Turn. To determine what happens in a Turn, use the following sequence. For the purposes of illustration, assume that Cord has encountered a guard, and both are using pistols.

Step 1. Roll the two dice. If the roll is the same as or less than Cord's Pistol skill of 61, Cord's bullet has hit the guard. For example, you roll 46; it is less than 61, so Cord's shot hits the guard. However, if the roll had been more than the skill—say, 78—Cord missed, and you would skip to Step 1 for the opponent.

Step 2. If Cord hit the guard, the die roll on the left-hand page (the tens digit)—the same die roll already used to determine if his shot hit—shows how much damage he did. In the same example of 46, his shot does 4 points of damage to the guard.

Step 3. The right-hand die roll, of the same roll used to determine if you hit, shows location of the hit.

Note that in the TOP SECRET/S.I.™ role-playing game, a character's advantages must be offset by a comparable number of points of disadvantages. Cord, for example, is an inveterate gambler, which makes him better known in some of the questionable places of entertainment than is probably good for him. Also, he has a mole on his face, which makes him fairly easy to recognize. However, these disadvantages are not being utilized in this game.

As is shown on the diagram, a 9 or 0 means that an arm or leg has been hit. Such a hit rarely puts a person completely out of action, so it is not used in accumulating points of damage. A roll of 1 or 2, however, strikes the head; 3 or 4, the right side of the victim's chest; 5 or 6, the left side; and 7 or 8, the abdomen. In our example of 46, Sebastian Cord has done 4 points of damage to the left side of the guard's chest. You put an X through each of 4 boxes at that location on the diagram.

When those three steps have been completed for the person with the first shot, you roll the dice again to see if the second person hits, rolling against the second one's own Pistol score, which will be given in the text. Thus you go back and forth until one person is put out of the action by taking 8 points of damage at one location (8 boxes are filled).

Critical hit: Note that the entire combat process can be speeded up when you roll a double number that is good enough to hit. For example, a 44 would be a critical hit to the right side of the chest, immediately killing the victim.

Fighting two opponents: Sometimes Cord runs into two guards. At that time, a Combat Turn consists of Cord's shot, followed by guard 1's, then guard 2's, before Cord gets to shoot again.

Unarmed combat: Either because he has lost his weapon or he prefers the quietness of unarmed combat, Cord occasionally has to fight hand-to-hand. In that case, the blow of a successful hit (rolling against the Basic Melee skill) does bruising damage that accumulates to send a person into unconsciousness instead of death. The damage and location work just the same way. However, use a different mark on Cord's combat diagram to indicate the blows he receives; for example, shade the box instead of putting an X through it. At the end of the fight, those shaded boxes can be ignored or even erased, because bruise damage does not accumulate over several fights as bullet or knife damage does.

Enjoy your adventure as a Special Intelligence secret agent again and again. Turn to page 6 to begin.

The roulette wheel in the hotel's casino is singing its siren song, calling you for the evening. Donning your work clothes—a midnight-blue dinner jacket of superb cut and material—you prepare for an evening of pleasure, when the phone rings. Reluctantly, you answer.

"Cord? Matheson. Get to Denver tomorrow morning. One of our computer operators turned up dead yesterday. Today they're sure it's . . . something we ought to look into."

Sighing, you agree, then you ask, "Is Denver Burkhart's domain?"

When your boss, the head of the New York headquarters of the Orion Foundation, replies that yes, Burkhart is the head of the Denver office, your reluctance leaves you. Denver is where the wondrous Brittany Farrell disappeared to. You knew she was working for Aaron Burkhart, but she carefully neglected to tell you where you might find her when she left your hotel suite for the last time.

"Okay," you tell Matheson rather less grudgingly than you had started to, "I'll be there."

Using the little Orioncomm SW1 on your wrist for a more mundane purpose than it was designed for, you ask the foundation's computer for flight schedules out of nearby Philadelphia, wondering as you do occasionally—though not often enough to do anything about it—about the wisdom of living in Atlantic City by the casinos, instead of in the Big Apple.

There's a middle-of-the-night flight that, with the time change, will get you to Denver at dawn, so you've got a few hours to spend in the casino. Lady Luck calls. To hell with sleep.

As you settle back in the aisle seat of the almost-empty Stretch DC-8, you feel the pressure of your overly full wallet against your backside. Although most of your winnings go directly into your account with the casino at the hotel you live in, you always get a kick out of carrying more cash than is really wise. Must be a holdover from childhood, when your allowance always seemed too small.

When you pull out your sketch pad and start making quick sketches of some of the scenes and people around you, a flight attendant quickly attaches herself to the arm of your seat and spends most of the four-hour flight to Denver oohing and cooing rather seductively in your ear.

Such attention certainly does make a boring flight go much faster, but this woman, try as she might, gets no requests from you to see her after the trip. You're going to see Brittany—the superlative Brittany Farrell. Even though your affair of two years ago was brief, you've never been able to put memories of her completely in the past. Probably, you admit ruefully, because the relationship ended on *her* decision, a situation that left you feeling as if you were walking around with only one shoe on.

Brittany Farrell has been with Orion for about five

years. Originally, there was a movement to make her an S.I. agent like yourself—in fact, that's how you met, on a joint mission—but she had trouble adjusting to the fact that it was impossible for her to be inconspicuous when the need arose. Fortunately, she discovered computers, and the computer experts discovered that she has a mind that can put incredibly diverse facts into meaningful patterns almost as quickly as the computer.

Driving the rental Firebird you pick up at the airport, you find the Orion regional headquarters just off East Colfax in downtown Denver. It's in an old red-brick building six stories high. Though reluctant to leave your car in the run-down neighborhood, you park and enter a dingy health food store. At the back, you enter a small booth containing a tanning bed that apparently doesn't work. There, you insert your Orion card case into a thin slot located in the side of the bed. A door opens in the back wall, you retrieve the card case and enter the hidden Rocky Mountain Region headquarters of the Orion Foundation.

"Sebastian Cord!" The warm, Latin accent tells you that the receptionist is Katerina Valdez, who used to work in New York.

"Katerina! So you came out here, too, when this place was opened?"

"Si. I haven't found a good *enchilada* here yet, but there must be one somewhere around. Now, Burkhart has been waiting for you, but he's busy for a few minutes."

"Could I . . ." You hesitate.

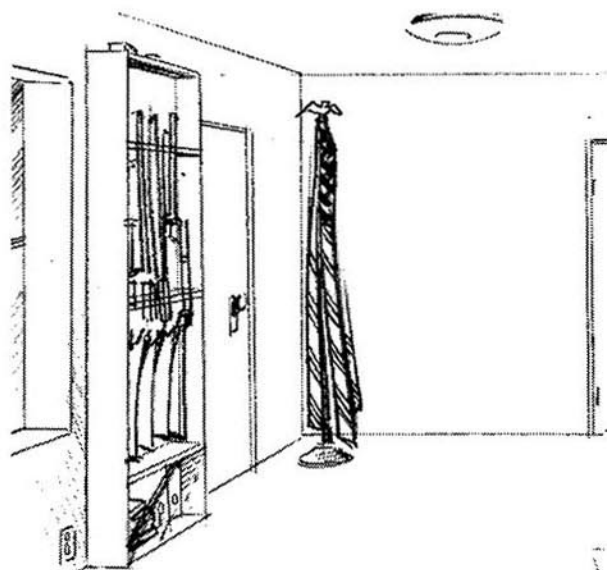
". . . see Brittany first?" Katerina finishes, smiling. She always did know everything. "Sure."

Senora Valdez leads you through several confusing hallways and down two flights in an elevator to a door labeled "COMPUTER."

"Brittany's in there, Sebastian. Her shift will be over in a few minutes."

"Thanks, Katerina. I'll send you some *enchiladas*." As the woman walks away, you open the door, wondering if Britt is going to be glad to see you.

Turn to 7.



The first thing you see on entering is a ball of sunshine lying on a desk. Then you realize that it is Brittany's spectacular golden hair, and that she is resting with her head on her arms.

"Ms. Farrell," you say in a mock-stern voice, "why are you sleeping on the job?"

The golden head stirs, a half-awake sigh sounds, and a sleepy-eyed face looks up at yours. It changes swiftly to astonishment and dismay.

"Sebastian! What are you doing here? Hey, I've been asleep! Why was I asleep? I never go to sleep on duty!"

You still her alarmed chatter with a kiss on her forehead. "I'm here to check into the death of your fellow computer operator."

"Oh, Ed Charnoff?" The expression on her classic face changes to sadness. "Sebastian, find out who did it! He was such a nice guy, and his wife, Millie, is absolutely devastated." Then she adds in a puzzled voice, "I can't understand why I fell asleep. I've never slept on duty before, and I didn't even lose any sleep yesterday. . . . Oh, well. What time is it?"

You check your gold Piaget and say, "Six forty-five. You're off duty in a few minutes, right?"

But your answer has stunned Brittany. "Six forty-five! The last time I looked at my watch it was two o'clock! Sebastian, I *couldn't* have slept that long!"

Her alarm begins to penetrate your pleasure in seeing her. "Better check around and see that nothing has happened while you've been asleep."

She first checks her computer monitor. "That's just as I last did some work on it—I was inputting some data on the last remnants of Nazis in South America." She walks around the room. "Everything looks all right. But let me just check. . . ."

You watch the wondrous woman hold the palm of her hand to a 12-inch-square, deep red plaque set into the wall to the right of the double doors leading to the big computer, which only Britt and the other operators are allowed access to. The security computer finishes checking her palm print and releases the double doors. They slide open . . .

. . . revealing a man slumped backward in the desk chair. There's a faint odor of bitter chemicals in the air, and smoke rises from the computer equipment close to the man's side.

You know that he's dead.

"Who is he?" gasps Brittany. She stands, her face pale, by your side, clutching the door frame. "And how did he get in?"

"Brittany, my love," you say gently, "you'd better be prepared to answer those questions. They'll certainly be asked, and very soon."

"But I don't know him, Seb." Her shaken voice takes on a pleading tone. "Really, I don't! I've never seen him before. And there's no way he could have gotten in. I was sitting at my desk!"

"Asleep," you remind her. "Come on. Let's call

Burkhart. The sooner the better."

The Denver administrator bustles into the room in seconds, consternation, anger, and disbelief all vying for expression on his face.

On seeing the body, he calls in the official Orion photographer. "Photograph everything! This is the second death in two days. Something's going on here!"

You smile at his naive deduction, but you agree with him.

From an easy chair in the operators' room, Brittany asks, "Aren't you going to call the police?"

"Not yet, Britt," you reply. "Orion has to do all its own work first—can't take a chance on local police finding out things they shouldn't." And you know that Brittany Farrell is questioning, probably for the first time, just what kind of an organization she's been working for. The only answer you can give her to calm her law-abiding soul is—"secret, and determined to keep the evil Web organization from taking over the world."

As you and Brittany keep moving out of the photographer's way, Burkhart gradually gets her to realize that she is legitimately a suspect and that it is better for her to cooperate fully, even if that means going to an Orion-controlled hotel room instead of home to await questioning. Finally, she bows her golden head and agrees. As she leaves the room she whispers to you, "Find out who did it, Sebastian, please! I know nothing about that dead man!"

"I know," you reply as you hug her. "Just hold tight, and answer everything truthfully." You give her cold hand one final squeeze of encouragement as she walks off under guard.

The photographer clicks away, finding an amazing number of different angles to shoot from, as you and Burkhart review the situation. Finally, he shakes his head. "That's two deaths in our jurisdiction in a few days, Cord! What is going on?" You look at him and only shrug, then he continues. "I've already got men on Charnoff's death. You concentrate on this. Who is that man? How did he get in? Why was he here? We've got to know!"

Turn to 8.

Aaron Burkhart, the administrator, stands silently beside you as you look around the computer room. Your eyes, however, keep coming back to the body. You bend over and start to investigate the pockets of the corpse's clothes. But there's nothing—no wallet, no identification, no keys, and only about seventy-five cents in change. This man was a pro, aware that he could be caught at any moment.

"Your people will take care of the police-type stuff, won't they, Burkhart?" you ask. "You know—the fingerprints, mug shots, how he got into the building—stuff like that?"

You don't want to admit that you're most concerned with clearing Brittany.

"Sure, sure," Burkhart replies. He signals to some waiting men to come move the body.

"What killed him?" you ask the administrator.

"Some sort of trap on the computer, but I don't understand it. You'll have to ask Perry Smith, the computer specialist."

As the body is carried out, you study the room around you. You've been in enough Orion Foundation offices to know where to find things immediately. The powers-that-be decree a layout for a computer room at each Orion office. The main thing about the setup is that the computer itself is not accessible in any way to the world outside the room. That's the only way to keep the data in a computer inviolate. Modems, terminals, whatever—all are vulnerable to interception.

Here at Orion, however, the computer operators enter their new material onto disks on a desktop computer out in the operators' room. Only when they are ready to transfer the material from the disk into the mainframe computer, or when they need to get something out of it, do they enter the big room and sit at the keyboard and monitor there, though an extra PC sits nearby.

The operators are supposed to be the only people ever to enter the computer room. But, obviously—you look again at the chair where the body had lain—someone else did. And your friend Brittany is being accused of letting it happen by selling out.

Burkhart shuffles uneasily at your side. He doesn't like being ignored, and you've been staring around the room in silence for some time now.

Just at that moment, a man enters the operators' room and looks startled at seeing the double doors to the computer room open. "What's going on, Aaron?" he calls. Then his eyes widen at the sight of you. "Sebastian Cord!"

"Foster Needham!" you exclaim, hurrying to clasp the older man's hand.

Behind your amenities, you're shocked at what you see. Not that there's any very obvious change in the man since you saw him about five years ago. But the finely polished edge has been lost. He could even have been called dapper before. Now his suit isn't

quite clean enough, his shoes haven't smelled polish in a long time, and he could do with a closer shave. From the man who valued quiet sartorial elegance, this is dissolution indeed.

Foster Needham smells of failure.

Both of you together ask the same question: "What are you doing here?"

He forces you to go first. "I'm checking into Ed Charnoff's death, and now this new one."

"New one?"

You tell your old colleague about the body found in the computer room.

Burkhart breaks in. "Sebastian, Foster here"—he gives the man a rather condescending hug around the shoulders—"is one of our most valued computer operators. In fact, he's on duty now. That's why he's here." You're startled; Foster Needham used to be a field agent. What could have happened?

You watch Burkhart lead Needham to the door, telling him that he's to go get some coffee, that you need time in here now. Needham's to come back to work after you're through here.

As Needham's footsteps disappear in the distance, you ask, "Why's Foster working in the computer room?"

"Well . . ." Burkhart stares at you, as if checking your need to know. "Needham has a bit of a problem—gambling, actually. And it's made him pretty vulnerable out in the field. Matheson thought he'd be better off here."

You shake your head in sorrow for Needham, but also to cover the shudder that goes through you at a sudden vision of yourself in twenty years.

Ready to change the subject, you say, "Why don't you get on with your own work, Aaron? No point in my taking your time while I'm looking around."

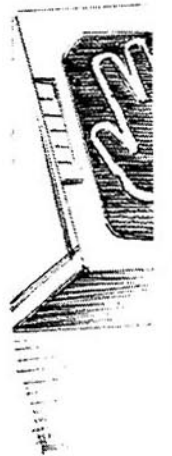
This man who always wants to appear in control hems and haws for a minute, then says, as if it were a new and wonderful idea, "Why don't you go on and look around in here, and I'll go check into some other things?"

"Good idea," you say with a straight face as Burkhart leaves you alone with the computer.

The first thing you do is pull your ever-present sketch pad out of your pocket. The soft pencil you prefer follows the pad. You learned long ago that if you make a quick sketch of the details of a scene—even if you tear it up or burn it immediately after—you "see" what you're looking at in a way that you don't with your eyes alone. Making the sketch creates an agenda in your head.

You may check the:	by turning to:
computer itself	153C
computer security	135E
computer room	88D
death of Ed Charnoff	16F

When you have done all you want in the computer room, go into the operators' room (64A).



10A

Gradually, you get a story out of her. She is Dr. Sarah Graham, a geneticist who came to the laboratory about six months ago to work on a special project. It was good money, and a chance to put some away to maybe invest later in a commercial genetics laboratory.

"To sell blue jeans?" you ask.

"Funny, but I've heard that one at least a thousand times." Then a small smile crosses her face. "But thanks for trying."

"What have you been working on here?"

She looks at you for a long moment, as if testing your intelligence, then says, "Well, it's supposed to be a big secret because it's commercially important, but . . . we've managed to change the genes in a virus to make it produce an enzyme that, when it reaches the brain, will control the mood swings of manic-depressive patients. This can be very valuable, and make life worth living for such people."

"Sounds good. So what's the problem? Why'd the guards lock you up?"

"Well . . ." she finally admits, grudgingly, "I guess I got carried away. Karl—that's Dr. Pachezny, says the cultures are ready, and he's leaving tonight to deliver them to Quintessential, the firm that's been backing our research. And . . . well, I don't think it's ready. We haven't proved yet that we can replicate the gene's recombination and the bacteria's cloning. And I threatened all sorts of horrible things—like destroying the samples so they couldn't take them and reporting them to the FDA. So they threw me in here." Her voice grows very small and puzzled. "I don't understand."

"Rather unusual for a business enterprise to imprison its scientist," you say thoughtfully.

"This place does unusual things. I was hired after a whole group of four scientists were let go all at once. I've tried to find what they did wrong, but neither Aleta, Karl, nor the guards will talk about it. Speaking of not talking . . ."

Sarah looks directly at you and demands, "And who the hell are you?"

"Someone who wants to help. 'I came up here to the lab to investigate what was going on, and wasn't as careful as I should have been.'"

The two of you talk for a long time, you telling her enough about Orion to make her trust you, and her revealing her own doubts and fears. During the conversation, you urge Sarah to try to figure out what effect the recombinant virus might have that would be valuable to . . . well, to people who might be less than ethical. That's certainly one way of referring to those making up Web.

She starts describing some of the reactions they've had from test animals—lethargy, surprising obedience from the usually willful chimps—they behave well, but are no longer much fun to play with. They don't seem to know how to play anymore.

"What do you think the effect would be like in a

human?" you ask.

"That's difficult. You can do all the tests you want on animals, but the moment you switch to humans, you may get results you don't anticipate. But I'd say that you'd get a very passive person, one who still has his brain power but needs to be told what to do because he would have no will of his own."

You think rapidly. "That would make such a person very useful, wouldn't it? Think of how convenient it would be to have such an employee . . . or"—your mind reels—"such a slave!"

As Sarah gasps, you marvel once again at the villainy of the Web organization.

"And there must be some sort of deadline from the people backing the research," you add. "They're demanding the cloned bacteria now."

"But . . . but we've got to stop them!" exclaims Sarah. "I heard Aleta tell Karl that they were going to take a train just after midnight tonight. And he said he would have the culture ready to travel. It takes half an hour to get down to the train at Moorland. Oh, Sebastian, we've got to get out of here!"

If you and Sarah are locked in the room, turn to 104E. If not, turn to 42F.

10B

You stand still, staring around the car. If you know that there is someplace else you should be looking in this car, turn to 41A. If you think you'd better move on, turn to 56A.

10C

Your mind has churned enough during sleep to make you decide, upon waking, that you want to observe the male operators outside of work and see if they do anything that will cancel or reinforce your suspicion.

After a tasteless vending machine breakfast, you call Burkhart. If you are waiting for a chemical analysis test, turn to 69D. If not, turn to 54D.

10D

Your first glance through the window reminds you of the computer room back at headquarters—without the dead body. You see, then, that only a small part of the room contains the computer. The rest is work tables and lots of shelving. It's a library of sorts, though it doesn't look like one that would be very relaxing. Return to 150A to place another room or move on.

11A

Within seconds you are handcuffed and standing in front of a very angry Aleta Marcus, armed with a machine gun.

"I thought we'd seen the last of you, Mr. Cord. Well, this time I'll make sure of it!"

She orders you to turn around and the gun jabs you in the back. "Just walk ahead of me, Mr. Cord."

You think you're going to have a chance to turn abruptly and grab it from her, but when she tells the guards to return to their duties, that she'll take the problem from here, she moves back a bit. You can't reach the gun, but she's not too far away to miss you if she pulls the trigger.

The Web agent directs you to the basement hallway and through a door below the guarded lobby. You find a plain, unused-looking classroom.

"Are you planning to teach me a lesson?" you ask, cool laughter in your voice.

"Of course not. It's too late for you to learn a lesson. I am planning to dispense with you. You've been responsible for entirely too much disturbance around here." As the woman talks, she goes to the chalkboard and, still holding the gun on you, pulls a concealed lever mounted flush with the chalk rack on the bottom of the board. "You can join the others who tried that."

On the last word, the floor opens up beneath your feet, and you tumble toward a pit in the earth.

You land hard, but looking up, you see the light of the classroom turning Aleta's flamboyant red hair into a golden halo. "Good-bye, Mr. Cord," she says.

You see her stepping over to the lever again and realize that you're about to be left in darkness, in an unknown slimy pit. Quickly, you look around, trying to get a grasp of your surroundings before the lights go out.

What you see takes your breath away. You are standing in a bowl carved out of the earth beneath the building. Most of the mud is coated with a flowing, oozing bright blue substance, and sticking out of the blueness is a nauseating collection of bones. Human bones, you can see at once, perhaps of six or eight bodies.

"What is this place?" you shout, as the floor above you starts to close.

"It's where inquisitive people go to die," Aleta calls down. "Just one of our little experiments in recombinant genetics that didn't work out quite as we expected, but it has proved very useful. The blue stuff— isn't it pretty, Mr. Cord?—is a slime mold that we gave the ability to eat animal flesh. Oh, it's very efficient. Even as you stand there, it's beginning to nibble away at the skin of your feet and ankles. Don't you feel it, Mr. Cord? I imagine that the ones who went before you were quite insane with pain and fear before they actually died."

Giving an involuntary shudder, you try automatically to lift your feet from the ooze and stand on

something solid, but there's nothing except bones.

"But I'll be kind, Mr. Cord. I won't leave you to go crazy." And before you realize what she's doing, she turns her machine gun on you and fires. You fall into the blue ooze, never knowing that within days all fleshly remains of Orion's greatest Special Intelligence agent will be gone from this earth.

11B

It's nice and clean, just the way you would keep a truck. But you wonder vaguely where the key is. [1X]

Return to 104A.

11C

The small bottom drawer contains clean stationery, but the top drawer is a deep one meant to be used for file folders. The labels show that the files are the kind of stuff found in any office. You know you don't have time to go through them all, but you decide to pick out two files at random and see if they contain anything interesting.

Roll one die.

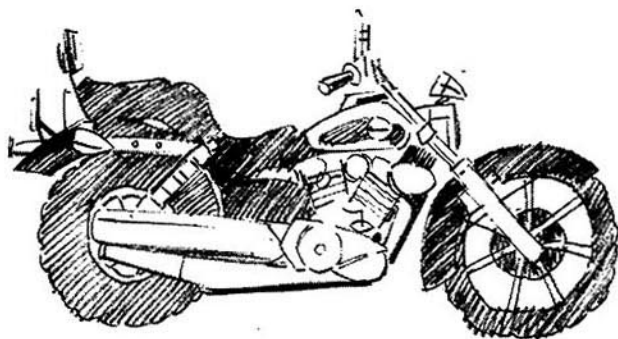
If you get:	turn to:
1-2,	141B
3-4,	109D
5-6,	123C
7-8,	120A
9-0,	45D

11D

You prowl through everything in the garage as quickly as you can, but you fail to find the key to the Kawasaki. By the time you accept that you're not going to, too much time has passed to use the truck to chase Aleta down the mountain.

You're going to just have to use it to reach the train station in time for the train to Los Angeles.

Turn to 28G.



12A

But the Titan Team isn't needed. You're halfway down to Moorland when the top of the mountain explodes. All traces of the Web installation are gone. Only you and Dr. Graham have survived to tell the tale.

12B

You walk closer to the board and see that the central portion of the chalk holder is made up of a double strip of metal. Bending down so that you can see underneath, you realize that the bottom strip is part of some mechanism that is hidden in the wall.

Turn to 50E.

12C

Hoping Aleta hasn't become aware of you yet, you follow her car down the twisting mountain road, thinking of the best way to go about ramming her Ferrari. However, the road suddenly widens out, and it occurs to you that you have some other choices. If you still want to ram her, turn to 17E. Otherwise, you can try to pass her and set up a roadblock (86C), or shoot out her tires as you go by (31C).

12D

After a few minutes, you climb stiffly from the truck, ready to explore this place for anything that you think might be helpful. [4X]

Turn to 104A.

12E

A few things have accumulated in the middle of the table where people push them when they sit down. There's an empty envelope addressed to "Joe Dirkham" mailed to a post office box in Moorland. [1X]

Also in the middle is a paperback book with a rather lurid cover. If you want to take time to look at it, turn to 118C. If not, return to 124A.

12F

Because the bacteria cultures have already been disposed of, only these papers remain to cause problems. You can get rid of them now (47C) or steal them and get off the train (101C).

12G

The man looks startled, then gives a sarcastic laugh and says, "Yeah. That's what I'm trying to do, too, but I'm not having much luck."

"What's puzzling you?" you ask, sitting down beside him as if you belonged there. He's in such a stew about something that he takes your presence completely for granted and even welcomes it as a chance to share whatever is bothering him.

"Strange things are happening here. . ."

"Like what?" you ask when he pauses. "First, tell me your name."

"I'm Artie Sadler. Sarah and I've gone along for

weeks working on our little recombinant virus, making progress one day with the monkeys, none the next with the cats, keeping our notes. Everything good little scientists are supposed to do. All that time, Dr. Pachezny has listened to us report each day on our progress or lack of it, nodded, said "Good," and then went back to Aleta—I know he's supposed to be a great scientist, but he certainly seems more interested in that woman than in genes right now."

"So what's bothering you?" you ask. "Maybe I can help."

"Well, this afternoon, Sarah—that's Dr. Sarah Graham, a geneticist; she's been working here for months; I just came in a few weeks ago—well, Sarah told me that Pachezny told her to finish up everything this afternoon and that he was leaving with the bacteria tonight. Sarah objected, said it hadn't been tested enough, and he said that it was none of her business. He was in charge and he was ready to turn it over to the people who had been paying our salaries all this time."

"Is it finished?"

"I wouldn't have thought so. It needed a lot more testing to be sure it was safe. But what do I know? I've just been here a few weeks, replacing another hungry young scientist who decided to take his talents elsewhere."

"What is the 'it' you mentioned?" you interject.

"It's a recombinant virus that makes a special enzyme. When the enzyme reaches the brains of manic-depressive persons, it calms them down to an even keel. Makes them easier to live with."

"Sounds helpful."

"Yeah, but it hasn't been tested enough to even be ready to submit tests to the FDA for approval. So why would the backers want it now? And besides, where's Sarah?"

"Dr. Graham? Isn't she here?"

"No. That's what's got me worried. I haven't seen her since a couple hours ago when she and Pachezny were talking in the lab. And I know there hasn't been any transportation off the mountain since then. I'm afraid she's disappeared, too."

"What do you mean?"

"Well, scientists have a way of disappearing around here. Sarah replaced one named John Carrier."

Suddenly you're worried, too. [3X]

If you came into the lounge looking for a place to hide, turn to 20B. However, if you were freely exploring, turn to 46E.

13A

When another bullet enters your body, you know that this is the one, the one that finishes the career and life of Sebastian Cord. Will Orion ever know where you died, you wonder? Will they care? . . .

13B

If the time is between eleven-thirty and twelve o'clock, turn to 96D. If it is within 2X of midnight, you find the outer door of the garage wide open; turn to 87E.

13C

When you touch the photocopy machine, you discover that it is slightly warm, as if it were kept turned on. Just on the off chance, you lift the lid, but no one has left an original in it. [1X]

Return to 48A.

13D

Among the clutter on the workbench, you discover a pair of police-type handcuffs, which strikes you as strange. The sight sets you wondering if someone, somewhere in this place, is being kept prisoner.

Something to keep in mind, you think, taking the key . . . just in case. [1X]

Return to 127G to make a second roll. Otherwise, turn to 104A.

13E

You glance into the lounge and find yourself wishing that you could join the two men inside who are busy relaxing—watching TV, reading, whatever. Right now that has more appeal than trying to get inside a place that doesn't want to be gotten into.

Oh, well. It won't be through this window, anyway. No point in taking on two people. [1X]

Turn to the chart and see where to go for the next room on your diagram.

13F

You make it safely to the room you're heading for.

If that room is the:	turn to:
kitchen,	44B
laboratory,	32B
animal room,	78A
garage,	53B

13G

Turn to page 49 and glance at the picture. Do not study it in detail and do not read the text.

You peer into the small office, your eye caught once again by the wonderful red-leather couch. If this place belongs to Web, they are certainly treating their people well, these days. But then your eyes focus on something else: the wonderful, lustrous hair that you recognize from Denver. The redheaded woman is standing, talking to a worried-looking man seated

behind the desk.

You're about to turn away, knowing you can't go in this window, when you realize that the window is open slightly and that you can hear their conversation.

"Look, Karl," says the woman, "that damned Sarah Graham thinks she's God's gift to science. There's no way she's going to agree to let the stuff go tonight."

"So?" interjects the man named Karl in a somewhat timid voice. "What can we do about it?"

"You, Karl. What can you do about it. You can lock that witch up until after we've gone. Once we've left for Moorland to catch it, I don't give a damn what she does."

"If we're gone, my dear, how . . . how will we let her out?"

"I'll leave instructions with the guards." You hear a peculiar twist to her voice.

"Won't they wonder why we've locked up our top scientist? After all, I'm wondering, too." His mild voice is beginning to sound very worried.

You don't see what happens next, but you can imagine. You hear the sound of movement and then the woman's honeyed voice: "Oh, Karl. Everything is going to be so wonderful when this is over. You'll have the prestige that your brilliance entitles you to. We'll have the money from the company that paid for the research. And most of all, we'll be together."

"Just a little longer, my darling. Don't rock the boat now. If Quintessential wants the stuff now and they want it in absolute secrecy, then that's what Aleta Marcus is going to give them, so we can be together."

After a moment of silence except for some "mmmmms," she adds, "And if the guards ask, just tell them it's Quintessential's orders. They know where their bread is buttered."

The two talk a few minutes longer about what they will do after "the train trip." Then there's a moment of silence followed by the door opening.

You duck into the shadows and hold your wrist so you can use your Orioncomm SW1. You quickly punch in a message asking headquarters for information about Aleta Marcus. [3X]

Then you head for the next room you want to try to enter (by turning to the chart on the inside back cover). After you have gone to the next room, turn to 134B.

14A

You stare from behind the trees at the wide glass door leading into the building. Just inside, you see a bright room with a desk on one side, papers that appear to be roster sheets pinned to the walls, and a reception area. There's a door to the left, and an open hallway on the right near the desk, though you can't see where it goes, and double doors at the far end. There are several chairs spread casually around, but the two guards on duty appear to be busier talking together than paying attention to anything else. You know, though, that if they are trained at all—and Web would have only trained guards—most of their attention is focused on looking and listening for signs of things that shouldn't be there . . . like you.

. . . But will they know that? Maybe you can get in by pretending to belong there. Like guards everywhere, they probably aren't kept abreast of who in the organization has the right to be there and who doesn't. [2X]

If you want to try to bluff your way into the building, turn to 62C. If you want to take the guards out with some well-placed shots, turn to 109B. However, you could try to trick them into leaving their post (101B).

14B

The bookshelf contains mainly technical books that must belong to the chief scientist. From the evidence of the room, you doubt that he's done much book research while he's been here. You also find a highly illustrated but confusing copy of *A Layman's Guide to the Implications of Recombinant DNA*. [2X]

Return to 136A.

14C

You need to disconnect the blasting cap. If you want to try to remove the gummy stuff—you think it's wadding—around the wires, turn to 58C. If you'd rather pull the wires out, turn to 142C.

**14D**

Knowing full well that Aleta is trying to draw you through the corridors to where more guards will hear and come to help her, you manage to slow her down with some accurately placed shots.

Before she reaches the corner in the corridor, one more bullet finds its home and sends the evil woman to the floor, beautiful even in death.

If there is someone in the building you promised to "rescue," turn to 43A. If not, 56C.

14E

Mark DeWitt's drawer shows that he is an operator on the way up. He's got a nifty little book on computer vocabulary, full of illustrations that maybe even you could understand. There's a copy of a Bill Granger novel—you just hope that Mark doesn't think that's the way an agent's life should be. There's also a bottle of expensive after-shave and an electric razor. You doubt if there's a wife waiting at home for this fellow.

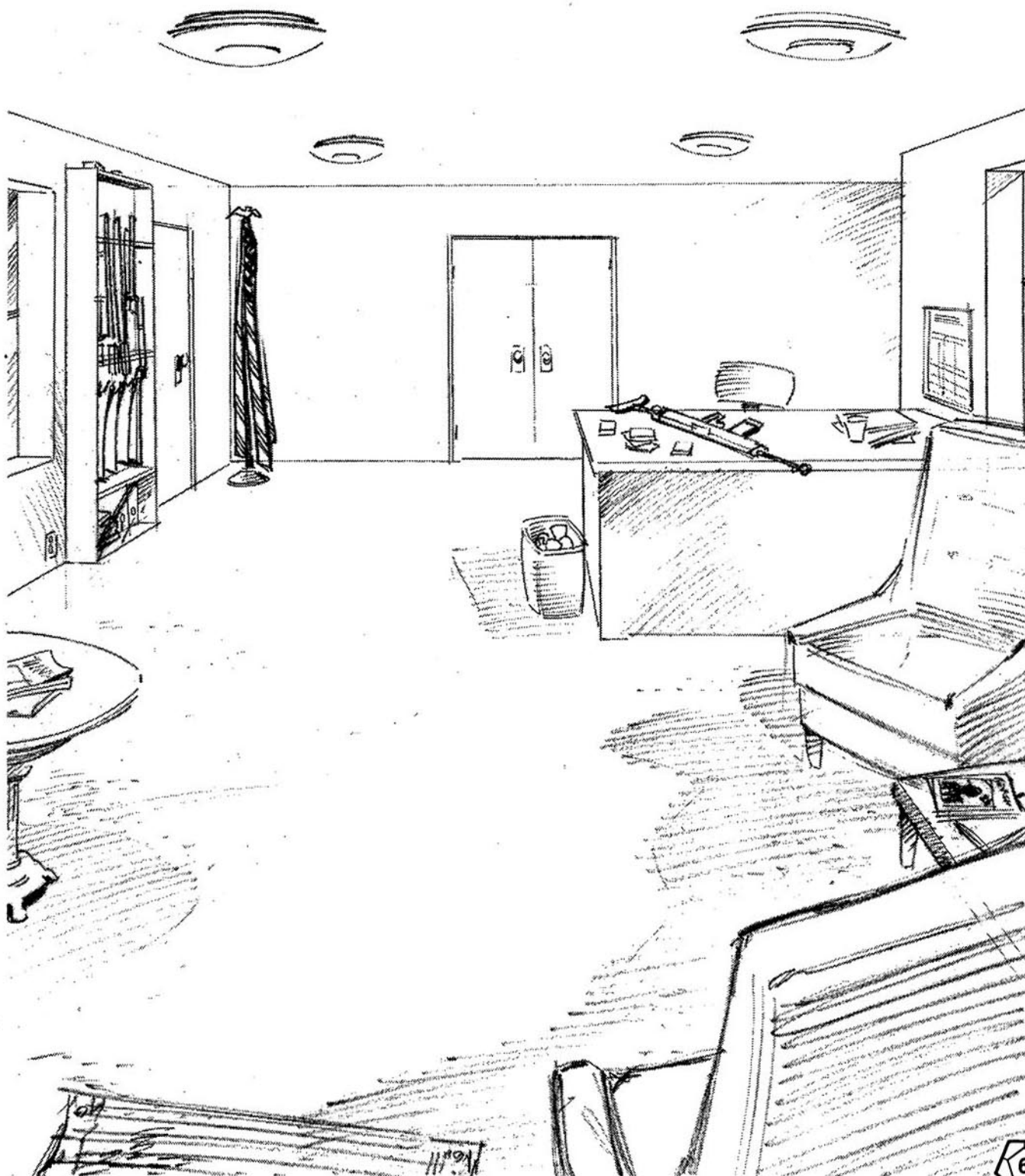
Your eye is caught by a small three-fold brochure. It describes a luxury train called the Mountain-Midlands Express. Suddenly the words *scenic*, *mountains*, and *luxury travel* make you yearn for a vacation.

Turn to the pocket at the back of the book and remove the brochure. When you are through studying it, return to 106D, unless you've checked all the drawers, in which case, return to 64A.

14F

To see if you can bluff her, give yourself 1 point for each of the following questions that you have the answers to.

1. What is the full name of the person in charge of the mountaintop laboratory?
 2. What is the ostensible purpose of the scientists' work at the laboratory?
 3. How does Web plan to use what the scientists have created?
 4. When are they taking the samples away from the laboratory?
 5. How and where are they taking them?
 6. Does the chief scientist belong to Web?
- Turn to 56E for the answers.



16A

The briefcase is open because Aleta was working on some things from it when you entered the private car. You glance at the paper she was writing on and see that it was the barebones beginning of a report on the genetics laboratory, but it isn't addressed to anyone and she hadn't accomplished anything beyond the opening sentence.

The briefcase, however, is another matter. It is filled with papers, some of which appear to have been stuffed in, as if she gathered them up in a hurry. You pull a big handful out and spread them on the table to study them.

Roll the two dice, adding the results. If you get 2-6, turn to 74G. If you get any other number, turn to 61C.

16B

Recognizing that it's just as dangerous to *half* remember something as to forget it entirely, what should you do? Cut both wires (80E) or just one (134E)?

16C

You walk around the nice little Toyota truck. You usually live in cities—closer to the gambling—but every once in a while, you daydream about living in the country and having a pickup. You could bounce across the landscape, haul all the fish you can catch, and just look sporty.

Laughing at your daydream, you look inside. Turn to 43B.

16D

You leaf quickly through the cards and discover a Jack of Spades with a red lipstick mark on it. Since that Jack is *your* card, and Brittany knows it, you wonder . . . well, you wonder what might have been.

Turn to 124F.

16E

You may not know what was being developed here. But if you know when Aleta will be leaving to deliver it, turn to 110H. If you don't know, turn to 118G.

16F

Returning to Aaron Burkhardt's office, you plop yourself down in front of his desk and say, "Talk to me about Ed Charnoff." You know such a vague request is going to get his goat; he's a firm believer in telling no one anything unless it is virtually forced out of him.

"Nice man," he replies. "Too bad he's dead." And then he returns to his work as if he had completed his response to your request.

"Tell me more, Aaron. Tell me how he died, where he died, etcetera."

He peers at you peevishly over his glasses as if checking that you're really Sebastian Cord and have some business asking such questions.

"All right," he finally says, "Ed Charnoff was found dead in his car on a street near his apartment.

There were no certain signs of violence, although the autopsy finally revealed that some great vibrational shock had occurred to his body. We don't know how it was done. But apparently its purpose was to learn the codes for getting into the computer. We suspect Web was behind it, but we have no proof."

When he pauses and returns to his papers, you ask impatiently, "And that's *all* you know? I don't believe it."

"I don't either, Cord," he replies angrily. "But our very best people have not been able to find out more. Charnoff is dead. Somebody broke into our computer—with or without Brittany Farrell's help—and that is all we know!"

Then he looks directly at you and adds, "But that isn't what I want you to work on now, Cord. Others can handle Charnoff's death. You concentrate completely on clearing Brittany Farrell or proving she's guilty. We can't let her work until we know. And we've already had to move Bob Berner, the substitute operator, into full-time because of Charnoff's death"—Burkhart makes it sound as if Ed Charnoff died deliberately to antagonize him—"and we don't have another full-time operator ready to go, just a bunch of part-timers that we can't give full secret clearance to. So get busy, Cord!"

You can't tell whether he's giving you a pep talk or whining about all that's happening, but it's clear that you're not going to learn much more from Aaron Burkhardt.

If you want to go back to the computer room, turn to 8. However, if you want to talk to Brittany Farrell, turn to 126E.

16G

At least you know where to find the woman—on the train out of Moorland, going to Los Angeles.

Cleaning yourself up as well as you can, you set out walking to your own car parked in the trees not far from you. You reach it and drive at a comfortable pace down toward Moorland. You, too, will take the Midland-Mountain Express. Aleta and Web's brew of bugs aren't lost to you yet.

Turn to 28G.

17A

You don't particularly want to fight this man here and now. If you have already come face-to-face with Aleta during this adventure, turn to 118D. If not, turn to 140F.

17B

You leap at him. He falls, and you bang his head against the floor, knocking him out. Pulling his body back onto the couch he just left, you tape his arms and legs to its sides, tape his mouth shut, and then cover him to his nose with a coverlet you find lying nearby. There, he looks just as if he's serious about his after-dinner naps, and you're free to look around. [2X]

Turn to 148A.

17C

Before you leave the cupboards, roll the two dice. If you roll your Intelligence score or less, turn to 82B. If you roll more, turn to 25B.

17D

As you approach the dining table, your eye is caught by something rather unusual on the table—not unusual in and of itself—it's just a kit for a detailed model of an old-time ship. Berner didn't seem the type for such a hobby. You notice that there's a sticker on the box saying that the kit came from Leroy's Game and Hobby Shop.

On the wall just outside the bedroom door, you see a "girlie" calendar (you're beginning to like Bob Berner less and less), which he apparently uses to record all his dates. There's one, though—a dentist appointment for later this week, in fact—that he has written across with a marker pen. It says "Cancel until know work schedule."

Roll the two dice. If you get more than your Intelligence score, turn to 34A. If you get the score or less, turn to 18H.

17E

For a moment, you hope there's going to be a straight stretch of road, but when it doesn't happen, you watch Aleta's headlights moving around the turns ahead of you. She's a competent driver, dealing with the twists and turns smoothly but without aggressiveness. (Aleta has a Driving/Automobile skill of 45.)

You study her pattern for a few minutes and then mentally say, "GO!" Accelerating steadily, you fit into Aleta's driving pattern and gradually approach the back of the little red Ferrari. It looks mighty small from the seat of the pickup. Bracing yourself, you charge the truck right at the sports car.

First roll the two dice against your own Driving/Automobile skill. If you get more, turn to 59E. If you get the score or less, turn to 88A.

17F

She takes a sip of coffee and says, "I'm already all thrown off schedule by being awake now. I usually go right

home to sleep. It'll take a few days to get back into the nighttime routine when I go back to work." She smiles at you. "See? I'm assuming you're going to solve it all and get me back to work."

The worry, though, comes back, and she grabs your hand. "Figure it out, Seb. I didn't let anyone into that computer room. I'm not a danger to Orion. Help me, Seb."

You kiss the worry lines from her face and say, "I will, Brittany. Trust me."

You leave her then and return to the red-brick Orion building. Return to 8 to do any unfinished work in the computer room.

17G

But you're too slow. The powerful bullets of the Web agent's machine gun make a line of holes upward from your chest to your face as you drop down . . . and stay there, your life's blood pouring out onto the laboratory floor.

You hear Aleta's voice saying to Karl Pachezny, "Get up, you little worm, and get that stuff out of the autoclave. If it's too late, you'll pay for it!" Then you can no longer hear the voice, because Sebastian Cord has died.

17H

After waiting a few minutes, you're just about to get out of the truck, when the inner door opens again and you duck down. When it becomes clear that whoever has entered is not searching for you, you carefully raise your head so you can see over the window.

You see the woman from Denver—Aleta—bending down below the workbench. She is shoving a parcel back as far as it will go. She kneels down and checks something; it looks like a little black box. Then she rises, gives a harsh laugh, and leaves the garage.

Once again, you wait a few minutes, but nothing more happens. [4X]

At last you feel free to explore the garage, knowing you'll go right to the workbench.

Turn to 104A.



18A

You head for the door with the key hanging outside. Taking down the key, you turn it in the lock. If it is before nine o'clock, turn to 84A. If it is after nine, turn to 47E.

18B

You may be in a hurry to escape from pursuing guards, but not such a hurry that you don't pause to see if anyone is in the kitchen. And there is. Just as you are going to open the door, you hear a scraping sound from within, as of someone pushing a chair back. [1X]

The kitchen isn't any place to go. You'll have to choose another room. But first, turn to 93D.

18C

You make your way to the garage, knowing you're taking a chance on being seen. Go to 93D to see if you are spotted by the guards, then turn to 13B.

18D

When things have returned to what you presume is normal, one and one-half hours have passed (note that on your time card). You creep back to the building to look for a place to get in. Choose which room you're heading for and turn to the chart on the inside back cover.

NOTE: *Because the guards are much more alert now, if you have to roll for whether a guard sees you or not, you are unlucky on any double number or any number between 10 and 20 and between 90 and 99.*

18E

You come to the door of what you think must be the laboratory. You listen carefully but hear no sound through the solid door. Taking a chance, you turn the handle to duck through the door.

You find yourself in a small, barren anteroom. There's a rack of clean white lab coats along one wall, a chair, and a door with a large round wheel in the middle of it. Strange. There's a small viewing hole above the wheel through which you can see into a laboratory. You see the back of a person in a white lab coat, leaning over a laboratory bench. You don't know if you can be heard or not, but you'd better get a move on. [1X]

Hurrying back out into the corridor, you head for another room. Turn to 93D.

18F

Ignoring Pachezny, you run out of the room and go down the stairs to the basement. You unlock the "prison" with the key you've had in your pocket.

The fear in Dr. Sarah Graham's face dissolves to joyous relief as soon as she sees that it is you opening the door.

You describe to her how you got the cultures.

"That's wonderful, Sebastian. But . . ." A look of consternation crosses her face.

"What is it?"

"Aleta can just hire someone else to repeat the procedures. She's got all the papers."

"Aleta . . . Aleta won't be hiring anyone. She's dead."

A very small "oh" comes from the geneticist. Then she looks up at you. "Can we get out of here, Sebastian, right away?"

"Of course. Just get your coat and purse and I'll take you down the mountain to a motel. A team of investigators from my organization will be here by morning to close this place down."

If you found some dynamite, turn to 12A. If not, turn to 141C.

18G

Your groping hand hits the key hook on the first try. You must have a better sense of touch than you thought! You hang the key on it, pull in your hand, and close the door.

Signaling to Sarah to be quiet, you get behind the easy chair, just in case the approaching guard decides to enter the room.

But the footsteps pause a second outside the door, then go down the hall toward the row of bedrooms. You stay silent for a moment as the steps recede into the distance, then you emerge and say, "Now, please tell me all you know about what's going on here. I promise, I've come to help."

The green eyes look doubtful for a moment, but they bore into yours and apparently find something trustworthy there.

Turn to 10A.

18H

Suddenly, you wonder if Berner has actually canceled that appointment and if so, when he did it. You go to the phone and call Burkhart's office. You tell his assistant—widely known throughout Orion as a very adept improviser—that you want to know when Bob Berner canceled his appointment with Dr. Ernest Quigley, a dentist. He says he'll find out right away, while you talk to Burkhart.

Burkhart demands that you tell him everything you've learned so far, which isn't much. You manage to interject a question about when Berner was notified about coming to work full-time and are reminded that he was told soon after Charnoff's body was found on Saturday morning.

When Burkhart's assistant comes back on the line, he says that Berner called the previous Thursday to cancel tomorrow's appointment. That was *before* Charnoff was killed. How could Berner have known then that he would probably not be able to keep his appointment because he would be working?

Pondering that point, you return to 20A.



19A

Before you leave the refrigerator, roll the two dice. If you roll your Intelligence score or less, turn to 124D. If you roll more, turn to 31A.

19B

You're beginning to think despairingly of perhaps never getting out of there alive, when you feel a rumbling over your head. You can hear the metal of the pit mechanism creak and groan. There must have been an explosion in the laboratory.

Then comes another . . . and another. Then, piece by unavoidable piece, the building collapses on top of you, pinning you forever in the blue flesh-eating ooze created by Web. No one will ever know where Sebastian Cord died.

19C

But unfortunately, you don't wake up. There are important things going on in the laboratory tonight, and the guards can't let an intruder run around the building. It's easier to shoot him where he lies.

19D

The room has obviously been recently cleaned by a maid, though not a very good one. Furniture has been dusted and the rug vacuumed, but nothing was moved to do either task. Looks as if he uses his exercise bike, anyway. The only place with personality is the kitchen end, where you're surprised to find lots of spice bottles. Cumin, rosemary, bay, and so on—so he's not a man who lives just on frozen dinners, although the spices may be just to impress dates.

Nothing here. You shrug. At least your hotel apartment has some charm and brightness and color, . . . as well, of course, as the casino downstairs.

Return to 96A.

19E

They didn't come from around the building at all. Curly and Pete—at least you presume that's who they are—come barreling at you from the darkness of the woods to which you are running. You can't escape the multiple blows that rain down on you. [3X]

Turn to 142G.

19F

Through the little window, you can see a man moving around inside the lab.

"Oh, that's Karl. He's the head scientist and administrator, though he's actually been busier panting after Aleta than with science."

"Can you tell what he's doing?"

She studies the scene through the window for a moment. "I guess he's getting the cultures ready to go. They have to be sealed completely and packaged properly to be safe."

"Okay. Let's go," you say, turning the wheel that opens the inner door.

Dr. Pachezny looks up, startled, as you enter the

laboratory. "What—what are you doing here, Dr. Graham? And who are you?" he demands of you.

"We've come to get the cultures, Pachezny. They aren't safe in hands like yours."

"But they're all ready to go to Quintessential. See?" He picks up two sealed flasks and shows them to you. "They'll take good care of them. After all, they paid for them. Aleta and I are leaving tonight to deliver them."

"Karl," says Sarah gently, "think for yourself a moment. Forget what Aleta has been saying. Do you really think reputable companies would want the cultures before they are thoroughly tested? Do you, as a scientist, really want to release them too early? Think of the damage those bacteria could do if they were used wrongly."

A look of horror crosses the balding man's face. "But . . . but Aleta said . . ."

You step toward the confused man. "Give them to me, Pachezny."

"No. . . . No! These are going to make the university hire me again. They'll know then that I do good work. They'll be sorry they fired me." He steps backward, his hands trembling.

"Don't drop them, Karl!" Sarah exclaims, terror in her voice. Sarah's shout makes Pachezny stumble backward.

You've got to get the flasks from the man. There's no telling what he's apt to do.

Roll the two dice. If you roll your Dexterity score or less, turn to 96G. If you roll more, turn to 37G.

19G

"Where do you think Sarah could be?" you ask urgently.

"I don't know. I've looked all around up here and can't find her. There's some rooms in the basement where she might be."

"Okay," you say. "Let's head there."

The two of you leave the lounge, Artie in the lead, heading for the stairway. When you get down there, you find a hallway with several doors. One open door leads to a collection of small bedrooms where the guards and junior-level scientists live. Artie, still depressed and worried, sits down on his bed and says, "I'll stay right here. Let me know if you find her."

"I will," you agree gently.

Turn to 47E.

20A

When there's no answer, you use the passkey Burkhardt gave you and enter Bob Berner's apartment.

This is a large apartment, clearly decorated by an interior designer with contemporary leanings. A huge, slanting skylight reveals the city from anywhere in the great room, which has several areas meant for different uses: cooking, dining, conversation, TV watching, card playing, and more. Beyond it is a large bedroom that looks as if it were probably planned for dramatic seduction scenes.

You may investigate the: by turning to:

conversation pit	81E
TV area	90F
kitchen	92A
bedroom	68C
dining area	17D
card table	82F

When you are ready to leave Berner's apartment, turn to 101D.

20B

Suddenly, you hear footsteps in the corridor. You quickly say to Artie, "Don't worry. I'll help both you and Sarah. But right now you've got to trust me. The guards are coming and they mustn't find me here."

Artie looks puzzled and alarmed, and you quickly add, "Really. I'm not here to hurt anyone, just to help you and Sarah." You drop down on the floor lengthwise by the couch and pull some newspapers over you.

For Artie to accept what you say, you must be attractive and believable. Take the average of your Intelligence and Willpower scores and add 10 points for each of your Social Graces advantage points. Then roll the two dice against your final figure. If you roll the total or less, turn to 66F. If you roll more, turn to 48F.

20C

Sticking out of the top of a paperback Le Carré novel, you find a used envelope with Bob Berner's return address on it. The other operator must have sent DeWitt something.

You start to ignore the envelope when you realize that there is still paper in it. It turns out to be a brief note from Berner saying: "DeWitt, here's the brochure of the Mountain-Midlands Express I mentioned to you the other day. It's not an advertised train, but I heard about it from a friend and rode it last year. What a trip! I don't know how they can afford to do what they do. Enjoy!" Signed, "Bob."

If the name of the train means anything to you, turn to 100E. If not, turn to 103A.

20D

You push open the door to the lobby, ready to duck back immediately if there's still a guard in the room. But they must have all left to hunt for you elsewhere, because the room is empty of people.

But it's not empty of guns. You go to the desk, where you find a spare Smith & Wesson loaded and ready to go. Thankful, you hurry back to the door you entered. You know you're going to have to keep on hiding because the guards are actively looking for you, but at least now you're armed.

You open the door, returning to the corridor at the top of the stairs. There's a door immediately to your right (132C) and one just opposite you (57G).

20E

There's a pop from Aleta's car, and you see the tail end swerve for a moment, but she never actually loses control. In a moment, you realize that she is going to stop. She must not want to risk damaging her beautiful sports car.

Keeping your gun in your hand, you decelerate with the Web woman's car, keeping the same distance behind. Somehow, you're certain that when she stops, you're going to have a new kind of trouble.

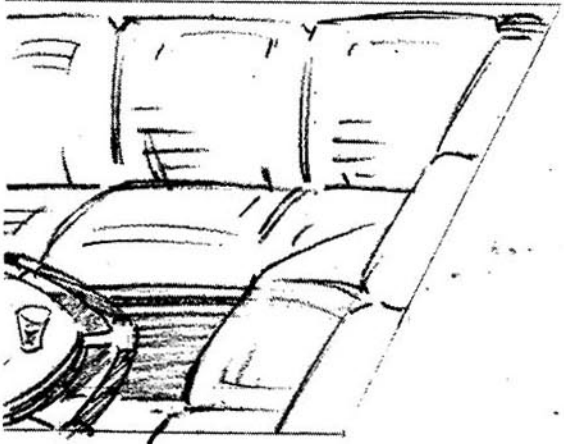
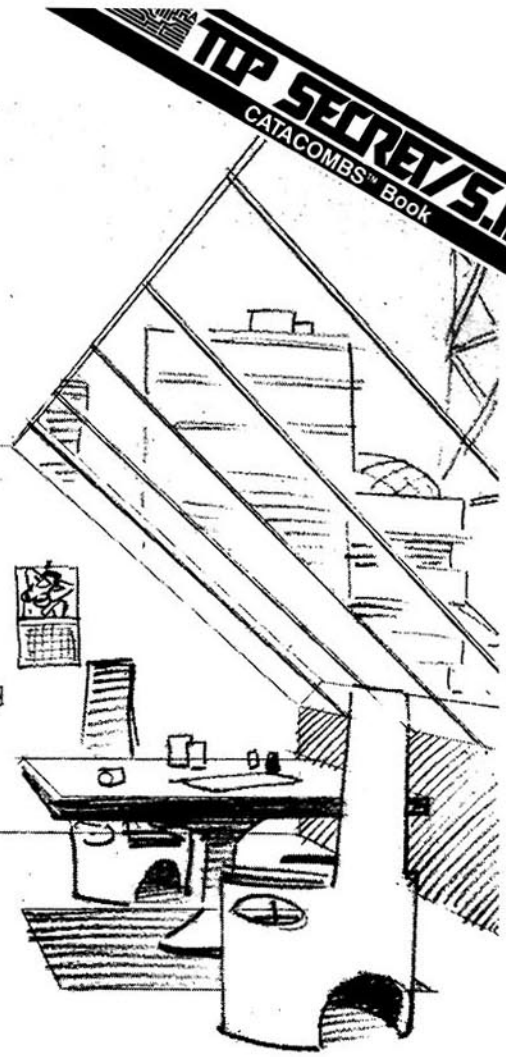
Turn to 78C.

20F

Although most of the books are about genetics and biology, you find several novels among them and even one world atlas. There are some small pieces of paper sticking out of the atlas, so you take a look at it. The papers mark pages covering Africa and South America. You find some paragraphs marked with yellow highlighting pen. They concern the people who live in isolation in certain parts of the two continents, miles from anywhere, but with adequate supplies of plants, game, and good water. The people are also known for their natural good health.

You're about to close the book, when you see some place names circled on a map. They are: Kraboul, Mustinquá, and Nutane. [2X]

If it is after eleven-thirty, turn to 62G. If it isn't, turn to 130F.



22A

You ask some more questions, and the whole story—as far as this guy, Dr. Karl Pachezny, knows it—comes out. He was hired by Aleta Marcus, who had a contract from a company named Quintessential—they're the people who insisted on the guards—to develop a recombinant gene to their specifications.

"Recombinant? What's that?" you ask.

For a moment he gets some of his courage back as he looks at you down his nose. "That's a type of gene that has been kind of 're-engineered' to do something specific. In this case, we've taken a virus that ordinarily can't grow in the human body but that would be useful there in controlling erratic behavior because it produces a special enzyme. Anyway, we've 'recombined' this virus with an *E. coli*—"

"With a what?" you interrupt.

"*E. coli*. It's a bacterium that normally lives in the body anyway. We just change it a bit. . . . Anyway, we're supposed to take our supply of fixed bacteria to our backers tomorrow evening."

"But why the isolation, why the guards?"

"B-because the people who make it first will get all the c-credit and m-money."

You don't really believe all he has said, nor do you believe that it's all so benevolent, but apparently Pachezny does.

"Who's backing your work?" you demand.

"I d-don't know. Aleta would never tell me. She—she set up this place and runs the guards and . . . things."

Talking some more, Pachezny seems to be relieved to be telling someone the things he knows, which isn't as much as you hoped. Aleta Marcus had come to him—a university scientist in trouble with his university, he sheepishly admits—and asked him to take on this special work. She handled all the arrangements, even, he implies, to taking the lead in the affair they have been having all the time they were isolated here on the mountaintop.

You take a moment to punch out a message on the Orioncomm on your wrist, asking for any information headquarters has on Aleta Marcus.

Turn to 71F.

22B

As you sort quickly through the papers, you come across a folded, hand-written note. It says:

Haskell,

Ms. Aleta Marcus will be boarding the train at Moorland, Colorado. She will be using my private car again and should be given every facility.

Thanks,

and it's signed with a flourish that you can make out as "Porter Harland."

Suddenly, any doubts you might have had about the laboratory being a Web operation are stilled. Porter Harland is an alias used by one of the bigwigs in Web, a man that Orion has been trying to stop for

many years.

Turn to 10B.

22C

Following DeWitt was a bad choice. He's an idiot, but appears to be a harmless one. Unfortunately, you follow him far longer than you should and wind up failing in your mission.

Turn to the pocket at the back of the book. Remove the item with the red seal and read it.

22D

One guard pauses just as you drop, and you fail to grasp their heads for the one swift blow that you had hoped would end this interference. Instead, you find yourself the subject of a well-coordinated attack that quickly sends your senses reeling. [2X]

Turn to 142G.

22E

Surprised that the table didn't move at all, you shove it again, and nothing happens. The big library table is bolted to the floor!

You could see that being done on shipboard, when a sliding table could be dangerous. You can even see it being done in an environment where people will steal anything that isn't bolted down. But why here?

Studying the floor in front of the table, you gradually perceive a crack in the tile. That floor must move!

That means there must be some mechanism that makes it move. Assuming that to be true, you look at everything in the room with a different eye than you did before. And this time you realize that the unusual double chalk holder must be important.

Turn to 50E.

22F

You downshift again, and pull off of the damaged car. You land with a bounce that sends pain through your neck, but you're upright and still rolling.

You manage to slip by the Ferrari just as Aleta loses all control. You glance backward and see the lovely red Ferrari and the beautiful red-haired Web woman land violently on a jagged rock that sticks out of the mountainside. There's an explosion of flame, and you know that Web's evil plans, too, will die in the cleansing fire.

23A

No, there's nothing more here. Whoever works at this table keeps it pretty tidy. [1X]

Return to 110A.

23B

You stand by the door and stare around you. A shudder goes through you as you accept that Needham has become a compulsive gambler. There, but for the grace of whatever powers that be and the glory of periodic winning streaks at the tables, go you. You walk away, just wanting to get out of that vision of a possible future as quickly as you can.

Return to 93C to search another operator's home. If Needham's is the last one, turn to 69C.

23C

You keep glancing between the sketch and the drawer, but nothing comes to mind except that it's been a long time since breakfast. If you are through checking drawers, return to 64A. Otherwise, go back to 106D.

23D

Turn to page 91 and glance at the picture. Do not study it in detail and do not read the text, then return here.

You glance into the scientific laboratory and see a woman in a white lab coat working at a table. She keeps glancing into a microscope, but the kicking, antsy gestures she's making with her shapely legs indicate that she is restless and angry about something.

You wish you could talk to her, but the window, you see now, doesn't open. In fact, the glass is mounted into the wall itself. Where the glass joins the cement, there are heavy rubber gaskets sealing the joints. Someone must want very badly to keep something out of the lab . . . or is it keep something in? There's no way you can enter the building here. [1X]

Move along to the next room on your diagram and return to the chart on the inside back cover.

23E

You study the heavy rubber seals around the window and door. They certainly aren't intended to keep regular air in or out. In fact, you are breathing regularly now. Nothing about the air smells or tastes funny.

There's a system of vents on the ceiling. When you stand by one all you get is air-conditioned air. So there's got to be an outlet somewhere, too.

You explore the walls and discover another vent, down toward the floor, at which you can feel the air being sucked out of the room.

Roll the dice. Add to your Intelligence score 10 points for each Sixth Sense advantage point you have. If you roll the total or less, turn to 100B. If you roll more, turn to 48B.

23F

On the front of one cupboard is a roughly hand-lettered sign that reads "Keep all bugs in the laboratory. They

don't belong in here. Clean up after yourself."

You open the cupboard doors one by one, finding lots of heavy dishes, some lightweight foods, such as crackers and coffee creamer, and plenty of glassware—although the pile of soda cans in the wastebasket indicates that no one uses them.

As you explore, you begin to realize that you're not finding the amount and kind of food that this kitchen ought to have in it. [2X]

If you think there must be a pantry and you want to take time to look for it, turn to 96I. If not, return to 124A.

23G

You pull yourself as quietly as possible into the window, then step onto the floor, keeping an eye out for anything that might cause you to make a misstep. But there is nothing. You are well inside the room, and there hasn't been any sign of motion from the shape on the bed.

But you just have to make sure. You walk to the bed and very, very carefully lift the blanket. . . .

Turn to 67C.

23H

You feel a strange reluctance to look in Brittany's drawer. Not because you think she's guilty—you don't—but because you'd rather not see the used-tissue side of the lady.

But you look, of course. That's your job.

. . . No dirty tissues or worn powder puffs here. Miss Brittany is a very organized lady. Her makeup is all in a small case kept neatly closed. There's a paperback with an artsy cover—no lurid murder scenes for her—and it even contains a bookmark. You thought everyone turned down the corners of paperbacks. . . .

Nothing more particularly catches your attention. You stir the items around—a bottle opener, a few coins, a small square bottle of sugar substitute (surely she doesn't need any help with her figure), a box of unused note cards with a couple of United States cat stamps in it.

But as you start to close the drawer, something begins niggling at the back of your brain. You sort through the things again, but nothing turns the niggling into a full-blown idea.

You make a quick sketch of the desk drawer and its contents, hoping the act will jog your mind. If you've already been to see Britt at her hotel, turn to 60A. If you haven't, turn to 23C.

24A

You pull on the door. It opens easily, letting you peer around the garage.

Roll the two dice. If you roll your Intelligence score or less, turn to 147B. If you roll more, turn to 66A.

24B

Roll one die. If you get an odd number, turn to 98A. If you get an even number, turn to 96F.

24C

You come to the door of what you're sure must be the laboratory. You listen carefully but hear nothing, so you open the door and slip in. You find yourself in a small anteroom. There's a rack of clean white lab coats along one wall, and a door with a large round wheel in the middle of it with a small thick-glassed window above that. When you look through the window, you see the actual lab beyond the door.

You also see two people in lab coats—a man with longish curly hair and a lovely woman with blonde hair. The woman, apparently angry, though not at the man, is making gestures and occasionally stamping her foot. The man makes tentative soothing gestures to which she pays no attention whatsoever.

Now's not the time to be here. One of them could come out at any moment. [1X]

You leave the room and turn to 93D.

24D

Coming within sight of the Ferrari, you see that it's on a fairly straight stretch of road, so you accelerate and roar after her. When you think you're in just about the right spot, you lean back, pulling up on the handlebars so that you're riding just on your back tire. Then you fall forward onto the Ferrari. . . .

But your starting place was ill-chosen, and the car has zoomed on ahead. Not only did you fail to get her, but you may lose control of the bike.

Roll the two dice. If you get your Driving/Motorcycle skill of 56 or less, turn to 148E. If you get more, turn to 122B.

24E

Nothing happens until you get into the word processor. Then you discover that you're reading a letter home from someone named Artie. He's all excited about the results they've been getting in the lab working with something called *E. coli*. He thinks that the first part of the work is about over, and he should soon be able to get in some fun on the mountain. He hopes to use the truck that's in the garage, or, if it snows early, maybe the snowmobile. Then he concludes:

"I still find it strange, Mom, that there should be an all-new research staff here. And no one explains where the old one went. Oh well. It's a good break for me. Love, Artie."

You remove that disk.

Return to 50D.

[2X]

24F

Seeing that you're going to lose it, you concentrate very hard on laying the bike down on the ground before you let loose and fly. You land on your shoulder, rolling, and rise with only a few bruises to show for it.

You hurry back to the Kawasaki and discover that it has survived the skid and not crashed into anything. You're going for another ride down the steep slope, and if you hurry, you can still get ahead of Aleta.

Turn to 106C.

24G

The rest periods you need between sawing become longer and longer. Finally, you cannot force yourself to climb up one more time.

As time passes, the pain in your arms gives way to pain in your flesh and horror that eats away at your mind. Soon you can no longer stand, and you feel yourself falling into the ooze. What little remains of your mind imagines the blue slime creeping slowly up your legs, your chest, your neck, your brain. . . . Sebastian Cord's bones will join those strewn around you.

24H

"Do you know just when they're going?" you ask the young lab tech.

He glances at his watch. "Bout now, I heard them say."

You think about your car sitting so far down the mountain and ask, "Is there more than one vehicle in the garage that runs? Could we chase them?"

"Yeah, I think so. There's a small truck . . . and a motorcycle, and maybe some other stuff." He begins to get an excited look on his face, and adds, "I'll come with you. I know this mountain better than you."

"Just show me the stuff in the garage right now, Artie."

"Okay."

Moving in small spurts to avoid being seen by anyone, Artie Sadler leads you to the garage. You glance in just as a beautiful red Ferrari pulls out through the large door.

"Too late. There they go," says Artie.

"Then let's see what I can catch them with," you say, "and you can't go with me."

"Awww!" This kid hasn't grown up!

Turn to 154A. Note: *You may stop keeping track of time now.*

25A

You drop to the ground, rolling, but fail to roll close enough to the guard to prevent his shooting at you. He shoots, and a bullet creases your head, sending your senses reeling. [1X]

Turn to 142G.

25B

Well, you guess that's it for the benches and cupboards. You turn to other items in the room. [2X]

Return to 90A.

25C

By some hellish miracle, Pachezny's weapon of glass strikes you in the neck, severing your jugular vein. You grasp your neck, trying desperately to stay the pulsing flow of blood, but your hands can't contain it. Weakness drives you to the floor, and you feel yourself blacking out. The last thing you hear is the incredulous scientist babbling something about "I didn't mean . . . I had no idea . . . I don't see how I . . ."

25D

As you turn the key in the ignition, you have a sudden feeling of burgeoning excitement. You haven't ridden a cycle like this in a long time.

On the other hand, your pleasurable motorcycle jaunts have been on bright, sunlit afternoons. Now it is night. There's some moonlight, but it mostly creates shadows that make the road appear to be inhabited by ghosts.

The main benefit of using the motorcycle is to go down the mountain without using roads, and thus get ahead of Aleta, but you can also stick to the road, catch up with her, and then decide how you want to take advantage of being on the cycle. If you're going to go off-road, turn to 126G. If you're going to stick to the road, turn to 42A.

25E

You drop down the stairway three steps at a time, glad for your rubber-soled shoes, which don't click on the tile steps. At the bottom, you find yourself in a narrow, straight hallway with several doors opening off it. One door, you notice, has a key hanging on a hook outside it. Another is open, showing a narrower hallway with several small bedrooms off it—the guards' rooms, you guess. Two other doors are closed, and another is open a crack revealing a utility room. At the far end, you see another staircase, which you suspect is the one that opens up right by the guardroom; no sense taking that. [2X]

You glance again at the utility room. If it is after eleven o'clock, turn to 110E. If it is before eleven, turn to 94E.

25F

You stand at the office door for a moment, preparing to enter. Then you realize that a man and a woman are

talking inside. Listening carefully, you hear such phrases as "... get rid of the papers" (the woman), "... need the records ..." (the man), then, her voice rising in anger, the woman says, "... man in control wants it swept clean!" Then you hear footsteps coming to the door and dash away down the hall to take cover behind a corner. From there, you hear the woman open the door and say, "I'll make sure there's nothing left. Leave it to me!"

There's a menace in her voice that no doubt means she has something lethal in mind. [2X]

When you're sure the woman is walking away from you, you return to your exploring. Check the next room on your map, then turn to 93D.

25G

In one smooth movement, you reach the glass door, pull it open, and fire twice, turning your gun hand only slightly between the two shots to cover the two figures. The first guard is down and the second looks startled, as the bullet whizzes past his arm and into the wall behind him. But he's well trained. Instead of giving in to surprise, or hurrying to return your fire, he takes time to press a button on the floor, causing a horrible alarm to echo throughout the building. Then he returns your fire.

All guards in this building, unless the text says otherwise, have a Pistol skill of 35. Conduct combat with this guard. If you win, turn to 150E. If you are seriously wounded and want to give up, hoping to live to fight another day, turn to 82G. If you take full damage to your head, chest, or abdomen, turn to 59F.

25H

The only thing you could eat without leaving parts around to be discarded is the grapes. You pull a few off the stem and toss them into your mouth. They're delicious, though you begin to wish you hadn't taken them because they just make you want more.

There's nothing more of interest in the refrigerator, so you turn away. [1X]

If it is after eleven o'clock, turn to 19A. If it is before eleven, return to 76A.

26A

The baggage car bears little resemblance to the baggage cars you've seen in the past. This is clean and efficiently organized. It has padded racks that hold the luggage, with no danger of scratching the pieces. There's a desk where a trainman must work, keeping track of manifests and various other papers.

This seems as good a place as any to start looking. You decide to begin with the suitcases and other bags on the rack.

If you came from the passenger car, turn to 80B. If you came from the private car, turn to 139A. However, if you just boarded the train and have been hiding, turn to 51B.

26B

You learn nothing more from Brittany's kitchen, or, indeed, her whole apartment. If you still need to investigate Bob Berner's place, turn to 53F. If you already have, turn to 69C.

26C

You time the oven for an additional ninety seconds after the agar starts to boil, certain that that is enough time to kill the bacteria. But as you open the door to remove the flasks, the glass containers explode in your face. One of the shards cuts your neck, and blood gushes in rhythmic pulses from your jugular vein. No one comes to the baggage car until it is too late. Sebastian Cord is dead.

26D

He nods his head in greeting, but then does a double take. "Who are you? Hey, you're not for real!" and he pulls his gun, but you've already got yours in action.

Conduct combat, with you taking the first shot. The guard has a Pistol skill of 35. If you win, turn to 134D. If you lose, by taking full damage to your head, chest, or abdomen, turn to 13A. However, if no one is dead after three exchanges of gunfire, turn to 102F.

26E

There must be some answers in the operators' room, you think, speeding through the halls. When you reach the room it is still empty; you're supposed to let Burkhardt know when Foster Needham can return to duty.

The first thing you do is go to the desk and look for Britt's name. It's on the top, right-hand drawer. But then you hesitate. You feel a reluctance to look in your old love's drawer. Not because you think she's guilty—you don't—but because you'd rather not see the used-tissue side of the lady. Even during your brief affair, she managed to keep some mystery about her (the biggest mystery of all being why she broke off your relationship, but that's a question for another time).

But you look, of course. That's your job.

... No dirty tissues or worn powder puffs here.

Miss Brittany is a very organized lady. Her makeup is all in a small flowered case kept neatly closed. There's a paperback with an artsy cover—no lurid murder scenes for her—and it even contains a bookmark. You thought everyone turned down the corners of paperbacks. . . . A small pack of note cards featuring a gold unicorn shows that Britt writes notes on duty occasionally.

Then you find the small round bottle of sugar substitute. Opening it, you discover that the tiny white tablets fill the bottle only halfway.

Replacing the bottle, you pull out a paper and do your normal rough sketch of what you saw when you first opened the drawer. Then you call Burkhardt and ask for someone to take the bottle to Chemical Analysis. You need to be absolutely sure it's what the label says it is.

Return to 8.

26F

You study the bundle of dynamite in front of you. There's a small black box, which you think must be a radio receiver, attached to a large battery. Then there's a set of two wires running from the battery into the end of one of the sticks, with a gummy substance around the wires. You know just enough about dynamite to suspect that the wires go to a blasting cap.

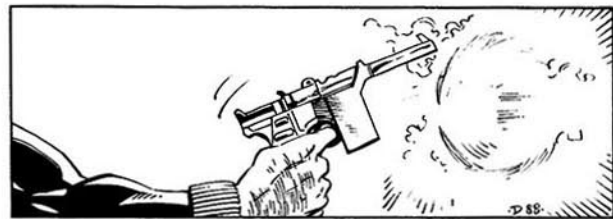
If you want to remove the blasting cap, turn to 14C. If you'd rather try to cut the wires, turn to 38B. However, if you think—considering your distinct lack of expertise with dynamite—it might be better to get out of the building, turn to 88F.

26G

Hoping they'll walk on by, you stay perfectly still . . . which does you no good when they yank the tarp off with a flourish and find you lying there. In seconds, with two guns trained on you, they jerk your feet and lead out of the garage.

"We'll take this guy right to the boss," says one guard.

Turn to 81A.



BAGI



28A

The distracted scientist pays no attention, so absorbed is he in his personal tragedy. You finally let him go and turn toward the vehicle you've selected.

If you've promised to rescue someone, turn to 107B. If not, turn to 29A.

28B

The young scientist doesn't even notice the slight squeal the window makes when you pull it open from outside. He does respond when you begin to climb inside, but more from noting a slight disturbance to his main preoccupation than from alarm, but you can tell he's not terribly interested.

"Who are you? Are you a guard?" [1X]

Turn to 136C.

28C

Mourning the death as you mourn all unnecessary deaths, you gather up your own belongings. Dawn will be coming soon, and this place of death is nowhere you want to remain.

When the train slows down on a curve, you leap from the platform of the baggage car, carefully tucking your limbs in and rolling as you land.

If you managed to destroy the bacteria cultures before getting off the train, turn to 108A. If not, turn to 95A.

28D

Standing up at the front of the top right-hand drawer are a number of personal items: a payment book for a new Ferrari (Aleta Marcus is going to be paying for a *long* time), some unpaid bills, a personal letter, a credit card account, and a ticket folder.

You take out the ticket, expecting it to be for an airline, but it's for Dr. Karl Pachezny to travel from Moorland, Colorado, to Los Angeles, on the Mountain-Midlands Express' special, unscheduled train leaving Moorland at 12:30 *tonight*! Does that mean that things are about to break? You pocket the ticket, just in case.

You just pull out each of the other drawers, seeing nothing worth exploring further. [1X]

If you haven't explored the drawers on the left, turn to 11C. If you have, return to 48A.

28E

You don't see anything of interest at first glance, but you stick the papers into your pocket to study again later. For now, return to 8.

28F

You're able to duck behind things, but the guards either have to stay in the doorway or take a chance on exposing themselves to your gunfire. Like hired guards everywhere, they're reluctant to do the latter—but do. Each time one leans into the room to aim at you, he's wide open to your fire.

The instant they both go down, you move to the doorway and pull them in.

You pause a moment, waiting for the sounds of someone else coming, but you hear nothing. The walls in this place must be thicker than they look.

You tuck the bodies carefully into a place that hides them as much as possible, and cover them so that no one entering the room will see them. You've got to hurry and finish searching this place. [2X]

If this is the first time the guards have found you, return to the illustrated page where you were searching. If it's the second time, turn to 117F.

28G

At 12:30 a.m., you are standing in the shadows of a little-used train station, waiting for the Mountain-Midlands Express. You can see the Web agent from the laboratory pacing restlessly back and forth, her luggage piled against a pillar.

When the train approaches from the east, first a dining car goes by, then a car with shades drawn—probably a sleeper. The third car comes to a hissing stop right in front of the platform. A conductor emerges and helps Aleta with her luggage, and you hear him address her as "Ms. Marcus." Surprised at the personal service and recognition, you wait until the train is making noises as if to start, before you emerge from the shadows.

If you have a ticket and have never come face-to-face with Aleta, turn to 130A. If you don't have a ticket or you know Aleta would recognize you, turn to 102E.

28H

Although Berner seems to take a rather roundabout route, you have no trouble following him to a small shopping center about a mile from his apartment. You park in time to see him dawdle along the covered walkway, looking in a number of windows. Finally, he enters Leroy's Game and Hobby Shop.

Because Berner has met you, you can't just walk in behind him, at least not looking the same. You can't do much about your black beard; it's trimmed too neatly to even mess up much. But you can comb your hair so that it comes down over your forehead. And from your pocket you take a pair of black-framed glasses with plain lenses. The two changes revise your appearance as much as you easily can. At least you hope so.

Turn to 32A.

29A

You're just going to have to let Pachezny get on with things. You've got to catch up with Aleta.

If you have chosen the Toyota truck, turn to 138C. If you prefer the motorcycle, turn to 64B.

29B

"Oh good. There's no one in there," says Sarah. She turns the round wheel in the middle of the door, which opens in response. "We'll just get the flasks and . . . and what? Destroy them? Take them somewhere?"

"They're really yours. What do you want to do with them? As long as they don't get into the hands of people who will do the wrong things with them," you say.

"Well, there are already some drugs that can help the manic-depressives, and if this cloned bacteria is really good, one of the reputable drug companies will come up with it soon anyway. Let's destroy the samples."

"How?"

"Heat! And we'll also make sure that Aleta's cohorts don't try to replicate my work." She hurries around the lab gathering all the paper and records she can find. Dumping it into a large laboratory sink, she sets fire to them. Then she finds the flasks and places them inside the autoclave normally used for sterilizing, and presses the buttons.

Turn to 56F.

29C

Biding your time, you wait on the platform of the train for one of the periodic stops the train makes during the night. And somewhere in the remote small towns of southern Utah, a stranger hitchhikes his way back to civilization as a train disappears into the night.

Back in New York, the great Orion network hears nothing more about the recombinant project until, many weeks later, you hear that a Web operative named Aleta Marcus was found shot to death on a West Coast beach, and rumor has it that she was disposed of as an example to other Web personnel for failing to accomplish a major project and wasting millions of dollars in doing so.

29D

You can't seem to get a grip on anything! You leap higher and higher, trying to grasp anything that will let you pull yourself up onto the gable, but there's nothing there!

By the time you give up on reaching the gable and slump back to the ground, two men have run out of the woods and are on top of you. The butt of a gun strikes you on the head, and you feel yourself fading.

[1X]

Turn to 142G.

29E

Rubbing your bruised hip, you walk on out of the room.

Turn to 41C.

29F

The fight is rough—it always is when taking on two at once, regardless of what the movies show—but they're finally both down. You don't dare let them sound an alarm, so after removing the uniform of the larger one, you tie them to two separate trees with the fine nylon rope you always carry, gagging them with tape. You don the uniform over your own clothes, finding it a tight fit. Then you are free to enter the building and begin your exploring to discover what this mountain-top retreat is all about.

You hurry into the building and head for the left-hand door. Opening it carefully, you discover yourself in an empty enclosed hallway, with another door ahead of you, one to the right, and a stairway going down. You decide to stick to this floor for right now, so you slowly open the door ahead of you and enter the room.

[4X]

Turn to 57G.

29G

You see a two-tiered shoeshine stand and swerve smoothly to it. As you sit down in a seat, you quickly tuck the bag into the space between your seat and the next, putting your foot on the pedestal at the same time. As the shoeshine man gets to work, you surreptitiously reach down and open the bag at your side . . .

. . . and come up empty. There's absolutely nothing in the bag that could be the bacteria cultures Aleta was delivering.

You look around you, chagrined. The person whose bag you took has hurried past you to the escalator, certain you went down it. And everyone else that you might have followed has disappeared. You goofed!

You finish the shoeshine, pay the man in coin and praise, and calmly walk away, leaving the bag behind, hoping it will be found and returned to the owner.

Turn to 38H.

29H

You stand admiring the incredible sight and sound system, and the huge library of films and compact disks. No way could this be one person's collection; it has to have been put together by a professional with a large budget and no information about the users' tastes. [1X]

If you want to look at the videotapes more closely, turn to 108C. If not, turn to 121A.

30A

If you went to Needham's place first yesterday, turn to 59C. If you went there later, turn to 154D.

30B

You find a manual on handgun use and care, with a special section on antique guns.

If you want to roll again, return to 114B. If not, turn to 96A.

30C

Your body crashes into a tree, head-first, taking enough damage to knock you unconscious. You lie there in the cool night for an hour or more before you awaken.

Coming to, you slowly crawl over to the motorcycle. Through pain-filled eyes, you see that the front wheel is bent completely out of shape, and the engine casing has sprung, releasing a number of vital parts into the mud. It's not going anywhere.

The only thing left for you to do is to find your own car, get in, and then try to think.

But dawn comes before you find your car. The train is gone, the culture samples are gone, Aleta is gone. This mission is all over.

Turn to the pocket at the inside back cover. Remove the item with the red seal and read it.

30D

Although you wonder if maybe Aleta and Karl got a little too clever and put the flasks somewhere unexpected, you think you know where the stuff Karl is going to get is.

If you think it's in the: turn to:

kitchen,	128A
laboratory,	108B
animal room,	145A
garage,	115C

30E

Hoping it isn't locked, you press the latch on the small white cosmetic case. It opens, and you quickly lift the lid just enough for your hand to get into it. Feeling around blindly, you touch nothing that feels as if it might have come from a genetics laboratory—no test tubes, no flasks.

Seemingly looking out the window, you quickly manage a peek into the case, and discover nothing. The bottles and jars all look like normal cosmetics. If she's pulled a clever switch and put the cultures in cold cream jars, you'll never know now, because Aleta Marcus is coming from the other end of the car. You wonder if she was in the restroom, or had gone into the next car for some reason.

You've closed the case and appear to be concentrating on some deep, inner thought by the time she comes to the semicircular couch.

Turn to 147F.

30F

But there is an answer. The door opens with a jerk, and Berner stands there. "Cord. What're you doing here?"

Trying to search your home, old man, you think to yourself. But aloud you just reply, "Thought we might get better acquainted."

He looks at his watch. "I've just got a few minutes. Got a date. But come on in." He stands back and you enter a large "great room," which has everything but the bedroom in one large open area.

You admire it appropriately, and Berner swells with your compliments. "Had a bit of good luck lately, and I was able to put it in this place," he says. "Glad you like it."

As he gets you a cup of coffee, you poke and prod at the source of his "good luck," but he manages to sidestep a clear answer every time, implying that someone in his family died.

"Say, Cord," he asks, "how do you think that guy got into the computer room? And why was he there?"

Now it's your turn to evade a clear answer—especially since you're not sure you have one.

"Obviously, somebody knows how important the computers are to Orion," you reply.

"And they used Brittany to get in," the other man adds. You fail to disagree, as if you, too, believed that Brittany Farrell is guilty.

After a few more minutes of unproductive conversation, you rise to leave. Berner is clearly relieved. "Got a date, you know," he says, and you depart.

You need to come back here later, when Berner is gone, but for now, return to 93C to search another operator's home.

30G

There are only two wheels beneath you as the truck turns around the huge boulder, but it stays on the road, and you didn't even lose much time.

As you come into a clear spot among the trees, you can see briefly down the mountain ahead of you. There are headlights moving a fair distance ahead on the road, but not very far as the crow flies.

Hmmm. Maybe you can be a crow. You've got four-wheel drive, and pickup trucks are made to go in strange, bumpy places—at least according to the TV commercials. If you want to try to cut across country through the pine trees and get ahead of Aleta and her Ferrari so that you can set up a roadblock, turn to 88C. But if you'd rather stick to the road and come up behind her so you can ram her, turn to 83F.

31A

You close the refrigerator door and turn back toward the animals. Return to 76A.

31B

The broken refrigerator has a small empty picnic cooler inside it. [1X]

Return to 127G to make a second roll. Otherwise, turn to 104A.

31C

You're going to have to use another weapon, a smaller one. You pull your gun out and check that you have enough ammo. Then, staying as far to the right as you can so you can aim out your driving window, you start shooting at the Ferrari's back tires.

Roll the two dice *four times* against your Pistol skill, from which you deduct 30 points because of having to concentrate on driving at the same time. Write down the four rolls. If any roll is in the 90-100 range, turn first to 144B. If one shot hits (one roll is your modified Pistol score or less), turn to 20E. If at least two shots hit, turn to 32E. If more hit, turn to 152A.

31D

Late the next afternoon, you and Aleta sit together on the couch in the private car and watch the always-fascinating city pass your windows. The two of you have had a memorable day, though you were ever aware that you were talking to a Web agent, and you suspect that she felt the same.

As the train slows, coming into the station, Aleta rises, and says, "Excuse me for a few minutes. I have to do something. You"—she drops a light kiss on your nose—"stay here."

She goes to the back end of the car, opens the door, and passes into the baggage car. You don't dare follow her openly, but as soon as the baggage-car door closes, you follow her onto the car platform from which you can see if anything happens.

Turn to 70A.

31E

Somehow, you're doing everything right. The first guard goes down, finally, and you're free to concentrate on the second. Then, one final blast sends him to oblivion, too.

You pause a moment, expecting more trouble to come. But this building must be built better than it looks, because no one comes in response to the noise. Hoping your luck continues, you look around for a door that's different from the main doors, and sure enough, just around a corner you find a door to a large storage closet. You quickly drag the bodies in and close the door. There's no key to lock it with, but perhaps no one will discover them there for many hours. [2X]

For now, you hurry to the next room that you want to check out (return to the chart on the inside back

cover). However, if you wish to go to the basement, turn to 25E.

31F

You rumple yourself slightly—although it doesn't take much for you to look as if you've slept in your clothes—and make sure that a couple ballpoint pens are sticking out of your sweater pocket. Then, looking single-minded, you open the door and dash into the entrance hall.

A guard leaps up and moves in front of you, his Smith & Wesson pulled, forcing you to stop. You deliberately shake your head and gradually bring your eyes to focus on him.

"Where do you think you're going?" the guard demands.

"To the lab, of course," you reply, astonishment in your voice. "They said it was an emergency."

"What emergency is that?"

"Well, the equipment, of course. That's what they called about. Said I had to get here and fix it immediately. The project will never get finished if I don't get to work immediately. Then you'll hear from the brass."

A look of uncertainty comes into the man's eyes, and he glances over at the other guard, who has been sitting by the desk watching the activity. The second guard rises to his feet and saunters over to you, looking you up and down as he moves.

"Lock him up," he says crisply.

"But, what if he's really supposed to be here?"

"The deadline on the project is mighty close," you interject. "Just let me get to the lab and get on with fixing the thing."

It all comes down to whether or not they believe you are who you say you are. Roll the two dice. If you roll your Social Chameleon skill or less, turn to 52E. If you roll more, turn to 75C.

31G

Still uncertain, you turn the handle of the door slowly, push it slightly, and peer through the gradually widening crack. Before you have to open it very far, however, you hear a human voice among the chatter, saying, "Good fella. Here, play with this now."

You quickly pull the door closed again and look elsewhere to hide.

Turn to 93D.



32A

You watch from outside as you see Berner go up to the desk in the center and talk to the fat man working there.

The fat man gestures toward the far side of the store, and you see Berner head in that direction. When he has disappeared behind the shelves, you open the door and go in. You meander toward the opposite side of the store and find yourself among some boxed games and books you don't recognize.

As you're staring at them, you hear the fat man's chair scrape back on the tile floor, and he appears around the end of the row of shelves you're studying. "You a gamer, sir?" he asks.

You panic slightly, not knowing what the man means. Then you catch sight of one box that has a starburst containing the words, "Quality Adventures for Role-Playing Gamers," and quickly respond. "Well, I've just begun to get into role-playing, and I thought I'd take a look around."

"Fine. Just take your time. It's a great hobby if you get in with a good group of players."

"Sure is," you reply, kneeling down by the bottom shelf.

"Just let me know if I can help in any way." Leroy returns to his desk, and the shop is silent for a few minutes, except for shuffling feet and papers being moved. You catch a glimpse of Berner sorting contentedly through some HO-gauge train cars and wonder if maybe he really is here to buy some hobby materials. While you're sitting here out of sight, you could be missing out on other important things happening, perhaps with Mark DeWitt.

If you want to leave and go to Mark DeWitt's, turn to 95F. If you're willing to stay crouched down by some esoteric games for a while longer, turn to 36F.

32B

Look at your time card. If the time is now between ten and eleven o'clock, turn to 108B. If it is any other time, turn to 98G.

32C

You move up to the man again, and just reach out to grab the small cooler. Roll the two dice. If you roll more than your Strength score, turn to 51A. If you roll your score or less, turn to 148G.

32D

You manage to wriggle backward through the window and drop to the ground below. Just as you start to run toward the trees, a siren goes off. However, you make it into the trees and hide safely.

Reluctant to leave this mountaintop retreat because you are certain that the answers to your questions must be here, you hunker down in some bushes and wait for the hullabaloo to die down. [1X]

Turn to 18D.

32E

Surprised at your own skill (or luck? a small voice asks you), you realize that both back tires of the Ferrari have been shot out and the car is careening dangerously down the road, sparks flying from the screeching metal of the bare wheels.

Roll two dice against Aleta's Driving skill of 45 to see if she regains control of the car enough to bring it to a safe stop. If you roll more than the score, turn to 36B. If you roll her score or less, turn to 152A.

32F

You take only a second or two to listen at the door, then you open it and slip in. Finding yourself in the kitchen, you pause to survey the scene and to listen for any signs of approaching people. You hear nothing, but that doesn't necessarily mean anything.

If you want to hide here in the kitchen, hoping that any search will pass you by, then explore later when things have quieted down, turn to 102A. If you'd rather start searching here to see if you can find anything of interest, turn to 87F. However, if you think it might be the better part of wisdom to leave, you can try to escape by the window (107E).

32G

You fiddle for a few minutes with a tiny blade that you carry in your shoe. It's not really a lock pick, but you hope it might work. . . . It's no good, though, and you finally give up.

Maybe you should just steal the briefcase and get off the train now. If that's what you want to do, turn to 101C. If you'd prefer to wait until you get to Los Angeles and see what happens there, turn to 92D.

32H

You brake slowly, maneuvering all the way, until finally you're at a fairly comfortable forty miles an hour, bouncing between trees, rocks, and small washouts. At that speed, you safely navigate all the things that might cause trouble, though you bounce enough to rattle your brains a bit.

Suddenly, there's a road in front of you again, and you increase your speed as you near it. But just before you reach it, the Ferrari zooms past, caught for a brief second in your headlights.

You're still behind her, but maybe now you can catch up with her and ram her. You turn into the road and accelerate as quickly as you dare. The road's still zigzagging, though, and you don't dare take it easy on the turns or you won't catch up to Aleta.

Roll the dice. If you roll your Driving/Automobile skill or less, turn to 138B. If you roll more turn to 155B.



34A

You flip through the calendar, noting nothing more of interest, and then return to your study of the room.

Return to 20A.

34B

As you sit there, the name "Moorland" begins to ring a bell. It was the source of one of the items that was completely removed from the Anomalies Report by Lorendi, the guy who broke into the computer and died for his pains.

Turn to 41F.

34C

You curl up in the protection of some bushes, napping lightly, waiting for the reaction to the alarm to die down. One and a half hours pass (cross them off on your Time Card) before you decide it's safe to venture back up to the building.

This time, you decide not to waste more time, but to confront problems right at the entrance to the building.

Turn to 14A.

34D

By a stroke of sheer luck you find a key bearing a label that says "Kawasaki" lying loose among the clutter on the workbench. You run toward the big black motorcycle.

Turn to 25D.

34E

After listening a moment and hearing only a little banging that could be a restless animal in its cage, you open the door to the room where the laboratory animals are kept. A quick glance shows you that no one is inside.

As you step in, you move slowly, afraid that the animals are going to react to the presence of a stranger. You notice that one chimp gets to its feet and reaches one long arm between the bars toward you but makes no noise, and the other chimp in the next cage just slumps down lethargically, not even noticing you.

You ignore the first chimp and move into the room, ready to take this opportunity to search. [1X]

Turn to 76A.

34F

Each running step you make you expect to hear a guard's voice shout, but you and Pachezny stumble into the trees undiscovered.

As the scientist finally begins to catch his breath, he asks, "What now?"

"Now you're going to tell me lots more about this place. And later I'm going to catch that train. In the meantime, I'll take you to a hotel somewhere."

Before you settle down to listen, you feel a vibration on your wrist. You look at the tiny screen on your Orioncomm and see a message appear across it:

ALETA MARCUS — ALIAS ALETA HAMPTON —
5'8", RED HAIR —

DRIVER IN MAJOR WEB ENTERPRISE,
BEIRUT 1986. —

BELIEVED MOVED TO SENIOR POSITION.

So now you know. That pretty lady is definitely a Web agent. Web can't be planning anything benevolent with the virus. They must be looking at it and the enzyme it produces in a very different way from the scientists.

As you drive down the mountain, you continue to question Pachezny. You learn that many different young scientists have worked on the project over the months, but that Aleta kept supposedly sending them home, dissatisfied with their work, though he never saw anything wrong with it. Pachezny tells it in a bitter voice, as if she had been deliberately making his work more difficult by changing the help he had.

When you reach Moorland, you turn out toward the highway, where you take Pachezny to a small motel. You have Denver headquarters rush in a Titan team to completely debrief the man and to keep him safe while you pursue Aleta Marcus and her fatal bugs.

Turn to 28G. Note: *You may stop keeping track of time now.*

34G

Things haven't changed since you first glanced in. Maybe someone just forgot to turn off the tube; people do, you know, you remind yourself.

Also reminding yourself that the sound of the TV will drown out any sounds that you might inadvertently make, you pull the slightly ajar window open farther, then use your hands to lever yourself up into the window.

As you lean forward into the room, your face is met by a plant that seems to want to crawl all over you. Spitting it out of your mouth, you look down to be sure there will be a place to put your feet among the greenery. There will be, so you pull up one leg to kneel on the window frame. Within a few seconds, you step lightly away from the plants and into the room.

You stand in front of the window, ready to take time to explore this room. [1X]

Turn to 148A.



35A

The slight scraping sound you make apparently draws no attention, and you manage to pull yourself onto your knees in the window. Then you step down. [1X]

Turn to 124A.

35B

As you replace the atlas on the shelf, your eye is caught by a curiously shaped package tucked back in a corner of the bottom shelf. Examining it, you realize that it isn't a package, but a bundle of long, paper-wrapped sticks. Connected to a battery and a small, black square device. As you stare, you realize that the device is a radio receiver, and the sticks are dynamite! This place is set to go off! [1X]

Turn to 92C.

35C

"If you'll recall," you say firmly, "I'm traveling with Ms. Marcus in the private car."

But that doesn't help a bit. All he does is grumble, "Then why don't you stay there!"

Giving up, you take the opportunity to look around as you walk the few steps back to the door, but you see nothing of interest. You open the door and return to the luxury of the private car.

Turn to 71B.

35D

You head straight for an escalator going down to the street. But that's your mistake: escalators are hard to get off of once you're on. And the person whose bag you took is barreling after you. "That's him! There on the escalator! Police!"

You hear a whistle. You had no idea there would be a policeman so close by. All you can do now is try to get yourself out of a bad predicament. You reach toward the upward-moving handrail of the opposite escalator, and set the bag there so that it's going up, while you keep going down. The owner sees it coming and creates such a commotion about getting the bag back that no one notices you disappearing from the building.

Turn to 38H.

35E

You admit you're fairly dexterous, but you've never had any special training in picking locks. Maybe you should steal the briefcase and get off the train now. If that's what you want to do, turn to 101C. If you'd prefer to wait until you get to Los Angeles and see what happens there, turn to 92D.

35F

Somewhere far from the station, you turn into a small, friendly looking bar. You order a mineral water, then head to the restroom. In privacy, you finally open the red cooler you've been pursuing since Colorado.

Nestled securely into specially carved plastic-foam

forms are two glass flasks with tightly sealed stoppers in the tops. The material inside looks like gray jelly with a rather grotesque refrigerator mold growing all over it. You don't even remove them from the cooler to look at them more closely. Instead, you close the cover, down your drink, and hop on the first plane back east, where you deliver your hard-won treasure to Orion's own scientists. And also take Brittany's thanks in person.

35G

Looking up, you see the light of the classroom turning Aleta's flamboyant red hair into a golden halo. "Good-bye, Mr. Cord," she says.

You see her stepping over to the lever again and realize that you're about to be left in darkness, in an unknown slimy pit. Quickly you look around, trying to get a grasp on your surroundings before the lights go out.

What you see takes your breath away. You are standing in an earthen bowl carved beneath the building. Most of the mud is coated with a flowing, oozing bright blue substance, and sticking out of the blueness is a nauseating collection of bones. Human bones, you can see at once. Bones of perhaps six or eight bodies.

"What is this place?" you shout, as the floor above you starts to close.

"It's where inquisitive people go to die," Aleta calls down. "Just one of our little experiments in recombinant genetics that didn't work out quite as we expected. But it has proved very useful. The blue stuff—isn't it pretty, Mr. Cord?—is a slime mold that we gave the ability to eat animal flesh. Oh, it's very efficient. Even as you stand there, it's beginning to nibble away at the skin of your feet and ankles. Don't you feel it? I imagine the ones who went before you were quite insane with pain and fear before they actually died."

Giving an involuntary shudder, you try automatically to lift your feet from the ooze and stand on something solid, but there's nothing but bones.

With a final chuckle, Aleta Marcus lets the opening in the floor close completely, leaving you in soul-destroying darkness.

Turn to 150C.

36A

You discover *Monopoly* pieces inside the *Trivial Pursuit* box and special trivia cards lying loose inside the *Scraples* box. [1X]

Turn to 148A.

36B

In her frantic maneuvering, Aleta makes things worse, and the Ferrari spins out of control. It wraps itself around a tree.

You park and run toward the car to get the woman out, but a glance shows you that she is already dead. Before you reach her, the car explodes, as a spark from the tearing metal sets the ruptured gas tank afire.

If you had occasion to pull a fire alarm up on the mountain, turn to 99D. If not, turn to 42G.

36C

When you add, "I'll put in a good word for you with the boss," the guards squirm a bit and glance questioningly at each other. Then the first one steps back, replacing his gun in his holster.

"All right," he says, "go on. Just tell Aleta that we were trying to do our job, okay?"

"Sure," you reply, and you push your way through the door. [2X]

Turn to 57G.

36D

You leap through the door and close it, just as you hear a sound behind you in the guarded entrance hall. You don't know whether it was someone new or a noise made by a fallen guard, but you can't take time to think about what might have been. [2X]

You find yourself in a narrow corridor, facing one door (57G), with another door just to your right (132C). A cement-block staircase goes down (76D).

36E

The rest periods you need between attempts at sawing while holding yourself with one arm become longer and longer. But just as you're about to give up, certain that you can't lift yourself up one more time, the little blade cuts its way through the last slivers holding the bolt in place.

You drop back into the pit just in time to avoid being hit by the falling strut. Safety lies in sight, just above you.

You start to shudder uncontrollably as the tension and horror you had not acknowledged are released. But you overcome the shuddering enough to leap upward and grab hold of the edge of the floor section. Your fingers catch the top, and you pull yourself up into the classroom. [7X]

Turn to 89E.

36F

You've just about decided that you'd like to be a magic-user in a rousing AD&D® adventure, when the outside

door opens again, jingling the bell.

You can see between the boxes that the newcomer is a woman in a kelly green suit. She has fine features surrounded by one of those expensive hairdos that gives her glowing red hair a casual, windblown look. She walks into the place with the confidence that you've often noted in beautiful women. You also get the feeling that the shop has been waiting just for her.

"Hello, Leroy," she says to the fat merchant.

"Milady Aleta," he cries in gallant pleasure at the sight of her. He lifts his heavy body to clear a chair for the woman.

She tugs at her straight skirt in a mock curtsy and says, "Thank you, kind sir, but I cannot be staying long today. I just need to check those orders for the special metal miniatures we've been discussing."

"All right, Aleta. The papers are in the back room." He rises and signals for her to precede him through a door at the far end of the shop.

There's silence for a moment, then you see Bob Berner rise from where he was studying bottles of paint for plastic model kits, and he follows the pair through the back door.

So, you made the right choice. Obviously, Berner is engaged in something secret, something that requires clandestine meetings. You wish you dared try to listen at the door.

Perhaps you should. . . .

If you want to go to the door and listen, turn to 142I. If you think you'd better just stay where you are, turn to 112A.

36G

The device goes off with a roar that amazes you, just as it has every time you've heard it. You are poised to run in as soon as the guards come out . . . but only one comes out. The other stays inside, poised for anything that might happen. So when you enter, he has a drop on you before you step through the doorway, even though, you then discover, he has a heavy bandage on his foot. That's what kept him from coming out.

You're about to try to take him, when another guard enters from an open hallway on the right and quickly has you in handcuffs.

"Take him to the boss," the newcomer says. [2X]

Turn to 81A.

37A

You are certain that Karl and Aleta are leaving, and they are probably taking the "stuff" with them to go down and get the train at Moorland.

Your job is to stop the special bacteria from reaching Web in Los Angeles. But if you try to stop it here, you'll miss connecting Aleta Marcus with the Web operation in Los Angeles. But if you don't try, you're taking a chance on not stopping it at all (as little as you like to admit the possibility that Sebastian Cord could fail).

You ponder a moment and decide that the main thing you need to do right now is stay here in the garage and see what happens in the next few minutes.

Looking around, you decide to crawl inside the truck and wait there. [2X]

Turn to 79F.

37B

You find a worn hardbound book on how to win at the racetrack. On the flyleaf is written "Hogwash! I'll stick to my own system!" and above the note is the owner's name: Foster Needham. Somehow in the last few years he must have become completely confident that one day his ship was going to come in at the track, and he was going to do it his way.

You wonder why DeWitt has the book, but having seen the drawers of the desk in the operators' room, you're not surprised people's books get switched accidentally or on purpose.

If you want to roll again, return to 114B. Otherwise, go to 96A.

37C

Biding your time, you wait on the platform of the train for one of the periodic stops the train makes during the night. And somewhere in the remote small towns of southern Utah, a stranger hitchhikes his way back to civilization as a train disappears into the night.

Months later, back in New York, you read a newspaper clipping. Remove the item with the red seal from the pocket at the back of the book, and read it.

37D

In a drawer of the old desk, you find a map of the mountain you're on. It shows that in addition to the main road down to the town of Moorland, there's a narrow, dirt trail that cuts several miles off the route. You stick the map into your pocket. [2X]

Return to 127G to make a second roll. Otherwise, turn to 104A.

37E

It's time to move on. Return to 93C to investigate another operator's home. If Dewitt's is the last one, turn to 69C.

37F

As you fall, you make a frantic grab for the table, but you fail to grab the edge, so as it tilts downward, you just slide off the surface right into the pit.

"Good try," you hear Aleta laugh as you fall into darkness. You try to flex your knees to prevent a painful jolt on landing, but you arrive at the bottom sooner than you expected. You land with a thud that sends pain up your spine. Your knees collapse you into an oozy, cold slime that makes you nauseated.

Turn to 35G.

37G

Before his fear makes his fingers release their grasp on the flasks, you leap toward Pachezny, determined to save the cultures. But just as you do, he flings his hands up to his face and bursts into tears. The flasks go flying. You dive headlong at one, but the other shatters on the floor. Your sudden burst of energy forces you to take deep breaths, and there is nothing you can do to avoid breathing in the bacteria released from the broken flask.

Leaving Pachezny to his trembling and tears, you go in search of Aleta Marcus. You find her creeping through the hallway carrying a bundle of long sticks, which you immediately recognize as dynamite.

When she sees you, she starts to throw a stick at you but stops when you quickly say, "It's all over, Aleta. We've destroyed the bacteria culture, and you have nothing to take to Web headquarters tonight."

"But . . . but they'll come after me. . . ." she says in horror and confusion.

"Yes, Aleta, they probably will. Good luck to you."

The stunned Web agent is still standing, blank-faced, in the corridor when you come back upstairs after helping Sarah get her belongings. You walk out of the building into the crisp night air and down the slope toward your rental car. You're just turning out onto the road when the top of the mountain above you explodes into a million pieces. Aleta Marcus found her own answer to the problem.

But the doctors have no answers for your problem. Day by day, as the recombinant virus takes over your system, you recognize that you are losing your own ability to make decisions for yourself. The last decision you make on your own is to have yourself locked up, forever, so that the bacteria that have taken over your body cannot be spread to others.

38A

You carefully close the door to the hallway before pressing the light switch. You blink a moment in the sudden brightness, but as your eyes adjust, you find yourself glad that you're not a scientist or other academic. You'd hate to have to spend much time in what looks like nothing more than a high school classroom.

In fact, it really does look like school when you glance at the chalkboard. Someone's been writing and drawing gibberish. If you recognize any of the unusual names, turn to 95G. If not, turn to 107D.

38B

From some well in the back of your brain comes the memory that it's dangerous to . . . to do something with the wires. That's a great help, Cord!

If you still want to cut the wires, you must have your knife (you were never captured by the guards) or you must be in a room where a cutting tool is available: the kitchen, garage, or laboratory. If you have a cutting tool available, turn to 16B. If not, you'd better try to get out of the building; turn to 88F.

38C

You hold your breath, trying to make yourself as small as you can. The guards just give a quick look around. One says, "No one here," and they trot back out of the room. Then you breathe again and stand up.

Now that you're here and you probably have a few minutes before they search again, you'd better take time to explore the room. [2X]

Turn to 148A.

38D

You open the door and slide into the beautifully crafted seat. You have to move the seat back slightly to make your long legs fit. You inspect the instruments on the dashboard and open the little glove compartment. There, you find a few papers on the car. And tucked into it, a small case of plastic, shaped like a credit card. It has a complicated hologram on it, which, if you hold it just one way, shows an emblem that you think says "Web." In fact, it looks rather like your Orion card case.

If you want to take the case with you, tuck it in your pocket. If not, return it to its compartment. [2X]

Return to 104A.

38E

Turn to page 125 and glance at the picture. Do not study it in detail and do not read the text.

You have to stand on tiptoes to see into the high kitchen window; it must be above the sink. Immediately, you see that there is a man with a balding head sitting at the table, his back to you. Aleta, the woman you followed here, is waiting on him, putting some more stew or something on his plate, her red hair gleaming in the lamplight. You see him reach out and pull her to him. She kisses him, but you see her grim-

ace slightly as she does so. Who's playing what role here? you wonder as you admit you're not going to enter the building here. [1X]

Walk around the building to the next room on your diagram and return to the chart on the inside back cover.

38F

You review in your mind what you saw through the windows of the building. Figure out what time it is, then turn to the chart on the inside back cover to see which section number is shown in regular type (the first section number listed) for the room you want to enter, in the appropriate half-hour.

38G

Seeing that you're going to lose it, you concentrate very hard on laying the bike down on the ground under you before you let loose and fly. You land on your shoulder, rolling, and rise with only a few bruises to show for it.

You hurry back to the Kawasaki and discover that even with all your effort, it has skidded along the ground and crashed into a rock. Its front headlamp is broken, so if you're going to go anywhere, it will be without light.

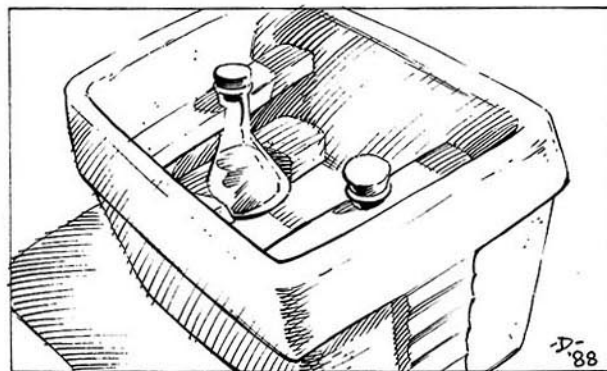
That means that you must get back to the road and try to follow Aleta's own lights. Maybe you can still catch up with her.

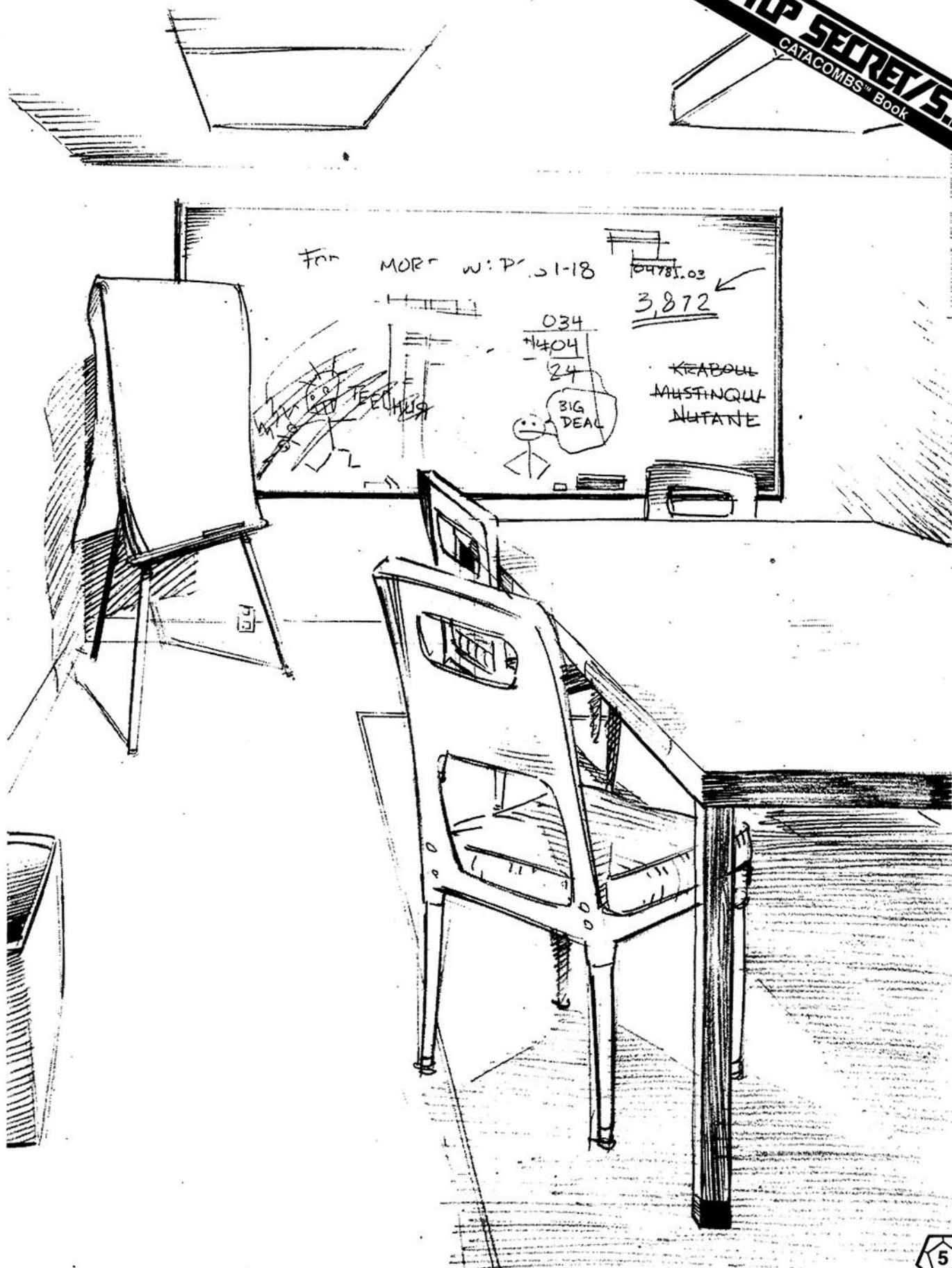
Turn to 73A.

38H

As you walk along the street outside the station, you kick yourself, along with convenient pebbles, for failing to intercept the bacteria cultures that Aleta was delivering. Finding a phone to call in a report to Orion headquarters, you wonder just what the bacteria are going to do to someone that Web wants to harm. You also wonder if you will ever know.

Turn to the pocket at the back of the book. Remove the item with the red seal and read it.





40A

It's just an ordinary TV and stereo as far as you can see, though you find someone's taste highly questionable—Muzak-style jazz and punk rock! Surely they don't both belong to the same person. Return to 64A.

40B

Lifting up the large tarpaulin that lies behind the snowmobile, you crawl under it and lie on your back next to the machine so that you can be sure the material is completely covering you. Then you wait.

Long minutes pass, but you think you hear the guards shouting at each other and coming closer. Finally, a door opens and a voice says, "Look carefully. There's lots of junk in here."

"I resent that," says another voice. "That little black and green beauty over there just happens to be mine. Come here, I'll show you."

Metallic steps near your hiding place. That's when you realize that the snowmobile you're lying by is painted black with green stripes. Should you get your gun out, knowing that you'll have to move the tarp in doing so (67B) or stay perfectly still and hope that they don't check here (26G)?

40C

The powers-that-be must be with you tonight, because you manage to avoid giving in to all of the obstacles you encounter. You reach the lower road in time to see Aleta's headlights still fairly far up the mountain.

You keep going on it until you find a very narrow spot, between a huge boulder and a sharp drop, where you can force Aleta to stop. There you station your motorcycle sideways across the road. You know that it won't be as good a barrier as the Toyota would have been, but its vivid chrome shininess gives it an eerie look in the moonlight, so maybe it will frighten her.

Because you got down the mountain so far ahead of Aleta, however, you've got time to pull some branches into the road to augment the barrier look of the motorcycle. Then you get off to the side into safety, not knowing if Aleta will be able to stop or not.

Turn to 50A.

40D

As you spin, you draw your gun. Coming up behind you is a tense-looking man dressed in a brown uniform and a big gun.

"Halt!" he shouts.

You're not halting for anyone! But his willingness to talk rather than shoot gives you the first shot.

Conduct combat. He has a Pistol skill of 35. If, within a total of 5 shots (the guard's and yours), you succeed in killing the guard (he takes 8 points of damage to the head, chest, or abdomen), turn to 68F. If he succeeds in killing you, turn to 59F. However, if 5 shots are fired and no major damage has been done, turn to 103G.

40E

The device you wear on your wrist looks like a computer nut's dream of a combination watch/calculator. But it is much more than that. You press an almost invisible button, raise an antenna, and it becomes a powerful communicator. You type into it your request for any information about Aleta Marcus. [2X]

For now, return to your exploration (136A). However, before leaving the bedroom, turn to 47F.

40F

You're hoping someone is going to say something that will give him or her away as the person who set the dynamite, but then you hear: "It must have been the stranger. He is trying to blow the place up."

Aleta Marcus grabs that thought instantly. "Industrial espionage! Someone must be trying to keep us from succeeding with the drug." There's a clamor of agreement, and then you hear her say, "Thank heaven we're scheduled to leave here with the cultures tonight." And she shouts to a plump guard standing near the door, looking ineffectual. "Alex, is my car ready?"

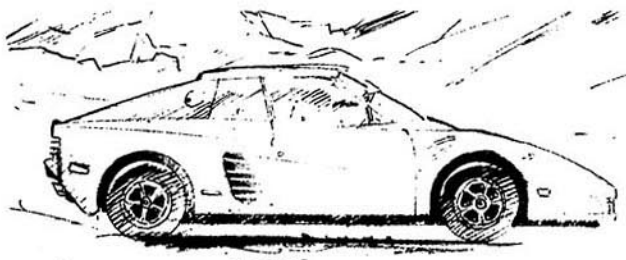
"Sure is, Ms. Marcus. Got her all tuned up. You could probably get down that mountain in fifteen minutes flat."

The woman laughs. "No need for that. I just have to make the 12:30 train at Moorland. Now, will the guards please go back through the building and make sure that there's no more dynamite set to go off? Karl and I need to leave and we certainly don't want to leave if there's any question about your safety." Why don't you believe in her sincerity?

There's no point in your trying to go back into the building. Everyone is too alert now, and you know that the reason this place exists is going to be taken away in a few minutes. All you can do now is try to stop it from reaching its destination.

You make your way through the darkness to where your rented Firebird waits, then drive down the twisty road to Moorland, at the bottom of the mountain.

Turn to 28G. (Note: You may stop keeping track of time now).



41A

You recall from the brochure you saw about this train that there should be someplace else to look in this baggage car. If you think there should be: a coat closet, turn to 87A; a safe 75A; a refrigerator, 94D.

41B

In a metal toolbox, you discover a key with a cardboard tag attached that says, "Kawasaki." You think you have found the key to the motorcycle. You pocket it in case you need it later. [1X]

Return to 127G to make a second roll. Otherwise, turn to 104A.

41C

You leave the room and close the door behind you, as it was when you entered. If you haven't checked out the room with the key hanging outside yet, turn to 18A. Otherwise, you decide it's time to get back upstairs, where you suspect the major action will be.

Turn to 114E.

41D

The guards' heads meet with a satisfying, resounding crack. One falls immediately to the ground. The other struggles to retaliate but is too groggy. Another punch sends him to the ground, too.

You pause, catching your breath. Though you listen carefully over your deep inhalations, you hear no indication that anyone knows you're there.

Working quickly, you move each of the two men into the woods. You remove one man's shirt and pants and don them over your own. Then you tie the men to trees, their mouths gagged. Maybe now you can explore this place undisturbed. [4X]

Return to 150A, roll the dice again, and see what room you're looking into.

41E

Coming to the door of what you are sure is the office, you pause to listen for any noise from within. You hear the low rumbling of a man's voice. It is interspersed by a woman's angry words: "... ready to go ... train tonight ... out of here ..."

[1X]

You don't dare wait to hear any more; the guards might appear at any second. You must choose another room to try. Turn to 93D.

41F

You talk Aaron Burkhardt into letting you have one of the headquarters' aircraft for as long as you need it. "Just don't need it for very long," he says sternly.

After studying the aeronautical chart and current NOTAMS for the little Moorland airport, over at the western edge of the state, you take off from Stapleton in a neat little Cessna 182. It's a beauty of a flight, giving you a chance to relax and let off steam for an hour or two. As you come in over the Moorland area, you take time to fly around, studying the terrain. Just

to the east of town, you see a peak that has been cleared at the top to make room for a largish, low building. You can see a very winding, narrow road snaking through the forest leading up to the clearing.

As you close your flight plan at the airport, you casually ask about what you have just seen.

"I unnerstan' it's a biology labertory of some sort," replies the man at the desk. "But they don't let anybody up there to find out. Friend o' mine said he heard shootin' there a few weeks ago."

Great, you think.

You pick out a nice dark car from the rental-car agency—another Firebird so that you won't have to get used to a different car—and pick up some maps. Before you make your way to the mountain you saw from the air, you eat a leisurely and satisfying meal of succulent rack of lamb, knowing it might be many hours before you get to eat again.

If you left the hobby shop right behind Aleta, turn to 126A. If you were detained by a fight, you followed Berner, or you had to take time to check out a phone number, or a chemical analysis, turn to 43F.

41G

Standing quietly outside the garage door, you continue to listen to them talking ... until you hear Aleta say, "Karl, I'll finish packing here. You go get the stuff out of the refrigerator."

If you know what the "stuff" is and think you know which refrigerator it is in, turn to 30D. If you decide you've got to learn more before putting yourself in a position where you might have to take action, turn to 114G.



42A

You revel in the cold autumn wind hitting your face as you charge down the mountainside after Aleta Marcus. Suddenly, you feel seventeen years old again and wonder why you gave up riding a bike. Then you chuckle at the image of you riding a big Kawasaki into the hotel where you maintain a luxury suite in Atlantic City.

The road surface is great, but the curves are very sharp. However, the big advantage of a motorcycle is that you can take curves off the road surface if necessary, making wide swings instead of tight corners, so even the sudden appearance of a huge dark boulder in your path doesn't faze you.

As you get closer to the lights of Aleta's car, which you can see through the trees, you decide to turn off your own lights so that you can creep up on her, unseen.

Turn to 73A.

42B

You get a serious shock as soon as you peer in the window. Inside is a zoo! Literally! You see cage after cage of animals—mostly monkeys of various sizes. You wonder what could possibly be going on in this place that would require a pet shop. Well, maybe you'll be able to find out.

Return to 150A to place another room or move on.

42C

Holding the ticket out of his reach, you ask, "Now, what is this ticket for?"

"A t-train t-trip . . ." he mumbles into his white coat front.

"Why are you taking the train?" you ask, jerking the gun into his face.

He gasps and cringes back, and you wonder how such a man ever got involved in something that must be illegal, probably even worse.

"We-we're d-delivering some s-stuff in Los Angeles t-tomorrow evening."

"What stuff? Tell me about it." And you make sure he remembers the gun you hold.

Turn to 22A.

42D

You're eager now to get out of that lobby as quickly as you can. If you're heading toward the left-hand door, turn to 140C. If you think the hallway will be safer, turn to 48E.

42E

"So what killed this one?" you ask.

"The computer," he says proudly.

"The computer and Ed Charnoff."

"Huh?"

"Well, we haven't been completely careless about the possibility that our operators could get in trouble. Charnoff, before he died, would have told the guys who came after him exactly how to get into the computer. And clearly, they followed his instructions to the letter."

"Then how did the man die?"

"A little trick I programmed in. Once the operators have been working in the computer for a few minutes, they have to type in a code to keep going." When you look blank, he continues, "Like this: The guy is sitting at the keyboard, working away. If he doesn't give the code at the proper time, the automatic tape handler inserts a special tape into the drive, one that self-destructs, giving off extremely poisonous fumes that quickly kill anyone in the room. And it did!" he finishes proudly.

"So Charnoff must have just told his killers the main operating code but not the keep-going code."

"Right. That's why I said he and the computer killed the guy."

"I'm glad," you say quietly. Perry nods his big head, shrugs, and leaves the room.

Return to 8.

42F

"We will, Sarah," you say. "But first, I've got to learn as much more as I can. I will come back for you, no matter what. I promise. All right?"

She nods. "Just hurry, Sebastian."

"I will." You kiss her on the forehead, listen but hear no sounds, and hurry out the door.

You lock the door and pocket the key. Maybe any guard seeing the key gone will assume that another guard has it.

[4X]

Turn to 86F.

42G

As you back away from the soaring heat, you see a red picnic cooler in the front seat of the Ferrari begin to melt. Certain that the culture samples are inside it, you rejoice in seeing it dissolve in the fierce heat of melting plastic.

You're heading back toward the Toyota, planning to go down the mountain and call in an Orion Titan Team to investigate the laboratory, when the earth beneath your feet begins to move. Looking up toward the top of the mountain, you realize that it is exploding. The woman who has just died must have made sure that nothing would be left behind her. There will be nothing left for a Titan Team to explore.

You head toward your own Firebird, eager to get back to Denver and Brittany Farrell, whose problems are over.

43A

You hurry down the stairs to the basement, where another woman awaits you. You unlock the "prison" with the key you've had in your pocket.

The fear in Dr. Sarah Graham's face dissolves to joyous relief as soon as she sees that it is you opening the door.

As you hold her, you tell her that Aleta is dead. A very small "oh" comes from the geneticist. Then she looks up at you. "Can we get out of here, Sebastian, right away?"

"Of course. Just get your coat and purse and I'll take you down the mountain to a motel. A team of investigators from my organization will be here by morning to close this place down and destroy the cultures and the records."

If it's after eleven-thirty at night, turn to 12A. If not, turn to 141C.

43B

The truck interior is nice and clean, just the way you think you would keep it if you had one. You note that the key is in the ignition, too. [1X]

Return to 104A.

43C

The bicycle has its chain off. The snowmobile can only run properly on snow, so it's just not relevant now because Colorado's snow is late this year. But then you notice the winged vehicle on one side. You lift some things off it and realize that you've found something very unusual, an autogiro. You know it was the predecessor of the ultralights that people are flying now, but you wonder just how useful it might be.

You study the thing for a few minutes. It doesn't look as if it's missing any parts. You feel a deep-seated urge to try the thing . . . but that's not what you're here for. [2X]

Return to 104A.

43D

Keeping your rear end low, you pull your leg back and then manage to crouch with both feet on the window frame. Turning sideways, you put that foot out again and leap away with a push from the second foot. You land heavily, but apparently without any damage. There's no shout out of the darkness, so you were not seen. Hoping your luck holds, you run into the protection of the ring of trees down the hill from the building. [2X]

Turn to 18D.

43E

You're able to duck behind things, but the guard either has to stay in the doorway or make himself vulnerable to you. Like hired guards everywhere, he has no desire to do the latter—but does. Each time he leans into the room to aim at you, he's wide open to your shot. And the instant he goes down, you move to the doorway

and pull him in.

You pause a moment, waiting for the sounds of someone else coming, but you hear nothing. The walls in this place must be thicker than they look.

You tuck the body carefully into a place that hides it as much as possible, and cover it so that no one entering the room will see it immediately. You've got to hurry and finish searching this place. [2X]

If this is the first time the guards have found you, return to the illustrated page where you were searching. If it's the second time, turn to 117F.

43F

Not wanting to announce your arrival on the mountain, you keep your car lights off and, as soon as you can, find a fairly clear spot to pull your Firebird off the road. You check that your Mauser is secure in its holster under the dark sweater you donned earlier. It is just nine o'clock at night as you reach the clearing around the laboratory. Make a note of the time, and turn to 93B.

43G

You walk around the cages, looking at them closely. The animals watch each movement you make, but you make a low crooning noise at them as you move, and none objects too much to your being there.

The cages are stainless steel, a lot smaller than you'd see in a zoo, of course, but no one appears to be terribly unhappy about their circumstances . . . that is, until you realize that of the pairs of animals—two rhesus monkeys, two chimps, two orangutans, and so on—one is always alert and playing, and very inquisitive about your presence, while the other appears preoccupied with something inside itself. They don't pay much attention to you, and they don't look happy or unhappy, just *there*.

As you study them, you realize that the lethargic animals all have a letter "A" on their cages, while the livelier, inquisitive ones have the letter "B."

Finally, you can't stand it anymore and you stand by the cage of the lethargic chimp and say quietly, "Hey, come on, fella, get up and play or something. It's a nice night, too nice to be sitting here moping. Come on, fella, get up!"

The chimp twists his head to one side and looks at you as if for the first time. He rises to his feet and shuffles the few steps he has room for, over to you at the bars. Then he sits again, right by the bars, and looks as if he's waiting for you to suggest he do something else fun. [3X]

If the animals started making lots of noise when you came into the room, turn to 134C. If they didn't, turn to 118B.

44A

The refrigerator in the laboratory is small and looks as if it might have been an afterthought because it stands in the aisle between the lab tables. When you open it, you see that the top shelf is taken up by racks of filled tubes labeled "Sterile Agar." Hey, something you recognize! You remember the name *agar* from school; it's a jellylike growth medium for bacteria. Maybe that's what they're doing here, growing bacteria. Harmful? Helpful? You've got to find out.

Somebody has soda pop stored in the refrigerator, too. Somehow, you wouldn't want any of that. [1X]

If it is after eleven o'clock, turn to 130C. If it is before eleven, return to 24B.

44B

You find nothing in the kitchen refrigerator except normal food. You're stepping out of the room, wondering where to go next, when you feel a gun jabbed into the small of your back.

Turn to 11A.

44C

Once more you drop down into the pit. You no longer even think about the blue flesh-eating ooze making its way into your skin. Instead, your whole focus is on trying to gather the courage and the strength to climb back up into the mechanism and keep sawing on the bolt you must cut through.

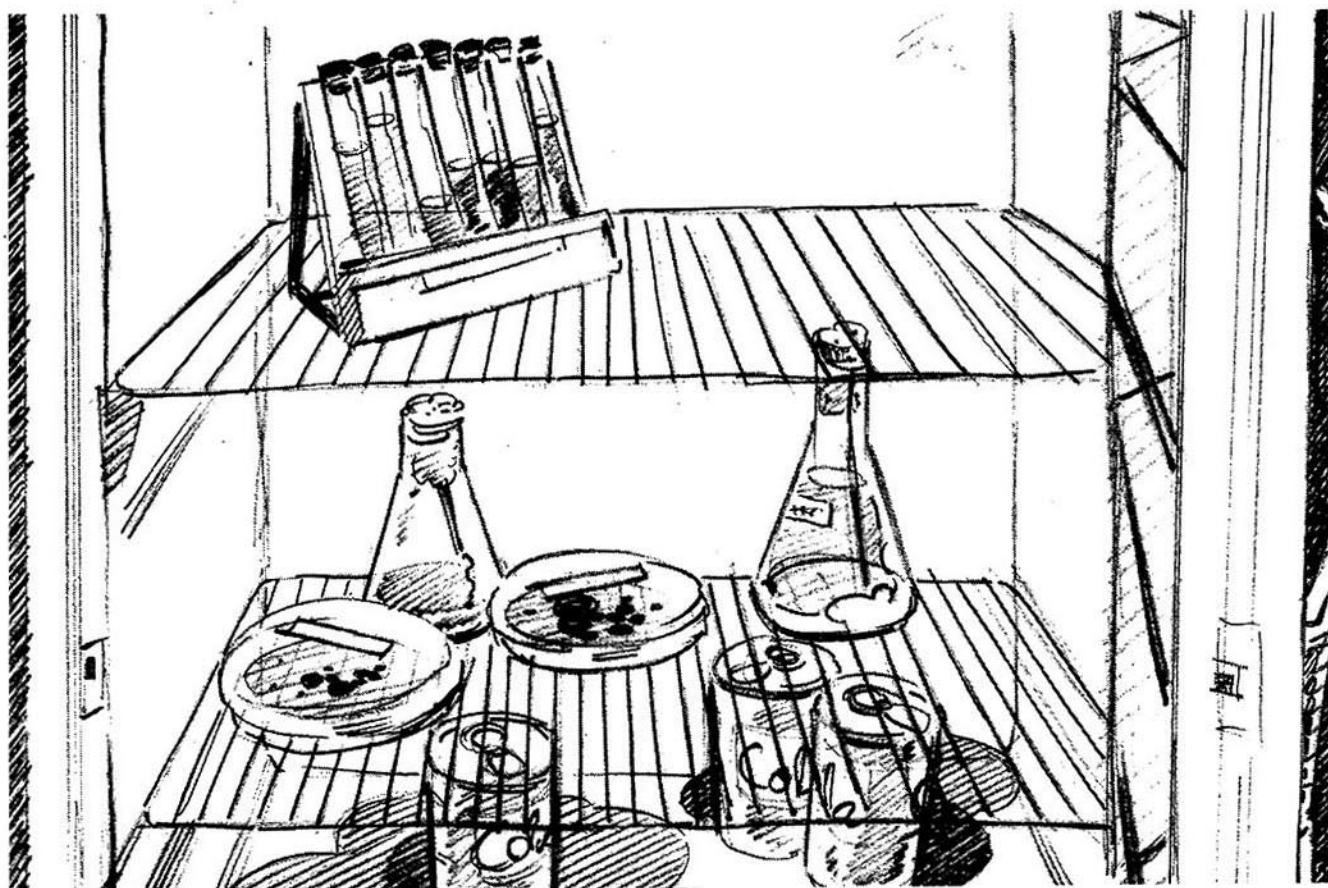
Roll the two dice. If you roll your Strength score or less, turn to 36E. If you roll more, turn to 24G.

44D

Turn to page 111 and glance at the picture. Do not study it in detail, and do not read the text.

You peer into the small computer room. It looks well-used, though kind of cold—as if lots of people stay a while, but no one uses it for a regular office. Certainly, there's no one here now. [1X]

If you want to enter the computer room window, turn to 155D. If not, return to the chart on the inside back cover and go to the next room on your map.



45A

Time's awasting. You quickly duck behind the easy chair and stay perfectly motionless. You hear footsteps pause outside the door and shuffle a moment. Then the door opens and someone enters. There's a pause, then the steps kind of sashay to the side, and you hear a voice say, "All right, mister, just stand up carefully and come out of there."

The guard is leaning sideways so that he can see you, and he's holding a gun on you with a perfectly steady hand. There's no way you can get your gun, nor can you leap at him. You are truly caught. You stand up.

"Now, just hand me the key you took from the hook."

You obey, stepping out into the room, under the eagle eye of the guard's automatic.

"Get goin' ahead of me. The boss'll want to see you." [1X]

Turn to 81A.

45B

You stand outside the room that you are sure is the bedroom. The shade is pulled, but the window itself is open. Hoping it doesn't crackle, you raise the shade slightly and peer in.

You find yourself staring at a pile of blankets on the bed, wondering if there's a person asleep underneath it. You doubt it. This just isn't the time of day when people are asleep. Of course there might not be much more to do up here on the mountaintop if you don't like TV or games. [1X]

If you want to take a chance and enter the bedroom, turn to 23G. If you'd rather not, move on to the next room on your diagram by turning to the chart.

45C

You lean back on the comfortable couch, waiting to see what is going to happen next. You're staring out into the night when Aleta Marcus appears at the far end of the car. You wonder if she was in the restroom or had perhaps gone into the next car for a moment.

As she enters the semicircle made by the couch, she looks quickly from her baggage to you. You just ignore her suspicious glance and smile at her. Even if she is a Web agent, she is quite lovely.

Turn to 147F.

45D

The file called Operations Manager is empty. [1X]

Return to 11C if you want to check a second file. If this was the second, you can check out the drawers on the right (28D) or other objects in the office (48A).

45E

Coming to the door of the office, you pause to listen for any noise from within. Hearing none, you quietly try to

open the door. But it's locked, and you doubt if you should take the time to try to pick the lock. [1X]

You need to choose another room; turn to 93D.

45F

You suddenly throw up your hands and say, "Wait! I give up!"

"Slowly bend down and drop your gun on the floor," the guard says. "Now, kick it over here."

You do so, and then quickly say, "Are you aware that there's dynamite set to go off in this building?"

"Sure, bud," he replies sarcastically. "If you want a way to get out of here, you'll need a better line than that."

"It's true. I just found a bundle in that room." You point. "Let me show you."

The guard looks worried for a second, then his training reasserts itself. "Come on. You're going to the boss."

"Maybe the boss set the dynamite," you say. "Maybe she wants to blow you up. Is she leaving here soon?"

The guard blanches. "Yeah," he replies, thoughtfully. "Yeah. She's scheduled to leave here about midnight. Alex's been getting her car ready."

"So she won't be here when the building blows." You are saying just what the guard is thinking.

"Show me what you found," he says. Then, remembering that he has captured a prisoner, he adds, "And it better be there, or I won't even bother taking you to the boss. You'll be dead meat!"

At gunpoint, you lead him back into the room you just left. When he sees the bundle of dynamite, he suddenly forgets your existence and goes running out the door. [3X]

Turn to 104D.

45G

Turn to page 91 and glance at the picture. Do not study it in detail and do not read the text.

You are looking into a large, immaculately clean scientific laboratory. At the moment, there's no one working in it, and you immediately think that this is where you should try to enter the building. But when you study the window, you realize that it is not an ordinary window. The glass is mounted into the wall itself, so there is no frame to have cracks or openings in. Where the glass joins the cement, there are heavy rubber gaskets sealing the joints. Someone must want very badly to keep something out of the lab . . . or is it keep something in? Whichever, there's no way you can use the laboratory to enter the building. [1X]

Move along to the next room on your diagram and return to the chart on the inside back cover.

46A

You open the door to the kitchen, listening carefully, and hear two male voices. This is no time to try to explore the kitchen. [1X]

Go back out into the corridor and turn to 93D.

46B

You manage to lower the blanket again without ever causing a change in the slow, slightly raspy breathing of the lovely woman.

Moving cautiously, you step to the door and listen for any sounds out in the corridor. When you hear nothing, you open the door ever so slo-o-o-wly, to prevent a sharp click of the latch. The corridor is empty, so you leave the door ajar and move quickly on to the next room. At least you are inside now. You shudder to think how close you came to disaster. [2X]

Check your diagram for what room is adjacent to the bedroom and turn to the chart, where you will use the numbers appearing in shaded type.

46C

The door closest to the stairway is locked, so that's no good. But the other closed door opens readily. However, it's dark inside, and there are no windows. You can see from the light coming through the open door that you're in some sort of classroom or conference room—all cold blackboard—and straight chairs. There's no place to hide here. You quickly turn around and head for the dormitorylike section. [1X]

Turn to 72C.

46D

You glance into the room full of animal cages, and immediately leap back. There's a man in a guard's uniform in there.

Slowly and carefully, you move back to the window. The man is clearly occupied and not concerned with who might be at the window. He's busy feeding or watering the animals. He keeps peering at a list on the bulletin board over the worktable.

After watching for a few minutes, you can see that the guard is concerned with making sure that food for every set of two animals is exactly the same weight and content. The animals must come in matched pairs for scientific research. Whatever they're testing for, it isn't dietary differences. [2X]

You need to get on, so you move to the next window on your diagram. Return to the chart on the inside back cover.

46E

You and Artie sit together for several minutes while you tell him who you are and what you think Web has to do with this place.

Finally, you say, "You said Pachezny and Aleta Marcus are leaving tonight?"

"Yeah."

"How will they go?"

"Aleta's got a car in the garage, a Ferrari." You hear the envy in his voice. "But I don't know where they go from Moorland."

"What will they take with them?"

"A case containing flasks of bacteria cultures. . . . They'd better be real careful with it, though," he adds thoughtfully.

"Why?" you ask.

"Well, if they had an accident or something and some of the stuff got out, it could be bad news for everybody."

You stir uneasily and ask, "How?"

"It would make them not have any highs or lows in their emotions, kind of flatten them out. And since the bacterium is normal in human systems, it would be virtually impossible to get out."

Artie sounds irrepressibly enthusiastic about such a calamity, but it brings a chill to your heart. Is this what Web is interested in? [3X]

You're torn, now, between making sure Aleta doesn't get away with the bacteria cultures and rescuing Sarah Graham, assuming she's still rescuable. If you want to stop Aleta, turn to 24H. If you'd rather go after Sarah, turn to 19G.

46F

You leave the garage and explore some more. There's an odd emptiness about the place now. Once you see a couple of guards standing in a hallway laughing together, certainly not as if they are on duty.

You begin to think that you're too late. Whatever was happening here has already happened.

Just as you decide that you might as well leave the building and return to your car, you hear a deep roar from under the building. The floor trembles slightly, and you wonder if perhaps Colorado is having an earthquake.

Very unlikely, you think, just as another explosion occurs right beside you, and the building comes tumbling down on top of you.

The mountaintop laboratory was dynamited by the people who left. Now no one will know what was going on there . . . or what became of the late Sebastian Cord.

47A

As the angle of the mountainside causes the truck to accelerate more and more, the truck also bounces more as it hits rocks and washouts. Suddenly, it bounces more than you can control, and the truck wraps itself around a large tree. The Toyota doesn't catch fire, but you're trapped and wounded. Sebastian Cord is through on this case, and perhaps forever, if someone doesn't come and rescue him soon. . . .

47B

Late the next afternoon, after a boring day punctuated by good meals, you watch Los Angeles pass your window. Concerned that Aleta is going to make some move very quickly after arriving, you walk to the front of the passenger car and hang out on the platform as if you were too restless to sit still for the final slowing of the train. From the platform, you can see into the baggage car, and glance occasionally down the outside of the train to see if she makes any moves.

Turn to 70A.

47C

You can't go into the bathroom and burn the papers there, and if you just tear them up, some earnest person might manage to piece them together again. The only thing you can think of is to tear them up and toss them off the train. No one would ever piece together separate bits of paper found many miles apart.

Standing in the door of the private car, you tear each sheet of the scientist's hard work into pieces and toss them into the night.

For each point of your Sixth Sense advantage, add 10 points to your Intelligence score. Roll the two dice. If you roll the total or less, turn to 61D. If you roll more, turn to 155C.

47D

You stand outside the door you think leads to the main bedroom for a moment, listening. When you hear nothing, you open the door and slip inside. The room is empty. So, too, is the bathroom off it.

You look around hurriedly for a place to hide if the guards come. You're so large that you could hardly be unnoticed in the bed. Under it? Nope, too low. When you check out the bathroom, you realize that the shower curtain is too thin and the storage space too small.

Discouraged at what you see, you look toward the window, wondering if perhaps you'd better get out of it right away.

And as you wonder, a knock comes at the door. "Dr. Pachezny? Aleta? Either of you in there?"

Will you try to get out the window before the searching guards come in the door (103F) try to hide in the bed after all (106E), or answer the guard, pretending to be the man whose room this is (67A)?

47E

As you open the door, you hear a scrambling sound in the room beyond. Looking in, you discover a blonde woman in a white lab coat standing behind a straight chair, holding on to both vertical posts of the back as if she were going to lift it and use it to attack you.

"You just leave me—" She stops abruptly, looks at you intently, and then continues. "Who are you? I've never seen you before."

"I'm Sebastian Cord," you reply. Then, figuring that this woman must oppose the Web people at the laboratory (or she wouldn't be locked up), you add, "I've come to help you figure out what's going on in this place."

"I know what's going on," she replies harshly. "They're picking the brains of decent people to sell a discovery that isn't ready to market and that might even be harmful."

"Is that why they locked you up? Because you disagreed with them?" You look at her sympathetically.

"Yes. I tried to get them to agree that the stuff wasn't ready."

"Maybe I can stop them," you say thoughtfully.

Just then, you hear footsteps on the stairs. Someone's coming down and will discover that the key is gone. You've got to slip it back on the hook!

Roll the dice. If you roll your Dexterity score or less, turn to 18G. If you roll more turn to 144F.

47F

You're considering leaving the room when you feel a slight vibration on your wrist, and, as usual, you thank the Ganymede Bureau for their amazing silent signals.

Holding your wrist so you can see the tiny screen on your Orioncomm, you see a message marching across it:

ALETA MARCUS—ALIAS ALETA HAMPTON—
5'8", RED HAIR—DRIVER IN MAJOR
WEB ENTERPRISE—BEIRUT, 1986—
BELIEVED MOVED TO SENIOR POSITION.

So now there's no doubt about it—this is a Web operation, and the alluring Aleta is pretty high up in the Web organization. Now you know this place is crooked, and you must do something about it. [2X]

Return to 136A.

47G

In order to see if you can pick the lock on the briefcase, roll the two dice. If you get more than *one-fourth* of your Dexterity score, turn to 32G. If you get one-fourth or less, turn to 100A.

48A

A nice combination of comfort and efficiency, you think, as you look around the office. The red-leather couch draws your eyes, but you resolutely turn away from it—after making a promise to yourself to look for one for your own hotel suite.

You have a feeling that this office is where you're going to get some important answers about this laboratory, if you can find them—or recognize them when you see them. [1X]

You may search the:	by turning to:
desk	138F
computer	133A
bookshelves	66G
photocopy machine	13C
fish tank	120B

If guards are aware that you are in the building, you must roll a luck roll before exploring any item listed above. If you get double numbers on the dice, turn to 128C. Otherwise, continue exploring.

When you are ready to go on to the next room, go out into the corridor and turn to 93D.

If you think you have learned enough to take action, turn to 86F.

48B

Remembering your chemistry class in high school—the one you didn't do very well in—you wonder if the strange ventilation system is to prevent awful smells from reaching the rest of the building. Seems likely for a scientific laboratory.

You look around at the rest of the room. [1X]
Return to 90A.

48C

The man's sheer bulk overwhelms you, and you go down in a dizzy spiral. You come to just enough to hear a voice say, "He shouldn't have stayed so long." Then there's a blow to your head, and you never know when Web's disposal squad comes for you.

48D

You glance at the glowing numbers of your watch in the darkness and realize that dawn might be coming soon. If you want to do any exploring, now's the time, while Aleta is sleeping heavily.

You rise carefully and take your clothes out into the living room to put them on, closing the door to the bedroom behind you. You yearn for a wash and a quick shave, but there isn't time for that right now.

If you haven't already checked out the baggage car, now is the time to do it. Go out through the door you entered and turn to 26A. However, if you have done so, you can take advantage of Aleta being asleep to check out her briefcase. Turn to 135A.

48E

You head toward the hallway at a run . . . and dive smack into the arms of a guard coming up a stairway you couldn't see from the front. He's as startled as you are, and for a second you think he's going to take time to get his gun out. But instead, he just hangs on to you for dear life, giving you neither a chance to get away nor room to use your own gun. You keep struggling, hoping that an opportunity will come, but all that comes is a blow to the back of your head.

Turn to 147E.

48F

You hold your breath and still your muscles with the long training required by your ill-gotten profession, training that could result in life or death.

The guards throw open the door. There's a moment of silence as you know they are surveying the room.

"Artie, seen anybody—a guy—who doesn't belong here?"

"Uh, . . . as a matter of fact, yes. He's down there on the floor."

You leap up, throwing the newspapers off, your gun blasting. Artie has leaped back into a corner, cowering behind a chair.

Conduct combat with two guards, each with a Pistol skill of 35. If you win, turn to 123F. If you die by taking full damage to your head, abdomen, or chest, turn to 59F.

48G

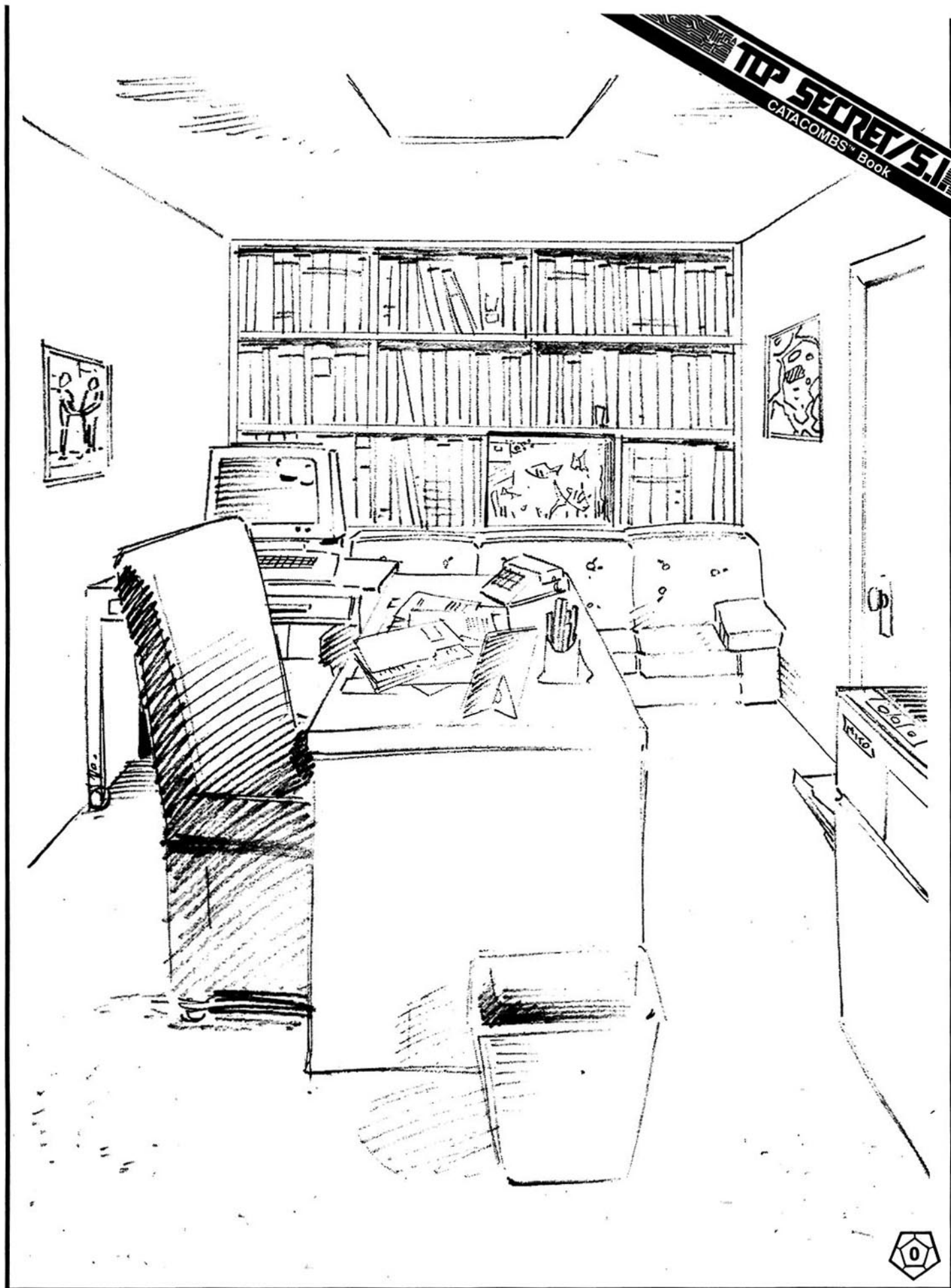
"Porter Harland asked me to check on you," you say smoothly, "and make sure that everything is all right here in his car."

"Things are fine," she says coolly and starts to turn away.

Unwilling to have her dismiss you as one of Harland's flunkies, you add, "I told him I was willing to have someone else use it this trip. It is a comfortable way to travel, isn't it?"

Her interest rekindled, she looks at you, smiles, and says, "I didn't know I would be taking someone's car away. Let me make it up to you. Come in and have a drink." And you know from the half-smile on her face that you have an invitation for as much more as you're willing to try.

Turn to 54A.



50A

The Ferrari comes roaring around a curve, right toward the narrow spot where you've parked your vehicle crosswise. You watch as the car makes a sudden leap, as if in instant response to what Aleta Marcus has seen in her headlights.

Roll the two dice. If you roll more than Aleta's Driving skill of 45, turn to 124G. If you roll the score or less, turn to 80A.

50B

You cautiously enter what you think must be the computer room.

You find yourself in a room that's half computer room and half library. There's a large worktable in the center, obviously set up for book research. The part of the room that looks busiest, however, has a computer table and a personal computer on it with several black 5 1/4-inch disks lying on the table beside it. You also discover that the computer is on. Well, lots of people leave theirs on. [1X]

Turn to 50D. After you've looked at as many disks as you want, turn to 110A and ignore the computer listing.

50C

But Aleta Marcus is a better shot than you anticipated. And with the sound of Dr. Pachezny's terrified sobs echoing in your head, you die with your face in a patch of oil on the floor of a garage somewhere in the wilds of Colorado.

50D

You turn on the computer, and it automatically goes through its initializing sequence. You don't know what the disks are, so all you can do is put them in at random and see what happens.

If the guards know someone is in the building and are searching, after you check two disks, turn to 110F. However, if you are freely exploring the place, look at as many disks as you want, then turn to 110A.

Insert a disk and roll one die.

If you get:	turn to:
1-2,	24E
3-4,	121B
5-6,	62D
7-8,	114F
9-0,	72D

50E

Curiosity gets the better of you, so you grasp the bottom strip of metal and pull down on it. One end moves, and as it does, you hear a grinding sound in the floor beneath your feet.

Clinging to the chalkboard, you watch in amazement as a large section of the floor drops away on a hinge that is not far from your feet. The big table goes with it but does not fall because it's bolted to the floor section.

Peering down, you look into a pit dug out of the

soil beneath the building. The bottom, only about ten feet down, is a vivid blue color, and the blue seems to ooze upward on the sides of the pit. Then you realize that sticking out of the blue are numerous bones, human bones, you can tell from a skull and a femur, that are completely clean.

An idea enters your mind that makes you squirm. Maybe the blue stuff is responsible for the cleanness of the bones. Maybe it's a chemical, or even something living, that eats flesh.

Then another thought worms its way into your consciousness: perhaps this is where the scientists are who have disappeared from the Western Colorado Genetics Laboratory. Perhaps Aleta didn't send them "home" at all.

You certainly have no intention of finding out by first-hand experience!

You close the pit opening and leave the room, more determined than ever to close this place down. [5X]

Turn to 89E.

50F

It's getting to be pretty late, so you think the lounge may be empty. You open the door slowly, hear nothing, and step on in. But there's a man there—a young man with longish curly hair—wearing a white lab coat that looks as if he's worn it all day.

He doesn't see you—he's too deep in thought—so you start to back out quickly and close the door again. But then you think of all the things you've already learned in this place and wonder if perhaps you should talk to him, tell him why you're here. [1X]

If you decide to do that, turn to 136C. If you doubt that you can trust him, turn to 61A.

50G

Hoping no one has heard the sounds of the scuffle, you drag the unconscious guard the few yards into the woods. There you remove the man's shirt and pants and don them over your own clothes, giving you a safety advantage you didn't have before. Then you tie the guard to a tree and gag him. There seems to be no commotion, so you return to peering through the closest window. [2X]

Return to 150A and roll the dice again to determine what you see.

51A

But the man is ready for you and is unexpectedly strong. Using muscles you certainly didn't notice under that flannel shirt, he shoulders you aside and walks swiftly—but not as if he were fleeing—toward the escalator. By the time you catch up, a crowd of people has moved in between him and you, and when you reach the bottom, he is gone.

Turn to 38H.

51B

Knowing it's probably not safe to be in the baggage car, you quickly take a look at the luggage on the padded rack. You recognize no names on the tags, nor does any of it look like anything but regular luggage.

The dog tied to the desk has been just growling since you came in, but now, as you walk toward it, the animal begins to bark at you, a furry ball of fury.

Suddenly, the door at the end of the car nearest the passenger car is flung open and a burly trainman wearing traditional overalls comes dashing in.

"Hey, what're you doin' in here? Passengers ain't allowed in here!"

If you're still determined to explore this room, you're going to have to do it despite the burly trainman (51D). If you'd rather do something else, turn to 17A.

51C

You look into the room full of animal cages, and at first you think you might be able to enter here, but then you realize that there is a man with longish, curly hair sitting on the floor by the cages. He's playing with the animals. One chimpanzee is holding its chin out so that the man can tickle it. Then the animal grabs a big ball and wraps itself around it and starts to roll. As it begins to spin, it looks to the man for approval. The man laughs and claps.

It's fun to watch, but getting you nowhere. [2X]

Choose the next room on your diagram and return to the chart on the inside back cover.

51D

"I just came out for a cigarette," you say, leaning casually against the wall.

But the trainman isn't having it. "This is my baggage car, not a smoking room!" And he starts toward you in a threatening way.

You're going to have to fight him if you want to stay. Conduct hand-to-hand combat. The trainman has a Basic Melee skill of 52. If you win, turn to 113E. If you are losing badly, turn to 123D.

51E

The row of small bedrooms off a narrow corridor makes you think of college, although at least there you had windows. The rooms offer some degree of privacy, but are small and dark. Web must pay very well for a stint in the wilds.

After a quick look through two of the rooms, you

find nothing of interest, except some mildly entertaining magazines. You suspect that the guards were hired for their lack of interest in what is going on around them, unless it impinges on their duty.

You find one slightly larger bedroom that appears to belong to a woman. It has an organization and tidiness about it that makes you wonder if a woman scientist lives here. If so, she keeps nothing here that tells you anything important. [3X]

Feeling you're wasting your time, you go back out into the main hall. You can check the closed rooms (142F), or the room with the key outside (18A), or you can go back up the stairs (114E).

51F

Quickly checking the little map you took from the garage earlier, you realize that there's a steep path that will take you right to the bottom of the mountain, and come out by the road. Surely, you can beat Aleta down on that.

You drive forward slowly, checking for signs of the path, and in just a few minutes you find it, even in the moonlight. You follow it down, turning and twisting as the path does, but never running into any of the debris that would make such a narrow, steep path dangerous.

As you descend the mountain, you catch occasional glimpses of car headlights turning this way and that on your left, and finally, after about twenty minutes, you realize that you are ahead of Aleta. Then, soon, the path joins the road. You keep going on the road until you find a very narrow spot, between a huge boulder and a sharp drop, where you can force Aleta to stop. There, you station your motorcycle sideways across the road. You know that it won't be as good a barrier as the Toyota would have been, but its vivid chrome shininess gives it an eerie look in the moonlight, so maybe it will frighten her into stopping.

Because you got down the mountain so far ahead of Aleta, however, you've got time to pull some branches into the road to augment the barrier. Then you get off to the side into safety, not knowing if Aleta will be able to stop or not.

Turn to 50A.

51G

The Ferrari draws you to it, but with it up on the rack, all you can do from down below is admire its underside and wish you could see more of it. [1X]

Return to 104A.

52A

You stand at the office door for a moment, preparing to enter. Then you realize that a man and a woman are talking inside. Listening carefully, you hear such phrases as "... can't be trusted!" (the woman), "... a good scientist..." (the man), then, her voice rising in anger, the woman says, "I don't care. She's going to have to be taken care of. We can't have her blabbing all over."

Afraid that her anger is going to carry her out of the office, you promise yourself that you'll look for a woman in danger. Then you turn and quickly move on to another room. Turn to 93D.

52B

You shout, "Hold it! I'm not firing!" Then you rise from your knees and toss your revolver out in front of you. The newly arrived guard hurries to your side, where he quickly kicks your gun away and pulls your arms behind you, handcuffing them.

"Take him to the boss," is all he says. [2X]
Turn to 81A.

52C

When you manage to figure out how to work the dratted thing, you try several rolls of microfilm, but discover that they all contain technical journals of which you don't even understand the titles. [3X]

Return to 110A.

52D

As your feet slide inexorably from under you, you clutch at the table, knowing that it isn't going to fall. You start to slip off, but a frantic grab at the edge of the tabletop keeps you safe.

"Oh, no you don't!" screams the Web agent. She turns her machine gun around and starts to slug you with the butt. Thanking those times when you sacrificed time in the casino for exercise, you tighten your stomach muscles and pull your legs up the smooth table until you can swing them up and over to the part of the floor that didn't fall. Which happens to be right at Aleta Marcus's feet!

You grab the butt of the machine gun and try to pull it from her hands. Shrieking, she leans forward to clutch at it, but in so doing, she trips over your body and falls headfirst into the blackness of the hole beneath you.

Holding tight to a table leg, you lean over the hole to see her body lying at a peculiar angle in a pit of bright blue ooze.

As you stare at the dead Web agent, vaguely hoping to see some movement because no beautiful woman should die like that, you notice that sticking out of the blueness are numerous bones, human bones.

She meant for you to die there. Now the pit will be her final resting place.

And you don't even know why.

Turn to 73E.

52E

When you add, "I'll make sure the bosses don't find out that you almost kept me from fixing the thing," the guards squirm a bit and glance questioningly at each other. Then the first one steps back, replacing his gun in his holster.

"Get going," he says. "But I'll just follow you to make sure... well, just to make sure."

You step confidently toward the left-hand door, as if you really know where you're going, and the guard follows you. When the door closes behind the two of you, you find yourself in a hallway of painted cement blocks. There's a door in front of you, a staircase going down, and a door to your right.

You head toward the staircase and hear behind you a somewhat plaintive, "Hey, that's not..." but then your gun is out and pointed right at the man's abdomen.

"No," you say, "that's not, but this is," and you grab the frightened man by the belt, dragging him toward you as you crash the butt of your gun into the side of his head. He slumps forward, and you catch him as you move toward the right-hand door. You're certain that the major rooms in this place either were visible from the windows or are in the basement, so you open the door and are pleased to have your reasoning validated: you've found a washroom.

There are two stalls, so you drag the unconscious guard in, undo his belt and pants, pulling them down, and prop him on the toilet. Hitting him again so that he won't wake any time soon, you tape his arms to the toilet tank and his mouth shut. Then you lock the door from the inside and crawl out under the door. Now, even if someone enters the washroom, they're not apt to disturb the man on the toilet. [2X]

Going back into the small hallway, you go to the door that first confronted you when you left the lobby.

Turn to 57G.

52F

Ah, this room must be the reason for the isolated mountaintop location. Web doesn't construct buildings for no reason at all. There before your eyes is a large room that can only be a scientific laboratory. The only door appears different from any you've seen before. It has a heavy rubber gasket around its edges, and there is a wheel in its center instead of a regular handle.

Return to 150A to place another room or move on.

53A

Turn to page 149 and glance at the picture. Do not study it in detail and do not read the text.

Looking into the lounge, you once again feel the strain in your neck muscles—the slight tension you always feel on the job—relax. You realize that nothing seems to have changed since you glanced in the first time. There's certainly no one in the room. [1X]

Maybe you should go in (34G). On the other hand, the TV is on, so maybe someone is planning to return here at any moment. If you're not willing to take a chance, return to the chart on the inside back cover and make another choice.

53B

You glance in the garage, then remember that the refrigerator there is missing its door and is not even plugged in. You're stepping out of the room, wondering where to go next, when you feel a gun jabbed into the small of your back.

Turn to 11A.

53C

You're about to step into the garage, when you realize that there is a man inside wearing a guard's uniform. He's doing some work on a wonderful red Ferrari.

This is no place for you right now. You've got to go on to the next room on your map. [1X]

Turn to 93D.

53D

Coming within sight of the Ferrari, you see that it's on a fairly straight stretch of road, so you roar after her. When you think you're in just about the right spot, you lean back, pulling up on the handlebars so that you're riding just on your back tire. Then you fall forward onto the Ferrari. . . .

You judged the timing nicely. The bike rides gently up onto the back of the sports car. You cut the acceleration just as the weight of the big vehicle starts bending the car's top.

A terrified shriek from Aleta tells you that she has finally realized that you are there and that the collapsing top is endangering her. In her terror, she loses control of the car, and it starts to careen all over the road. The question is: are you going with it or can you get your tire off the car safely?

Roll two dice. If you get more than your Driving/Motorcycle skill, turn to 144D. If you get the score or less, turn to 22F.

53E

Turn to page 91 and glance at the picture. Do not study it in detail and do not read the text.

You look into the window and see mainly darkness. The one night-light left burning in front of a refrigerator reveals that you are looking into a laboratory. At first, the darkness makes you think that here is the place where you can enter the building, but then you

realize that the window itself is very different from the others. It is mounted into the wall itself, and the joints are covered by heavy rubber gaskets.

As you study the window, your eye is caught by a movement. Someone is entering the laboratory through the heavy door at the end of the room. It's a woman carrying a bundle. As she passes under the night-light, you catch glints of fiery red in her hair. You watch, interested, as Aleta, the woman from Denver, stands in the middle of the room, looking around.

She leans down to open a door under the big stone lab table and thrusts the package she's carrying deep inside the cabinet. Closing the door firmly, she stands up. Aleta throws back her head in what is apparently a laugh, turns, and goes back out the door.

How strange, you think, wondering about what you've seen. Now you're convinced that you *must* get into that room somehow, but this window isn't going to do it. [3X]

Move on to the next room and return to the chart on the inside back cover.

53F

Berner's apartment building is fancy enough to make you feel conspicuous for not being better dressed. It is a luxury tower, with all sorts of interesting—and expensive—skylights and two-story-high hallways and rambling staircases and more. Suppressing your feelings of intimidation, you knock on Berner's door, hoping there won't be an answer.

If Berner's is the first apartment you go to, turn to 30F. If not, turn to 20A.



54A

Except for the fact that the whole thing is moving at seventy miles an hour and rocking back and forth at a good portion of that speed, you feel as if you're entering a well-designed one-bedroom apartment.

Aleta puts her things down and offers you a drink, saying, "Why don't we just relax? It's a long trip." She disappears into the bedroom, which you can see through the open door, and reappears a few minutes later carrying a chilled bottle of champagne and two goblets.

The next couple of hours pass in a bubbling glow of exploration and pleasure. At one time, you wonder how much greater the pleasure might be if the two of you were not having to maintain your deceit about who you really are. But then you admit that most of your life has involved such deceit, so there's nothing new here.

You find Aleta Marcus to be witty and intelligent—if a trifle forward, but that's certainly forgivable. She would have to be all those things to have achieved what she apparently has in the structure of Web. You have a delicious time getting to know the woman.

Turn to 48D.

54B

You give them a few minutes, then quickly go to a room with an openable window at the back of the laboratory building. In less than a minute, you are in the trees below the lab, making your way to the front. [2X]

Turn to 98F.

Note: If during the reaction to the fire alarm the time on your card reaches within 2X of midnight, turn to 110D.

54C

Turn to page 149 and glance at the picture. Do not study it in detail and do not read the text, then return here.

Looking into the lounge, you once again feel the strain in your neck muscles—the slight tension you always feel on the job; it keeps you alive. You realize that nothing seems to have changed since you glanced in the first time. There doesn't appear to be anyone in the room. [1X]



Maybe you should go in (62F). On the other hand, the TV is on, so maybe someone is planning to return here at any moment. If you're not willing to take a chance, return to the chart on the inside back cover and make another choice.

54D

Before deciding which computer operator you're going to follow, you call Aaron Burkhart to find out if anything significant has happened during the night.

He grumbles something about people who get to sleep at night while he's sitting in on conferences to determine the Orion center's response to the threat to their computer information.

You listen a few minutes, then quietly interject, "Bye, Aaron. See you later," and hang up.

If you want to follow Bob Berner, turn to 84E; Mark DeWitt, 22C; Foster Needham, 30A.

54E

As the guards start arguing about where the "ghost" went and whether they should go look for it (the one who had to be pushed is quite opposed), you slip quietly through the trees and make a quick dash for the glass door of the entrance hall.

You duck low and to the left as you enter the hall, hoping that you can stay in shadow in case the guards turn around. But apparently, they haven't by the time you get to the left-hand door leading out of the lobby. At that point, you're out of the guards' sight. You open the door slowly and peer around it. Finding no one waiting for you, you enter and close it behind you. [3X]

You find yourself in an enclosed hallway, with a door straight ahead of you, another to your right, and a stairway going down. Since you were able to look through the windows, you think you know what room is straight ahead of you, so you go there.

Turn to 57G.

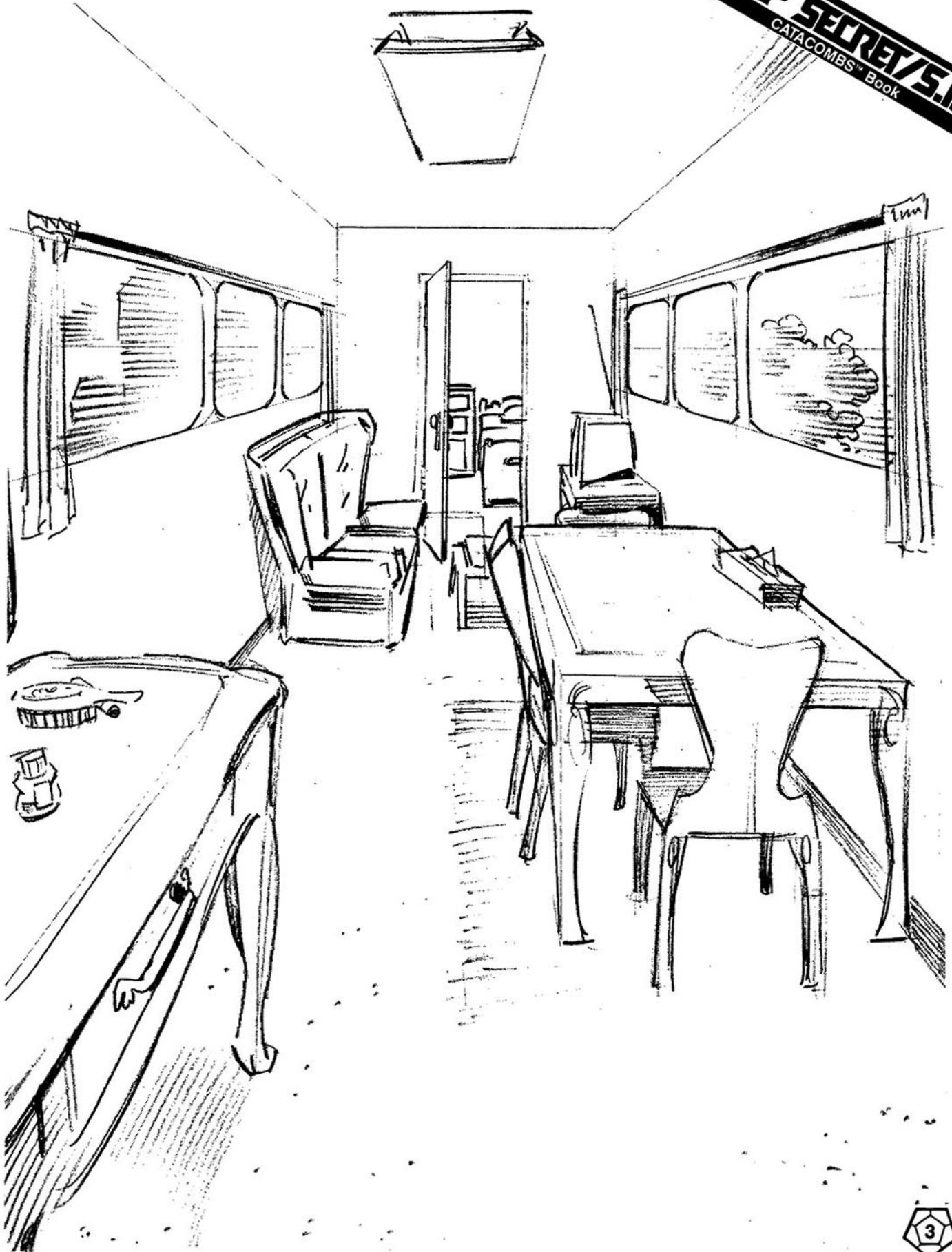
54F

Not far from the tree line where you stand in the darkness, you see the main entrance to the low, sprawling building. Even from your hiding place, you can see that there are uniformed guards on duty inside the lobby. What could be going on here that would require armed guards?

Moving carefully, using whatever cover you can find, you begin to circle the brightly lit building, peering quickly in each window to get some idea of what you need to prepare yourself for.

Remove the laboratory floor plan from the pocket at the back of the book. Cut out the separate rooms on it to use in mapping the building as you begin exploring. The back half of the lobby will be the core around which you will create a different building every time you play the game.

Turn to 150A for the instructions.



56A

Time to get out of this baggage car. If you have previously in this adventure come face-to-face with Aleta Marcus, or if you've already tried entering the private car and been thrown out, turn to 118D. If neither of those situations is true, turn to 130B.

56B

Turning the wheel and hanging on tightly, you manage to keep the centrifugal force of the truck under control and within the limits of the rough mountain road. The truck rights itself on the far side of the turn. You're alive, and you have the added bonus of discovering that Aleta had slowed down so much that you're right behind her!

Turn to 12C.

56C

You're shoulders slumping in relief but still alert in case some guards see you, you leave the building and head down the hill toward your car. You'll go down to Moorland and call in a Titan Team to clean up the mess at the top of the mountain. All you want at this point is to get to a hotel where you can clean the gruesome, terrifying blue ooze from your mind.

If it's after eleven-thirty at night, turn to 148B. If it's before, turn to 83B.

56D

There's nothing particular on his desk to attract your attention except for learning that his name is Karl Pachezny, Ph.D. Then you open the top right-hand drawer. Leafing through a number of vertical items, you find a train ticket. One quick glance shows you that it's for 12:30 tonight, on the Mountain-Midlands Express, leaving the town of Moorland at the bottom of the mountain for Los Angeles.

The scientist moves as if to grab the ticket from you. There's a frightened look on his face now as you make a menacing gesture with the Mauser. [3X]

Turn to 42C.

56E

The answers to the questions are:

1. The lab's administrator is Aleta Marcus, of Web.
 2. The scientists are producing a recombinant virus that, when introduced into the human body, will produce an enzyme that calms the ups and downs of manic-depressive patients.
 3. Web plans to use it on normal people to cause them to lose their will and turn them into slaves.
 4. Aleta Marcus and Karl Pachezny are to leave tonight, carrying the samples.
 5. They will take a train to Los Angeles from Moorland, at the bottom of the mountain.
 6. Karl Pachezny, the chief scientist, does not work for Web and does not know for sure what is going on.
- If you answered one to four questions correctly, you don't know enough to try to bluff; turn to 131D. If

you answered more than four questions, turn to 152F.

56F

"So much for six months' work," Sarah says rather sadly, as she watches the temperature dial rise to 250 degrees F.

"Did you at least get paid?"

"Yes!" And her sadness changes to glee. "They've paid me well, and now have nothing to show for it! If Aleta and Quintessential are what you say they are, I'd say that's completely fair."

While Sarah goes to her own basement bedroom to pack, you go hunting for Aleta. You find her carrying a bundle of long sticks that you immediately recognize as dynamite.

When she recognizes you, she starts to throw a stick at you but stops when you quickly say, "It's all over, Aleta. We've destroyed the bacteria culture and you've nothing to take to Web headquarters tonight."

"But . . . but they'll come after me. . . ." Horror and confusion consume her.

"Yes, Aleta, they probably will. Good luck to you."

The stunned Web agent is still standing, blank-faced, in the corridor when you come back upstairs with Sarah. You walk out of the building into the crisp night air and down the slope toward your rental car. You're just turning out onto the road when the top of the mountain above you explodes into a million pieces. Aleta Marcus found her own answer to her problem.

56G

A guard comes running toward you from the door at the far end of the garage. "What's the trouble?" he shouts. Then he gets a closer look and realizes that the trouble is you.

Just as you're about to decide to shoot, another guard appears at the door, plus one behind you. Swiftly, they have you disarmed and your hands cuffed behind you. "Take him to the boss," grumbles one man. [2X]

Turn to 81A.



57A

Berner pays for a small box of paints, shakes hands with the woman named Aleta, and departs, leaving Leroy and the woman talking.

If you want to follow Berner, turn to 121D. If you think you'd better stay, turn to 135F.

57B

The bedroom is almost as cold and unfriendly as the living room, but it does show signs that occasionally Mark DeWitt has a woman friend stay. That always warms up a room.

In the bottom drawer of the dresser, you find a strange and rather pathetic collection of so-called spy apparatus, bought from a catalog and "guaranteed" to prepare you to work for the CIA or some other espionage organization. It doesn't mention Orion, but you doubt if anyone at the mail order house has heard of the foundation.

You make a quick check of the small, tiled bathroom, but find nothing of interest except the fact that young DeWitt wears colored contact lenses. You wonder if he's practicing disguises.

Return to 96A.

57C

You have only one thing with you that might break the mechanism—your clever little Orion card case. The guards ignored it when they searched you—thank heaven for Ganymede Bureau and their clever minds.

You leap up from the ooze to catch hold of the diagonal structure. Your muscles screaming, you hold yourself there with one arm hooked over the diagonal strut while your other hand explores the mechanism. You discover that the most vulnerable point is the mounting plate beneath the floor, which holds the top end of the diagonal.

Reluctantly, you let yourself drop down again into the blue ooze, and find yourself unable to keep the image of it eating into your skin out of your mind. You quickly feel around the edge of the card case for the almost imperceptible rough spots. Pressing them in the proper order, you make the case open slightly, setting the fuse for the incredible high-powered explosive it contains.

Leaping up again, you carefully position the case in the gap between the floor and the bolt in the mounting plate. Then you swiftly drop into the ooze again and move as far away from the mechanism as possible, which isn't very far. You are turned toward the muddy sides of the pit, your arms over your head, when the explosion goes off.

Turn to 100G.

57D

Your Kawasaki suddenly hits a spot that it was never made to handle. The wheels slip to the side, the vehicle stops abruptly, and you go flying.

Roll the dice. If you roll more than your Intelli-

gence score, turn to 38G. If you roll the score or less, turn to 24F. However, if you roll a double number, turn to 90G.

57E

You feel your muscles slump with tiredness as you look into a comfortable-looking lounge. There are easy chairs, tables with game boards, some exercise equipment, and a large-screen TV, on which flickers an old black-and-white film . . . oh, Nick and Nora Charles. You wish you could stay and watch. You put the relaxing image of the room out of your mind.

Return to 150A to place another room or move on.

57F

Whoever uses this room must like lots of fresh air. It's the only window you've seen that is wide open. So if someone is inside, at least you don't have to make noise getting the window open.

With that thought in mind, you pull yourself as quietly as possible up into the window and step down onto the floor, keeping an eye out for anything that might cause you to make a misstep. But there is nothing. You are well inside the room, and there hasn't been any sign of motion from the shape on the bed.

But you just have to make sure. You walk to the bed and very, very carefully lift the blanket. . . .

Turn to 69E.

57G

You face the door of the first room to the left of the guarded lobby (on your map of the mountaintop laboratory). Check what room it is, then turn to the chart on the inside back cover. Determine from your time card what time it is.

Using the correct time period (on the left side of the table) and the correct room (on the top of the chart), go across and down to find the right square of three numbers. If the guards are after you, use the middle, bold section number. If they don't know you are there, or you have already hidden someplace and had them pass you by in a search, (so that you are free to explore), use the bottom, shaded number.

58A

Turn to page 125 and glance at the picture. Do not study it in detail and do not read the text.

Standing beneath the kitchen window, you peer through again and learn that you would have to enter over the sink. You have a sudden horrid vision of yourself standing trapped in a stainless steel sink as hordes of armed guards surround you. It's not an appealing picture. On the other hand, the kitchen has been cleaned up and is empty. [1X]

If you still want to try the kitchen, turn to 154C. If not, return to the chart on the inside back cover and move to the next room.

58B

Instead of shooting back, you keep on moving, taking more care this time not to dislodge pebbles. Soon, you get behind Aleta, where you can see her peering over the car door, trying to figure out where you are.

Turn to 79B.

58C

Using the end of a key, you scrape away the gummy stuff, until you can see where the two wires enter a small, pencil-shaped object stuck into the end of one stick of dynamite. Then you quickly disconnect the wires.

When you can move the battery away from the dynamite, you breathe a sigh of relief. At least this bundle won't go off. But might there be more?

Somehow, you've got to get the people out of the building. [2X]

Turn to 88F.

58D

You learn that Brittany Farrell has been on night duty lately. She goes to the operators' room at about 10:30 in the evening, spends a few minutes talking to the previous operator—it was Mark DeWitt last night—to find out if anything is going on that she needs to know about, and then takes over.

Last night, she had entered a few rumors and tales into the Anomalies Report from the slips of paper that always seem to multiply in the in-basket. She had also run various permutations of database reports on the identification of various old Nazis in South America. There's some evidence that they are meeting in secret.

At about two in the morning, listening to some gentle jazz on the stereo, she fixed herself a cup of coffee as she usually does. She had just returned to the keyboard and was working again, when the next thing she knew, you were standing over her, and hours had passed.

Somehow, between one thought and the next, she had lost more than four hours!

Now you know why the powers-that-be, reluctant as they may be to do it, are doubting Brittany's story. It's not even a well-concocted lie. But then, you have no doubt that the story is true. You have total trust in

this wonderful friend.

A panicky, fretting look crosses her face. "I didn't open that door, Sebastian. I didn't!"

"I believe you. . . . Or if you did, you didn't know it," you say thoughtfully. "There's all that lost time. You must have been drugged somehow."

You think a moment and then ask, "You don't remember feeling tired before the time disappeared? That wasn't why you got the coffee?"

"Oh, the coffee's just a habit. You know that, Seb." She smiles slightly at the memory of many shared cups of coffee. "I always drink it, especially when there's an automatic drip pot right there in the same room. I remember yawning a little after it. But I find it hard sometimes to sleep during the daytime, so it didn't surprise me to yawn a bit."

Roll the two dice. If you get your Intelligence score or less, turn to 114D. If you get more, turn to 17F.

58E

On your way out of headquarters you stop to say hello to Foster Needham. Again, you're shocked at what you see. Not that there's any very obvious change in the older man since you saw him last. But you know that he is a man who has given up.

Foster tells you that he knows nothing about anything that has happened, and you believe him. All the time you talk, you perceive a distance about him that is unnerving. It's as if the man's mind is concentrating on something in another world and only grudgingly responds to your questions.

You shake his hand and leave the building. If you want to go right to his apartment, turn to 142A. However, if you prefer to go somewhere else first, return to 93C to make another choice.

58F

You pause at the door you think leads to the lounge and listen for a moment. At first, you just hear the TV, which could easily be on when the room isn't occupied, but then you discern a human voice commenting on the words of the electronic voice. [1X]

You've got to go to another room. Turn to 93D.

59A

You open the door to the kitchen just slightly, listening carefully. You hear a male voice saying, "... files cleared out and ready to go about midnight."

"That'll be good," replies a low female voice. Then we can go straight on down to the train."

When you hear a chair scrape on the tile floor, you decide you don't dare stay any longer. [1X]

Return to the corridor, and turn to 93D.

59B

The Ferrari stands before you as if it were winking at you to draw you closer. There's a little paper taped to the dashboard, saying, "All ready to go, Ms. Marcus. Pete." The key is in the ignition, and, indeed, the car is all ready to go.

You have a momentary urge to get in and drive it away from here. Just go on down the mountain and out across the state ... take a long vacation ... relax and forget your commitment to Orion. [1X]

If you want at least to get into it for a minute, turn to 38D. If not, return to 104A.

59C

When you reach Needham's slummy neighborhood, you enter the building and stand in the hallway watching his apartment. A small boy peeks out from a neighboring apartment. The two of you eye each other for a few seconds, and he finally says, "Hey, mister. If yer lookin' fer the Horse Racin' Man, he killed hisself yestiddy. The big guys been after 'im and he dint have the money to pay 'em."



The informative, worldly wise youngster retreats, leaving you profoundly dismayed. Foster Needham was one of the good people of your earlier years. He didn't need to die, and for such a *stupid* reason!

Mourning within yourself, you return to headquarters and tell Aaron Burkhart, who reacts, predictably, with anger, most of it directed toward you, as if you had been responsible for Needham's compulsive betting.

Then the call of the living returns to you, and you know that you cannot delay trying to exonerate Brittan. Return to 10C.

59D

Wow! This is a place where you'd like to crash for a couple weeks. At least that's what you think when you first glance at all the videos, the one-armed bandits, and hobby stuff—though you're quite satisfied with the hobby you've got.

But then you think about what you're seeing—all the entertainment stuff, all the space and equipment for hobbies, all the arcade and pinball games. Somebody worked very hard to think of all the things that might be needed to keep isolated people content. Well, you'd rather be at the bottom of the mountain among people.

You step farther into the room, and almost break your knees trying to stop abruptly. There's a man in a guard's uniform (at least the pants) asleep on the couch. He snorts a moment and turns over as you freeze. But then he goes back to the quiet, deep breathing you had missed when you walked in.

Moving carefully, you put tape over the man's mouth and at the same time grab his arms to tie them behind him. You take one kick to the stomach before you manage to sit on his legs and tie his ankles to the arm of the couch. Turning up the sound on the TV to drown out the guard's efforts to be heard, you start to explore. [3X]

Turn to 148A.

59E

Foot to the floor, you aim right for the back of Aleta's car. But she must have realized you were there, for she, too, accelerates frantically, and her car was made for such maneuvers.

To find out if you lose control of the truck, roll the two dice. If you get your Driving/Automobile skill or less, turn to 104C. If you get more, turn to 116A.

59F

You try to suppress an involuntary grunt of pain, and prepare to aim again. But it's too late. You feel your life's blood flowing away. For some incomprehensible reason, the fates have chosen a barren mountaintop in an out-of-the-way corner of the Rockies for Sebastian Cord to die.

60A

Roll the two dice. If you get more than your Intelligence score, turn to 69B. If you get the score or less, turn to 100D.

60B

Mark DeWitt may have had some pistol lessons, but his eagerness got the better of his aim. You shake your head sadly as you see the younger man die. If only he had stopped to think! . . . But he didn't, and now he is dead. You call Aaron Burkhart, and he says he'll arrange for someone to come and secretly take care of the body, setting up a fake death scene that will not implicate anyone in Orion.

What a pathetic waste.

While you wait, you take the time to look around at Mark DeWitt's apartment, the reason you came here in the first place.

Turn to 96A.

60C

You follow the computer operator for several days, but he does nothing more of interest. You made a bad choice, although you do convince Burkhart that he can trust Brittany and probably should not trust Berner.

You never do know, however, what the invasion of the computer room was all about.

60D

You wave and wave, but the two guards never look up again—or if they do, they don't care if they're seeing a ghost. So much for superstition. You're going to have to find another way past the guards. [2X]

If you're still determined to go through the front door, you can try to bluff them (62C) or shoot them (109B). However, if you'd rather reconsider, there might be an open window that you can crawl through (38F).

60E

Figuring, at this point, that it's more important to reach the fire alarm than to take the trouble to hide a body, you leave it lying there and head for the alarm. [3X]

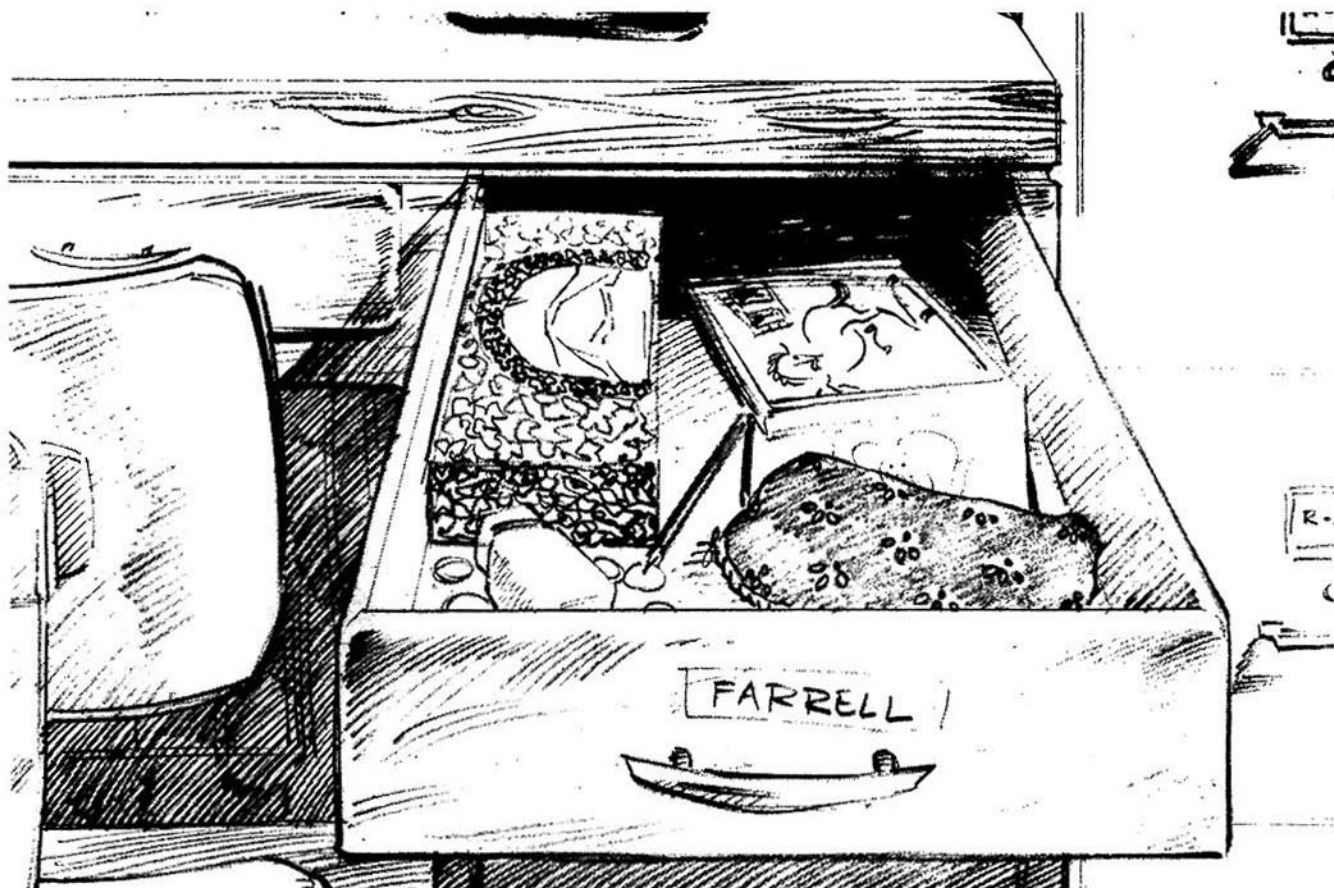
Turn to 104D.

60F

You manage to move across the face of the mountain and even over the road without making any noise. You get behind Aleta, where you can see her peering over the car door, trying to figure out where you are.

You never were very good at shooting people in the back, and you certainly can't do it to that lovely red-head, so you're going to have to try to capture her.

Turn to 79B.



61A

This one you're not certain about. You decide not to take a chance that he isn't one of the Web people.

You quietly back out the door, and go to another room. [1X]

Turn to 93D.

61B

Conduct combat, with Aleta firing first. Web takes care of its own, so Aleta normally has a Pistol skill of 54, but she is firing into darkness, not sure of where you are, so roll against a skill of 41 for her.

If you win, turn to 102B. If you die by taking full damage to your head, chest, or abdomen, turn to 116G.

61C

As far as you can see, the most important papers are Sarah Graham's complete—and original—notes on the entire procedure for developing the recombinant bacteria that was the whole purpose of the laboratory.

If you leave these papers with Aleta, anyone could probably repeat the process. That thought disturbs you.

If you have already found and destroyed the bacteria cultures, turn to 12F. If you haven't, turn to 145D.

61D

You're enjoying the wonderful feel of letting the elements take care of your decisions, when you begin to feel a prickling sensation on the back of your neck. You turn, knowing there's danger immediately behind you. Aleta is there, with a small gun in her hands.

Before she can react, you dive at her legs and pull her to the carpeted floor. Your sheer size and strength finish her attempt immediately.

While you hold the gun on the sobbing woman, you finish tossing the papers to the winds. "Aleta, you might as well accept the situation. Your project for Web is finished. Your bosses aren't going to like that." She buries her angry face in the carpet.

"Do you want to go on into Los Angeles and have to explain what happened to the work they entrusted to you? Or would you rather get off the train and disappear to somewhere they can't find you?"

The redhead shudders, but she's basically a realist. She sits up, wipes her eyes, and bravely says, "All right. How do we get off this train?"

Later, somewhere in northern Arizona, a man and a woman, carrying only a small case between them, hitch a ride to the nearest town. And as dawn appears, the Mountain-Midlands Express hurls itself toward Los Angeles, with no one riding in the luxurious private car.

61E

You shudder at the thought of the bacteria cultures that have been developed here at the laboratory, without the scientists actually even knowing what they were truly for.

If the bugs were released into the general population, the Web organization could control people for its own purposes forever, because there would be no way of getting the genetically changed bacteria out of the human body.

You're certain that your primary task must be to destroy the cultures and the scientific notes that might lead other scientists to reproduce the results.

Because the cultures are supposedly ready to be delivered, you're certain that they are in a refrigerator, being kept cool so that the bacteria will be dormant during transfer. You decide to head for one of the rooms where you've seen a refrigerator.

To find out if you're unlucky enough to be seen by a guard, roll the dice. If you get a double number, a guard sees you and you must fight (73C). If you don't, turn to 13F.

61F

As you dash across the empty space between the building and the trees, you hear a shout from one side. "There he is! And he's got Pachezny!" and many shots ring out. In the midst of the noise, you hear the scientist sobbing. You try to protect him with your own body, all the time shouting, "Run! Run! Run!"

The frightened scientist finally stumbles into the trees and stops being an inadvertent target. But you're not so lucky. A guard's bullet enters your back, sending you to the ground among the trees that were your destination. You reach them, but as you fall to the ground you know that Sebastian Cord will go no farther.

61G

Turn to page 103 and glance at the picture. Do not study it in detail and do not read the text.

As you look through the windows of the big rolling door, into the garage, your eyes are drawn to a wonderful red Ferrari that stands on the treads of a rack, as if it had just been brought down from being worked on. There is no one in there now, but the car has been brightly polished and looks ready to go. You wonder if it is, in fact, ready to go. Perhaps someone is about to leave the mountaintop. [1X]

If you want to take a chance that no one will be here very soon, and enter the building through the garage, turn to 24A. If you'd rather not, go to the next room on your diagram and return to the chart on the inside back cover.

62A

You head for the window of what you think must be the bedroom, but you find the shade down. At first, you think that's a good thing: you'll be able to duck in quickly and no one will see you. But then you hear sounds from within, sounds that indicate someone—two someones!—are in the throes of passion.

Suppressing your voyeuristic tendencies, you turn away from the window, knowing you can't use it for an entrance. [1X]

Check your diagram for another room and return to the chart on the inside back cover.

62B

"Hey, you don't belong here!" shouts the newcomer.

You're about to turn and fire when you hear a siren go off right there in the room. It blasts the air around you, and you know that more people are going to be there in an instant.

You have just a split second to make a decision. Will you run through the door and chance a bullet in the back (113G), run to the front door hoping to make it away before the bullets can find you (80C), or let yourself be captured (hoping to get away later), and maybe finding out what useful things you can in the process (81G)?

62C

You'd rather not feel as if you're going to be at gunpoint the whole time you're in the laboratory. So if you can bluff your way into the building, making the guards think you belong there, the better off you'll be.

If you are wearing a guard's uniform, turn to 63E. If you aren't, turn to 31F.

62D

You fiddle around with the disk for quite a while, getting nothing, until you realize that you should be in a data base program. Then you discover that each record covers the employment by the laboratory of one individual.

Some of the names you discover in the records include Arthur Sadler, laboratory assistant; Sarah Graham, Ph.D., chief geneticist; Peter Wolinski, guard. But there are others that have a blank in the form filled in with "terminated."

As you check back through the records, you discover that each time a scientist was "terminated," he or she was followed immediately by the employment of a new scientist. Dr. Sarah Graham, for example, followed a Dr. John Carrier. Some of the other terminated scientists are Martin Stein, Beatrice Farquhar, and Cyrus Washington.

You don't know what it all means, except that there is an awfully large turn-over here. Aleta must be a hard woman to work for. [2X]

Return to 50D.

62E

As you sort quickly through the papers, you come across a small folded brochure about the Mountain-Midlands Express. If you haven't already seen it, turn to the pocket at the back of the book and remove the brochure. After you've studied it, turn to 10B.

62F

Things haven't changed since you last glanced in. Maybe someone just forgot to turn off the tube; people do, you know, you remind yourself.

Also reminding yourself that the sound of the TV will drown out any sounds that you might make, you pull the slightly ajar window open farther, then use your hands to lever yourself into the window.

As you lean forward into the room, your face is met by a plant that seems to want to crawl all over you. Spitting it out of your mouth, you look down to be sure there will be a place to put your feet among the greenery. There will be, so you pull up one leg to kneel on the window frame. Within a few seconds, you step lightly into the room and away from the plants.

You stand in front of the window, trying to decide whether you want to look around in here or if you should head for the door, when your mind is made up for you. A yawning man rises from the big couch in front of the TV. The room wasn't empty after all; some people do their best sleeping in front of the TV.

The man, startled out of his post-prandial nap, is just as surprised as you are, but at least you're prepared for the unexpected.

Roll the two dice. If you make your Movement score or less, turn to 17B. If you roll more turn to 75G.

62G

You close and replace the atlas on the shelf.

Roll the two dice. If you roll more than your Intelligence score, turn to 130F. If you roll the score or less, turn to 35B.



63A

You suddenly sense that the conversation is sounding like words said by not-very-good actors, as if it's going on primarily for the benefit of a listener. You leap over to the role-playing games just as the door slams backward, banging against the door. If you had still been there, you would have received all the power in fat Leroy's fists.

The shopkeeper pretends he had something to do at his desk, then he returns to the back room. As the door closes, you hear him say, "Guess I was wrong." You remain where you are, and in a few minutes the threesome comes back out into the shop.

Turn to 57A.

63B

You're moving around the lab, intent on what you're exploring, when you hear a muffled shout. There are guards in the anteroom, and they have you trapped!

One guard waves his automatic in front of the window to be sure you'll see it, but it also tells you that they know that the strong door is bulletproof. That's great, but how can you get out of here?

Unfortunately, the guards are in the catbird seat. They're outside where they can do anything they want. You're stuck in the laboratory, unable to do anything.

That homely bit of truth rumbles around in your brain for several minutes, sinking in, until finally you hold up your own gun where the guard can see it, then you toss it onto the worktable beside you.

The guard signals you to come and turn the wheel on the door. You do, and in seconds your arms are handcuffed behind your back.

"Take him to the boss," says one man. **[4X]**

Turn to 81A.

63C

In a book on unusual transport methods, you find a heavy star by a section on flying gyrocopters. **[1X]**

If you want to check out some other books, return to 66G and roll again. If not, return to 48A.

63D

In a worn-looking game box in the bottom drawer of Leroy's desk, you find an address book. Leafing through it, you find a phone number under the name Aleta Marcus.

You quickly leave the shop and drive back to headquarters, where Burkhart obliges you by having the phone number checked out. It's the number of the Western Colorado Genetics Laboratory at Moorland in the western part of the state.

Turn to 41F.

63E

You straighten the uniform you took from a guard, trying to look as spit-and-polish as possible under the circumstances. Then, looking as confident as possible, you open the door and enter the lobby.

Without stopping, you head straight for the left-hand door, but before you reach it, a guard at the desk says, "Hey, you there. Who are you and what are you doing here? You don't work here!"

"Aleta sent for me," you say in condescending tones. "And if you delay me, you're sure to hear about it!"

A look of uncertainty comes into the man's eyes, and he glances over at the other guard, who has been sitting by the desk watching the activity. The second guard rises to his feet and saunters over to you, looking you up and down as he moves.

"Lock him up," he says crisply.

"But, what if he's really supposed to be here?"

"The deadline on the big project is mighty close," you interject. "Aleta sure isn't going to like it if you lock me up!"

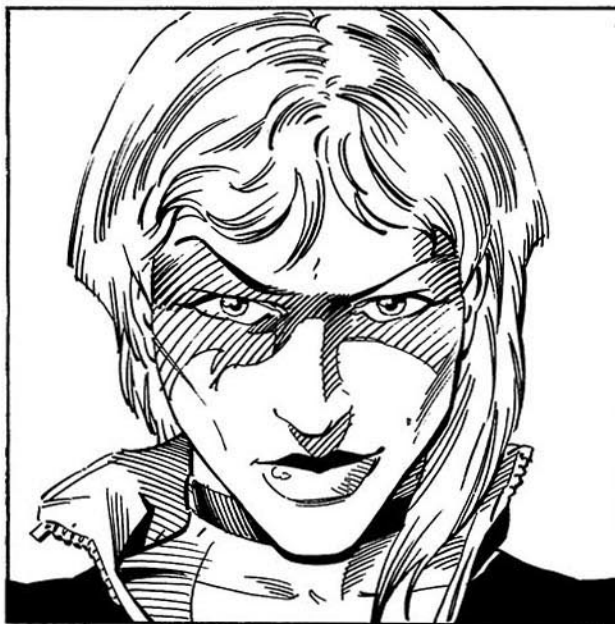
It all comes down to whether or not they believe you are who you say you are. Roll the two dice. If you roll your Social Chameleon skill or less, turn to 36C. If you roll more, turn to 75C.

63F

Before you can untangle yourself from the terrified scientist, Aleta has jumped into the Ferrari and is zooming toward the automatically rising garage door.

As you leap into the truck, determined to follow her, you hear Pachezny scream, "ALETA! Wait for me! We're supposed to go together!"

Turn to 138C.



The operators' room is a simple, small chamber containing only a single desk with a personal computer on it, some in/out boxes, the desk chair, an easy chair, a coat rack, a paper shredder, and a bookshelf. It could be anyone's office.

However, the whole point of the room is for the operators to enter the material they are given into a database on a personal computer disk, then take the disk into the main computer room, transfer the material to the mainframe, destroy the disk, and leave. Never is there any direct connection between Orion's people and the computer. No one but the operators knows the codes for getting into the main computer.

If an agent with the right authorization needs to read material directly, he or she goes to the operator, requests it, and stays outside in the operators' room (hence the easy chair) while the operator enters the computer room and gets what is needed out of the monster intelligence machine. The operator brings it out on paper (Orion must have bought up one factory's entire stock of shredders) to give to the operator. Or, if the information is classified as anything above "Secret," it must be transferred to a disk and shown to the agent on the PC in the outer room, then promptly erased.

Because the operators—there is one on duty at all times—spend so much time in this room and may not have work to do, it has been made as comfortable as possible, without compromising its security. There's an easy chair, some casual reading material, a television, a stereo system, and a coffee maker. In addition, each operator has his or her own personal drawer in the desk; their names are on them.

You're just starting to sketch the room (knowing that you'll be expected to shred the sketch), when Burkhart comes bustling in, followed by two men.

"Cord, I asked Mark DeWitt and Bob Berner to come in and check if they see anything different in here or the computer room from when they were on duty yesterday."

He introduces you to the two men. DeWitt is about twenty-eight years old, and appears to have all the enthusiasm of a puppy dog in meeting you. He practically wags his tail as he says, "Oh, Mr. Cord! Everything I've heard about you since joining Orion has been so . . . so . . ." You know he wants to say *exciting* but is afraid to sound juvenile. ". . . so *fascinating*! I'm so very glad to meet you. Tell me, where do you carry your Mauser?"

Oh, come off it, little boy! you think, but you just smile and open the right side of your jacket, showing the automatic in its shoulder holster.

Berner, somewhat older than DeWitt, and looking more experienced with his worn face, is trying hard not to show his disgust of DeWitt. You just shake his hand as Burkhart says, "Look around, men, and tell me what you think."

You stand back as DeWitt and Berner both walk

around the room, open drawers, enter the computer room, and even check wastebaskets.

One by one, they report, "Nothing, Aaron. Everything looks as it should."

"Well, we had to try. Thanks for coming in." The two men start to leave, but Burkhart calls, "Bob?" Berner turns around, question on his face. "You'll take Britt's shift tonight, won't you?"

The operator shrugs. "Sure. I'm busy this afternoon and early evening, but I'll be here before eleven. I hope we can get the permanent schedule worked out soon."

"We will," replies Burkhart. "And thanks."

"Anything else you'd like me to do?" asks DeWitt, rather like an obnoxious puppy that feels left out.

"Not now, Mark," says Burkhart with a show of patience, and the two men leave. The administrator turns to you and says, "Believe it or not, he really is a good computer operator. . . . Now, Needham will come on duty as soon as you are through here, and he'll check then."

"What about Brittany?"

You feel your features hardening as the administrator hems and haws and finally says, "Well, we couldn't really trust her answer, could we? And she's the one whose print opened the door." Flustered, he starts to leave, but he stops and hands you the big manila envelope he's been carrying. "Photos," he says shortly.

You look inside and find an amazing sheaf of black-and-white glossy prints of the photographs that were taken while you and Brittany watched. Glancing through, you admire the man's thoroughness but don't see anything that catches your attention.

You pull out your sketch book again, hoping that the mere act of drawing will take some of the angry tension out of you.

You may check the:	by turning to:
entertainment stuff	40A
desk	106D
PC	110G
wastebasket	155F

To begin investigating the operators themselves, turn to 93C.

64B

You head toward the big black motorcycle. If you have the key in your pocket, turn to 25D. If not, turn to 87B.

64C

As you take the disk out of the computer, you have a whole new sense of urgency. First, you were just trying to protect Brittany. Now, you must save whole populations!

[2X]

Return to 138A.



66A

You step into the garage . . . right onto a security grid mounted in the floor. A siren knifes through the building and huge floodlights suddenly come on in the garage.

If you are wearing a guard's uniform, turn to 132E. If not, turn to 56G.

66B

The man's belongings, in a low chest by the bathroom door, are all fairly new and expensive. Even the blue jeans are *Ralph Lauren*. You get the feeling from handling the clothing that it all belongs to a man who has only recently come into some money, and in doing so he decided to leave his past behind him. [1X]

As in the woman's dresser, you find a packet of letters. If you want to look through them, turn to 84G. If not, return to 136A.

66C

You study the library table but nothing special catches your attention. There's a notepad, tissues, some books that just didn't get put away, as well as a spiral-bound book of computer games written in BASIC.

Roll the two dice. If you roll your Intelligence score or less, turn to 88G. If you roll more, turn to 23A.

66D

Underneath two other papers, held by the same thumbtack, you find a paper dated about six months ago. It says:

To all personnel:

The supply of all-new research primates will arrive on Friday. Because Cyrus Washington left without giving notice, they will be under the daily care of guard Peter Backes. He will follow the scientists' orders but will have the immediate responsibility for the subjects.

A.M.

[1X]

To roll again, turn to 86A. Otherwise, return to 76A.

66E

When the glass point sails past you, you grab the scientist's wrists with your strong hands. He stares at you in fury for a moment, and then collapses, sobbing.

You release him and turn to the refrigerator again. He ignores you as you pull out the picnic cooler. Inside it you find two flasks, mounted inside plastic foam to keep them safe.

Pulling the flasks out, you look at the gray powdery stuff inside, growing on a gelatinous substance in the bottom. It's hard to believe that such innocuous-looking stuff can be so dangerous.

Looking around, you see the big autoclave used to sterilize laboratory equipment. You thrust the flasks inside and turn it on.

"All that work!" moans the scientist behind you. "The heat in that thing will destroy it all."

"I certainly hope so," you reply.

"You'd better hope it doesn't!" says a voice

behind, and there stands Aleta Marcus in the door, aiming a machine gun at you.

As you drop to the protection of the big laboratory table, a burst of gunfire rakes across the tabletop. To see if you are injured, roll the dice. If you roll your Dexterity score or less, turn to 70B. If you roll more, turn to 17G.

66F

You hold your breath and still your muscles with the skill learned by long experience in your ill-gotten profession, training that could result in life or death.

The guards throw open the door. There's a moment of silence when you know they are surveying the room.

"Hey, Artie, seen anybody—a guy—who doesn't belong here?"

"Nope. Who is he?"

"Don't know, but we gotta find him."

"Well, he isn't here."

"Kay." And you hear the door close again.

There's a long silence of held breaths, and then Artie says, "Okay. You can come out now. They're gone."

You rise from among the newspapers and hold out your hand to the young lab assistant. "Thanks. Now, let's sit down and I'll tell you what's going on—or what I *think* is going on." [1X]

Turn to 46E.

66G

The books indicate that both an administrator/scientist and an avid mystery/spy story reader occupy this office, though you don't know if they are one and the same person or not. You leaf through a few of the books, just on the off chance that they might reveal something.

Roll one die.

If you get:

1-2,
3-4,
5-6,
7-8,
9-10,

turn to:

138E
138D
99F
63C
102C

67A

"Wha?" you say in a sleepy voice. "Who . . . who is it? I'm asleep."

"Oh, sorry, Dr. Pachezny," you hear from beyond the door. "But we're looking for a man who shouldn't be here."

"Oh, well, get on with it."

"Okay. Sorry we bothered you."

And the guards' steps go on down the hall. [1X]

Now you're free to explore the room. Turn to 136A.

67B

Trying surreptitiously to raise the tarp with your right hand, you use your left carefully and quickly to reach into your shoulder holster and pull your Mauser out. You can't help but make the tarp rustle a bit as you move. The footsteps stop, and a voice hisses, "Shhhhhh!"

There's no point in waiting for them to uncover you, so you throw back the tarp with your empty hand as you leap to your feet. One guard with a gun out and you shoot at the same time.

Roll the dice first against your Pistol skill, then against the guard's skill of 35. The second guard has had time by now to duck into hiding and get his gun out. You are involved in full-fledged combat against two guns. Fortunately, there's lots of clutter to use as shields while fighting, as well as things to climb on in order to get better shots at the guards.

Conduct combat. If you win by giving each guard 8 points of damage to head, chest, or abdomen, turn to 71C. If you die, turn to 113B.

67C

And before you've moved the blanket too far, you see a head of shining red hair spread out on the flowered sheet.

Roll the two dice. If you roll your Movement score or less, turn to 46B. If you roll more turn to 79E.

67D

Scrambling uselessly to save yourself from whatever lies below, a tiny portion of your mind realizes that the table you were standing by is tilting into the pit. It must be bolted to the floor. But by the time you also realize that you might have saved yourself by grabbing hold of it, you have fallen past the table and are dropping into darkness.

You automatically flex your knees, hoping to relieve some of the jolt of landing, but you hit bottom sooner than you expected, and fall forward into a cold slime that instantly sends shudders through you.

Turn to 35G.

67E

Not surprisingly, you learn that Brittany reads primarily current history and biography. The only novels on her shelves are by Dickens and George Eliot. You leaf through everything quickly but discover nothing important. Brittany is not the kind to make notes in her books.

To explore more of the apartment, return to 118A.

67F

In just a few swift, silent strides, you are up to the Web agent. You quickly put your right arm over her head and pull her head back to your chest, then disarm the startled woman with your left hand, throwing her Beretta far into the nighttime trees.

When you release the pressure on her neck, the first thing she says is, "Damn you!"

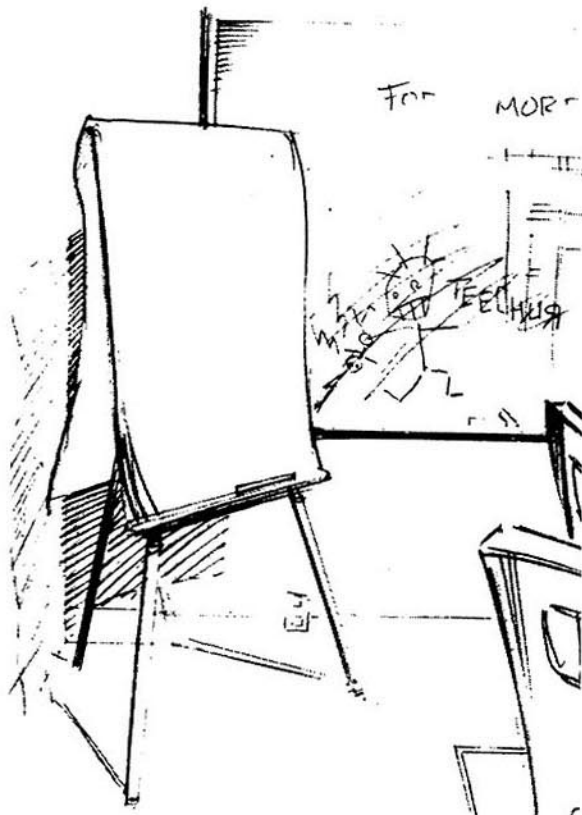
"No," you reply as if she has spoken civilly, "my name is Cord, Sebastian Cord, not Damnyou." You keep your gun jabbed in her back.

"What do you want?" she says coldly.

"All I want is that little basket of goodies you have in your car. I just don't think it should reach grandmother, do you?"

Ignoring her growing rage, you lift the picnic cooler out of the front seat of the Ferrari, then a briefcase containing the papers that Aleta has taken from the laboratory.

Aleta leaps on you, trying to get your gun, but her tricks aren't up to the task. One swift punch to her jaw, and she's out cold, saving you a slow walk down the mountain. You tie her up and pull her back into her own car, so you can drive into Moorland. There, a phone call to headquarters starts a Titan Team on its way to you. Let them figure out what to do with Aleta Marcus and her bugs. You just want to get back to Brittany Farrell.



68A

You walk behind the woman with the large shoulder bag for about fifty feet, judging your timing. The years of manipulating cards for gambling pay off. Your fingers smoothly lift the strap away from her shoulder, until she gets used to the weight not being there. Then you smoothly slip the strap down and over her slightly bent arm and off. You just as smoothly walk away, the bag held in front of you as if you'd been carrying it all along.

For a moment, you wonder if the woman has even noticed that her purse is gone, and you continue to consume large chunks of floor with your big stride. But then you hear a squeal behind you. "Help! Someone stole my purse!"

Certain that most people are going to turn around and stare at the distressed woman, but probably not think quickly enough to try to stop you, you keep on moving.

Roll the two dice. If you get more than your Intelligence score, turn to 35D. If you get the score or less, turn to 29G.

68B

"Sure you are," he replies in sarcastic tones. "Everything you learn goes right back to Aleta."

You try to persuade the young scientist that you can be trusted, and that you really want to help him figure out what's going on at the laboratory, but he'll have none of it. [2X]

You wish the young man luck and leave the room through the door to the hallway.

Turn to 93D.

68C

It almost embarrasses you—yes, you, Sebastian Cord!—to walk into Bob Berner's bedroom. It reminds you of an old Doris Day-Rock Hudson comedy called *Pillow Talk*, in which an angry interior decorator (Doris) turned Rock's apartment into the epitome of an over-sexed teen-age boy's secret fantasies. As you move around, you make an effort not to notice yourself in the mirrored ceiling.

Roll one die. If you get 1-5, turn to 107A. If you get 6-10, turn to 110B.

68D

Turn to page 105 and glance at the picture. Do not study it in detail and do not read the text.

You watch the interior of the garage/workshop for a few minutes, afraid that someone might come in to do some work. But all remains silent.

The accessibility of a vehicle, right there in front of you, begins to niggle at you, urging you to enter the garage and investigate. Maybe you can get the motorcycle to run and have some escape method from the mountain in case you can't get back to your car. [1X]

If you want to enter the garage, you can go in the small door set in the wall next to the big overhead

door; turn to 24A. If not, check the next room on your diagram and return to the chart on the inside back cover.

68E

All you see before your eyes is legs, human legs in well-creased pants, dangling from the high ceiling. Foster Needham finished his last shift as an Orion computer operator, then came home and took his own life. You shut your eyes, hoping to free your brain of the vision before you. But it does no good.

Your first thought is that Foster committed suicide from guilt over the affair in the computer room at headquarters; that he must have arranged for the man to get into the computer room. But as you explore the room, deliberately keeping your eyes off the corpse, you see that Needham had been living a desperately poor, unhappy life, apparently for a long time. In the pockets of his clothes, you find numberless torn-up parimutuel tickets. He'd been gambling compulsively on the horses for a long time, and obviously never won.

Satisfied that his suicide had nothing to do with Orion, you quietly leave the building. You phone Burkhart, knowing that he'll have the whole thing taken care of in a way that won't bring the Orion Foundation to the public's attention. You've still got other things to do.

Return to 93C to search another operator's home.

68F

The guard is down and not moving. You pause for a moment to see if anyone else is coming in response to the noise, but, amazingly enough, you hear nothing.

Moving carefully, alert for any sound, you go to the fallen guard, grab him under the arms, and drag him down the slope into the woods below. There you quickly remove the dead man's brown pants and shirt and don them over your own clothing. At least now you stand a chance of being mistaken for one of the real guards. You return to the building. [4X]

Return to 150A and roll the dice again to discover what you see.

69A

The window you come to is actually one of a row mounted in what you quickly see is a garage door. Peering carefully inside, you see that the room must be at least sixty feet deep and perhaps forty wide. You catch glimpses of a number of different vehicles at rest—a snowmobile, bicycle, small truck, motorcycle, riding lawn mower—though you never would have thought that Web would care about the length of the grass. Over on one side is a long workbench. Two doors leave the garage, one on the far side of the room, and one next to large garage door where you're standing. You're tempted to enter, but you've got to establish the layout of this place.

Return to 150A to place another room or move on.

69B

You go over the items in your mind. Tissues, note paper and stamps, paperback, makeup case. . . . Then you think you've found what's bothering you: you never checked inside the box of stationery. You return to the drawer and take out the box. The notes are the small, folded-over kind that people frequently use for invitations, thank-you notes, and so on. There's an abstract-looking gold unicorn on the front.

Lifting up the top note, you discover that Brittany had started a letter. It says: "Dear Antonia, Thanks for dinner the other night. It's fun to get out once in a while for a cozy chat about old times. That book you were asking about—" and there the note ends. Brittany had never finished it.

There's nothing else of interest about the box, so you return it to the drawer. And still the niggling feeling remains, but nothing more comes to you.

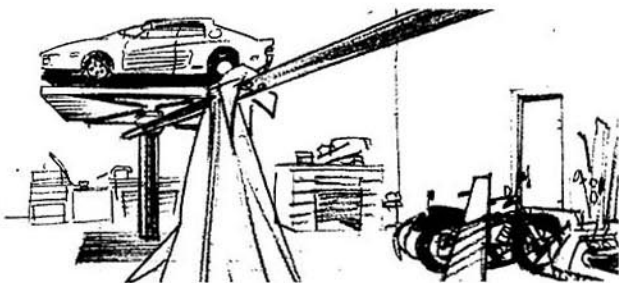
If you want to investigate more things in this room, turn to 64A. However, to look at another drawer, return to 106D.

69C

Suddenly, you realize how late it is and at what a pace you've been going all day since arriving in Denver. Even superhero Cord can't keep going without some rest.

Aaron Burkhart grudgingly lets you use one of the small bedrooms that are spaced around headquarters for use by employees involved in crises, and you quickly fall asleep. Your mind is churning with the possibilities for tomorrow, but that will be soon enough. . . .

Turn to 10C.

**69D**

Before deciding which computer operator you're going to follow, you call Aaron Burkhart to find out if there are any results to the chemical analysis of the little bottle you found in Bob Berner's apartment.

The administrator spends the first five minutes grumbling about people who get to sleep at night while he's sitting in on conferences to determine the Orion center's response to the threat to their computer information.

"Aaron . . . Aaron!" You finally stop his grouchy flow of words and ask about the analysis.

"Oh, yes . . . analysis. Ummm, the chemist says that the little white tablets have been made to resemble the sugar substitute tablets but actually contained . . . some gobbledygook that adds up to a fancy variation on chloral hydrate, the old mickey, but faster acting and with less aftereffect."

"Right on!" you exclaim, adding a quick goodbye. Now you know exactly who you're going to follow. Turn to 84E.

69E

And find a large, warm, friendly tiger cat curled up in a ball. The moment it sees you it starts to purr like a well-oiled engine. You sit beside it for a moment, petting its curled back in long strokes. Then you rise and look around.

[2X]

Turn to 136A.

69F

You hear the key turned in the lock behind you, but you can't resist quickly giving the door handle a hard jerk.

"It's no good," says someone behind you. "They're very adept at locking it quickly."

Startled, you turn and find yourself facing a breathtakingly lovely woman in a white lab coat.

"Uh . . . Dr. Livingstone, I presume," you say, feeling foolish even as you say it.

"No, Dr. Graham, Sarah Graham. And who are you?"

"I'm . . . kind of an investigator," you reply. "I'm looking into some reports of funny things going on here on this mountaintop."

"I never saw anything strange or funny . . . until today, that is. I started asking some questions about why Aleta and Karl were regarding the work as finished. They didn't want to answer, and when I got mad, I found myself being locked up down here."

She looks around at the tiny room. "Just what is going on—uh, what is your name?"

"Cord, Sebastian Cord."

"What do you think is going on, Mr. Cord?"

"Sebastian. I'm not sure, Sarah, tell me about the place."

Turn to 10A.

70A

However, before the train even stops in the station, a large number of people begin to crowd around the steps as if it were a commuter train and they were afraid of not getting a seat. You study them as closely as you can, but while trying to stay invisible, you almost miss Aleta's action. You see an arm coming back into the baggage car window from the crowd. She must have handed something out to someone!

Almost as soon as you realize that, you realize something else—the crowd on the platform instantly begins to disband. The whole mob scene must have been programmed by Web to ensure that no one saw to whom Aleta handed the bacteria cultures! You can't help but admire the organization and precautions that Web takes.

You leap off the still-moving train, trying to picture in your mind's eye the person closest to where you saw Aleta's arm. That person will now be carrying something fairly large.

Studying the people ahead of you, you follow them into the station itself. You quickly discern that there are three possibilities: a man in a business suit carrying an old-fashioned accordion briefcase fat enough to hold the cooler (123B), a woman with a large

square shoulder bag (68A) and a man in a plaid flannel shirt carrying a red cooler (116B). Which one do you think is carrying the cultures?

70B

The bullets zip over your head as you pull your own gun, looking rather slight against her machine gun, from your holster. You duckwalk, keeping your head low, around the far end of the table as quickly as you can.

To see if you can get around the table and within sight of Aleta without her realizing what you're doing, roll the dice. If you get your Dexterity score or less, turn to 99A. If you get more, turn to 17G.

70C

You're past her! And you're still in control of the truck. Now you speed ahead of her in the night, as if your only desire had been to get past and away. But a few minutes ahead down the mountain, you find a narrow spot where you turn the truck in a braking skid so that it blocks the road. You leap out and into the trees at the side of the road, not knowing if the lady will be able to stop in time or not.

Turn to 50A.



71A

As you pick up the briefcase, you smile in satisfaction. The smile suddenly fades, though, as you realize that, though you've kept the notes out of Web's hands, Aleta still has the actual bacteria cultures, and they're rapidly going on their way to Los Angeles.

Turn to the pocket at the back of the book. Remove the item with the red seal and read it.

71B

You find Aleta still asleep in the bedroom of the private car. All you can do now is wait and see what happens in Los Angeles. But there are plenty of things to keep your mind and body occupied until late the next afternoon when the train begins to enter the city.

Turn to 31D.

71C

One by one, the guards fall silent, stilled by death. You realize then that you're going to have to get out of here immediately. Although the walls in this building are pretty thick, those shots were echoing all over the place and were probably not unheard. Someone else is bound to be here in a minute.

You look at the door by which you entered, and know that there's no point in going back into the corridor; someone is certain to be there. You hurry to the small door next to the large garage door.

Roll the two dice. If you roll your Intelligence score or less, turn to 118E. If you roll more, turn to 74C.

71D

The worktable at the side of the room must be where they prepare food for the animals and keep supplies and things. But the only thing of interest is some bowls in two separate piles. One pile has a label tacked by it saying,

"FOR TREATED FOOD ONLY.
DO NOT USE IN FEEDING CONTROL
ANIMALS."

There must be something special done to the food of the test animals. [1X]

With that observation, you return to 76A.

71E

Leaving Brittany, you return to headquarters to get the addresses—and keys, if Burkhart has them—of the four current computer operators who cover the three-shift, twenty-four-hours-per-day use of the main computer. You're assuming that Ed Charnoff already played his part in dying, probably at the hands of whoever planned this whole, curious thing.

"Cord, everyone's hard at work on this. We've identified the body."

"Who is he?"

"The FBI's computers say he is Anthony Lorendi, a small-time thug, but Orion's headquarters computers say Lorendi isn't so small-time, and that he's turned himself into an invaluable, high-level gofer for Web."

"Web," you repeat. "So now we know. They must have sent him to computer school."

If you want to go right into investigating the operators, turn to 93C. If you want to take time to finish checking out their room first, return to 64A.

71F

Beginning to worry about the amount of time you've spent shut up in here, you decide that your best bet is to get on the train tonight when Pachezny and Marcus board at Moorland.

The scientist gathers his courage and asks, "Why do you look as if you doubt what I say? Who do you think these people are?" Then the question that's probably been bothering him for months: "And what do they *really* want with that virus?"

"What makes you so sure there's something more than you told me?" you ask.

"Well . . . well, Aleta kept hiring new geneticists. We've been through about four of them in the last year. They would just disappear—she said she sent them home—and a new one arrives." His face twists in dismay. "Why would she do that?"

"I don't know, Pachezny, but I'm going to find out. I can tell you this: you'd better seriously consider getting as far away from them as possible. They aren't trying to help the world." You pause a moment, then glower at the scientist and raise your gun again. "Now look, Pachezny. I should kill you right now, so you can't tell them that I've been here."

The look of terror returns to his face. "I-I won't tell Aleta or the guards! Really I won't. If-if they're doing something . . . something *evil* with my work, I want it st-stopped!"

He's shaking, and tears come to his eyes.

"You're coming with me, Pachezny," you say, and the fear that had disappeared as he discussed his own profession returned. "Don't worry. I just want to be sure that when I board the train tonight no one knows why I'm there."

"I won't tell!" he insists.

"I know you won't, because I won't give you the chance. Now get over to that window."

You let the man bring a sweater from his desk drawer, then, your gun firmly in his back in case he changes his mind, you make him climb out the window and you follow.

Roll the two dice. If you roll a double, turn to 61F. If you don't, turn to 34F.

72A

You stand at the office door for a moment, preparing to enter. Then you realize that a man and a woman are talking inside. Turning the handle with extraordinary care, you open the door just slightly.

You hear the woman say, "... come on, Karl. What kind of scientist are you if you're willing to have results released before we know if they're reproducible! There's no way the FDA's going to approve the stuff under these circumstances!"

"Settle down and grow up, Sarah! It's not our decision. Quintessential has been paying for our work here and they have every right to do what they want with the results *when* they want."

"Well, I'm not going to let you destroy my credibility as a scientist. Just see if you can find the flasks when you're ready to go tonight!"

You hear her stomp toward the door, with his heavier steps running after her. "Oh, no you don't, Dr. Graham."

Angry steps march toward the door, so you run down the corridor around the nearest corner. From there you hear Sarah Graham give a small shriek, and a different man's voice says, "Hold it, Dr. Graham. Dr. Pachezny insists that you go downstairs to Ms. Marcus."

"No! I've got work to do!" The scientist's voice is shaking with anger.

"Please, Dr. Graham, I don't want to have to force you."

"Force me? What's going on here?—oh, all right." And you hear their steps descending stairs. [2X]

If you want to follow and try to take advantage of Dr. Graham's anger to learn more, turn to 83E. If you'd rather go on exploring go to the next room and turn to 93D.

72B

You're certain that Aleta Marcus is about to leave, carrying the special bacteria cultures with her. You've got to keep them from being delivered!

Picking the truck as a hiding place to wait for whatever happens, you settle down out of sight.

Turn to 79F.

72C

You run back into the hallway off of which several small bedrooms open. There are eight of them, in eight variations of clutter and lived-in-ness. You pick one at random, enter, and leap to the other side of the bed. As you hear the footsteps coming closer, you drop to the floor and roll under the bed. There, you lie perfectly still.

It's almost impossible not to breathe an audible sigh of relief when you realize that the searching guard is only glancing into the rooms, not making a thorough search. You hear him stop a moment by the room you've borrowed and then go on down the hall. The footsteps return to the main corridor, and soon

you hear them climbing the stairs at the far end. [2X]

Now you are free to look around down here. You can explore these bedrooms (51E), go to the closed doors (142F), or try the room with the key outside it (84A).

However, since a guard has just been through here, it may now be safe to go back upstairs. If that is your choice, turn first to 93D. You should then be free to explore the rooms; go to one on your map that you haven't been to and follow the shaded numbers on the chart on the inside back cover.

72D

After you get into the word-processing program, you discover that this disk is a report on the individual animals in the laboratory animal room. Seems there's a pair of rhesus monkeys called Claude and Darryl. Claude has been given something called *E. coli* that is doing "as anticipated," causing him to eat lightly but obediently. He plays when given a ball to play with, but mostly ignores Darryl when Darryl wants to play. Claude never gets in a bad mood and is completely docile when being used for tests.

Poor Claude. You wonder what these people did to him. [2X]

Return to 50D.

72E

You peer through the dusty glass and see a large kitchen, all stainless steel and clean tile. All you can tell at a glance is that it's a busy room meant to be used by a fair number of people. You hope that doesn't mean that there are lots of people in the building.

Return to 150A to place another room or move on.

72F

She laughs and says in crude tones, "Good try, buster, but it won't work. Get out of here, *now!*"

You can't let her know that you're on her trail to Los Angeles, so you have no choice but to leave.

Giving her a big, lewd smile, you wink and say, "It certainly seemed worth a try, babe." You open the door and step back into the baggage car.

This time when the dog growls, you just ignore it. Turn to 118D.

73A

Very quickly, you find yourself just one curve behind the lights indicating the Ferrari. Aleta is not driving very fast, and she's clearly involved in keeping the car on the road through the hairpin turns and around rocks.

Have you got a surprise for the lady! You're going to ride the motorcycle right up her tail pipe. You know the motorcycle probably isn't big enough to drive her off the road, but sitting on top of her seems an adequate substitute.

Roll the two dice. If you get your Intelligence score or less, turn to 53D. If you get more, turn to 24D.

73B

Turn to page 49 and glance at the picture. Do not study it in detail and do not read the text.

You peer into the small office, your eye caught once again by the wonderful red-leather couch. If this place belongs to Web, they are certainly treating their people well, these days.

There's one man in the room, a man with a worried look and a balding head. He keeps rubbing his hand across his head as if it could help him think.

Well, you're certainly not going to climb in a window when someone is in there watching you. [1X]

Walk on around to the next room on your diagram and return to the chart on the inside back cover to see where to go.

73C

"Gotcha!" shouts of a voice behind you, and a bullet whistles past your head into the cement-block wall beside you.

Drawing your gun, you turn swiftly and fire back. The combat is on, and you're fighting a guard with a Pistol skill of 35.

Conduct combat. If you win, turn to 75D. If you lose, by taking full damage to your head, chest, or abdomen, turn to 13A. There can be no giving up now; the end of your mission is too close.

73D

She laughs, shrugs, and says, "At least we won't have to worry about this train turning back into a pumpkin." She turns back into the luxurious private suite, saying, "Why don't you come in and have a drink for your troubles?"

As you enter, you know that a drink may be the least of what you get.

Turn to 54A.

73E

Holding the machine gun ready, you leave the classroom and walk up the stairs. One by one, you locate the guards, disarm them, and lock them in a room. Then you start interrogating the scientists.

Karl Pachezny keeps rubbing his balding head in some kind of gesture of mourning as he weeps for Aleta Marcus. Then, finally, he acknowledges that

though he was brought to the laboratory to work on a recombinant gene that would help control the mood swings of manic-depressives, he has known for a long time that Aleta really had some other use in mind.

Artie Sadler, the young long-haired lab assistant, contributes, "I figured out that the stuff could be used in bigger populations to make people quiet, willing to do what they were ordered to do. I was going to mention it to Aleta, but I never got a chance."

"Be glad that you didn't, Artie," you reply. "I think I saw the remains of some other people who got too curious about what was going on here."

You call Burkhardt and have him send a Titan Team in to completely investigate the mountaintop laboratory, its purpose, and its connection with Web. Orion's own scientists come, too, trying to discover how to kill the flesh-eating blue ooze that Web's geneticists created by mistake.

73F

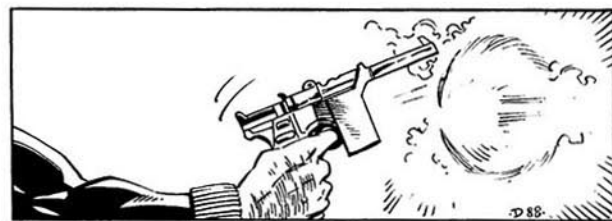
There's no one outside. Quickly reasoning that with the explosion in the basement, it's going to be safer for you upstairs—which is where you want to be anyway—you hurry up the stairs. You've still got lots of exploring to do if you're going to better understand what is going on here.

You find yourself at the top of the stairs located to the left of the guarded lobby. There's a door on your right, one on your left, and one facing you.

Taking a chance on the lobby, you open it slightly, just enough to hear a man's voice saying, "He's somewhere in the building. Spread out and find him!"

You're about to duck away when you realize that the footsteps of the guards are all going toward the staircase at the other side of the lobby. You've got to have a gun, and that's where all the guns are. So you're going to have to take a chance on going in there to find one.

Roll one die. If you get an odd number, turn to 147D. If you get an even number, turn to 20D.



74A

The angry woman looks doubtful for a moment, but you put on your most sincere face, and her frown changes to a smile. "Well, thank you. That was nice of you." She moves past you as if to take her luggage.

Turn to 147F.

74B

You'll probably never know whether you were taking a big chance or not. But at least you're still alive.

Then you wonder about the possibility of there being more dynamite caches around the laboratory. Somehow you've got to get the people out of the building. [2X]

Turn to 88F.

74C

You open the little door, and before you can step through, a shrill siren goes off. Looking down, you realize that you inadvertently stepped on a security grid. Now the guards know exactly where you are.

You run out the door and down the slope toward the trees, but it's too late. Guards come from all directions. You quickly find yourself surrounded and handcuffed.

"Take him to the boss," says one man. [3X]

Turn to 81A.

74D

When you hear no sound at the door, you open it just a crack, waiting for a cough or a rustle. When you hear nothing, you walk in. You find yourself in a computer room/library with a large work table in the center, obviously set up for book research. The part of the room that looks busiest, however, has a computer table with a personal computer on it. [1X]

You see immediately that there is no place to hide in this room. If you feel free to explore the room, turn to 110A. If you think you'd better take advantage of being alone to get out the window, turn to 103F.

74E

You look around, bewildered. You see the materials for painting, fly tying, ceramics, collection mounting, model making, photography, ceramics, baseball cards, stamps, even jewelry-making out of walnut-shell slices. You stir through the accumulation with your finger, not looking for anything particular.

One thing, though, does catch your eye. On the table where someone has been doing some small watercolors, there is a rough picture of a twisted thing with two lines drawn across it, breaking it. Next to the lines are the words "restriction enzyme" and a big question mark. Written in a list at the bottom of the sheet are the words or terms:

plasmid pSC 101

E. coli K12

clone

vector

You can't imagine what it all means, so you leave the paper alone and continue looking. [2X]

Return to 148A.

74F

Getting into your car, you wait for the woman to reappear. She does, carrying a small clothing box to her own vehicle, a light Toyota pickup truck. That should be easy enough to follow, you think.

You have no trouble trailing the woman westward, and you settle down for a leisurely drive. Fortunately, the road you're on is the main road west, so there's nothing suspicious if you appear and reappear occasionally in the woman's rear-view mirror.

After several hours, stretched out by some snacks and stops for gas, you find yourself entering the town of Moorland. It's small and pretty, though it is bisected by railway tracks.

Night is falling as the Toyota climbs a narrow, winding mountain road. You follow cautiously, with your lights off, but the farther you get up the hill, the less you like the situation.

Not willing to turn on your lights, you park your car in a small clearing behind some trees. You take a moment to change into a dark cardigan, with your Mauser carefully tucked into its shoulder holster. Then you begin to walk up the mountain, after the moving lights of the woman's truck.

The time, you see by your watch, is just seven o'clock when you reach the top of the mountain. Make a note of the time and turn to 93B.

74G

You're discovering that you've located Sarah Graham's entire—and original—notes on the procedure for developing the recombinant bacteria when you suddenly feel something poke you in the back, and Aleta's harsh voice says, "So, you are a spy after all, Sebastian. I'm sorry about that. We could have had—"

She's interrupted as you make a swift turn and try to grab the gun from the woman, who appears to be so busy talking that she's not paying attention to her weapon.

Roll the two dice. If you get more than your Dexterity score, turn to 117C. If you get the score or less, turn to 133D.

75A

You search the entire car looking for a safe, but all you find is a small locked box in the bottom drawer of the trainman's desk. When you pick the lock you discover that the box contains 87 cents in change and a metal washer.

Turn to 56A.

75B

You come to the door of what you think must be the laboratory. You listen carefully but hear no sound through the solid door. Taking a chance, you turn the handle and duck through the door.

You find yourself in a small, barren anteroom. There's a rack of clean white lab coats along one wall, a chair, and a door with a large round wheel in the middle of it. Strange. There's a small window above the wheel through which you can see into the laboratory. There is a man in a white coat inside the room. He's working around a small refrigerator at the other end of the room. You don't know if he can hear you, but you'd better not take a chance.

You're about to leave the little room when you hear footsteps hurrying down the corridor. The handle of the outer door is jerked from your hand and two guards come dashing through, calling, "Dr. Pachezny!" They are just as startled as you are, but they already have their guns out. With no chance to put up a fight, you find yourself quickly cuffed and under control.

"Take him to the boss," says one man. [2X]

Turn to 81A.

75C

You stand in silence, willing the guards to let you go. But your will must not be working too well, because the one with the drawn gun raises it and says, "You're not going anywhere."

And as he says it, a blast hits the air around you—a siren set off by the other guard! The guard with the gun is startled, too, so you take advantage of the brief second of inattention, and duck below his weapon, drawing your own at the same time.

"Hey!" he shouts, affronted by the fact that you would challenge his authority. But he doesn't have long to think about it, because you tackle him and land on the ground. He fires shots at targets that aren't there—at least you aren't. You're busy shooting first him and then, a split second later, the other guard, whose own gun goes flying as you shatter his hand.

The siren is still going, though, so you've got to move fast. You head for the door on the left side of the room, duck through, and find yourself in a narrow, enclosed corridor. [2X]

You are facing one door (57G), a cement-block staircase goes down on your left (76D), and there's another door to your right (132C).

75D

The guard must not have expected you to be so agile. When you return his fire instantly, his aim is thrown off, and he never quite gets it back. Your shots, on the other hand, head right where they're aimed, and soon the man falls to the floor.

You see no point now in trying to disguise the fact that you're in the building, so you leave the man where he fell. If you're trying to destroy the cultures, turn to 13F. If you're trying to stop Aleta from leaving, turn to 79F.

75E

When you look at the pile of dirty white coats in the holder beneath the rack of clean coats, you feel as if you should be getting an x-ray or something. The scientists here must go through an awful lot of coats. You reason that they are probably required to put on a fresh one every time they enter the room, and take it off before they leave the room. [1X]

Return to 90A.

75F

You're about to leave the pantry when your eye is caught by the large barrels of supplies on the floor under the lowest shelf. Tapping one labeled "pickles," you realize that supplies are getting low. Perhaps the work is nearing completion . . . or, perhaps there are a lot of avid pickle-eaters here.

Then you see behind the pickle barrel a bundle of odd stick-shaped things. Wondering what they are, you pull the bundle out and quickly discover that they're dynamite sticks! And they are attached to a small, black radio receiver and a battery. This place is set to go off! [2X]

Turn to 92C.

75G

A little more awake than you really suspected, the man jumps aside. Your clenched fist trails along his back as you land heavily on the floor and he dashes to the door. He's through it in an instant, and before you can get back to the window, a siren is blaring through unseen speakers and you hear the sound of running feet.

In one flying leap, you reach the window and vault through it, knocking over only a few plants. But before you can run into the trees, you find yourself surrounded by men with guns. Instantly, your hands are jerked behind your back and tied.

"Take him to the boss," says a voice, and you are led into the entrance hall. [2X]

Turn to 81A.



76A

The room where the experimental animals are kept contains none of the smells or filth that you subconsciously expected, as if the place were the barn of a not-too-conscientious farmer. Instead, rolled-up hoses and drains in the floor show that the room and the cages are kept very clean and tidy. Of course, when you take time to think about it, you realize that a good scientist isn't going to want uncontrollables like dirt playing a role in well-organized experiments.

That being the case, you doubt if there's much in the room that isn't supposed to be there, but, you decide as you sketch the room, you'd still better take a look. [1X]

You may inspect the:	by turning to:
cages	43G
worktable	71D
bulletin board	86A
refrigerator	128E

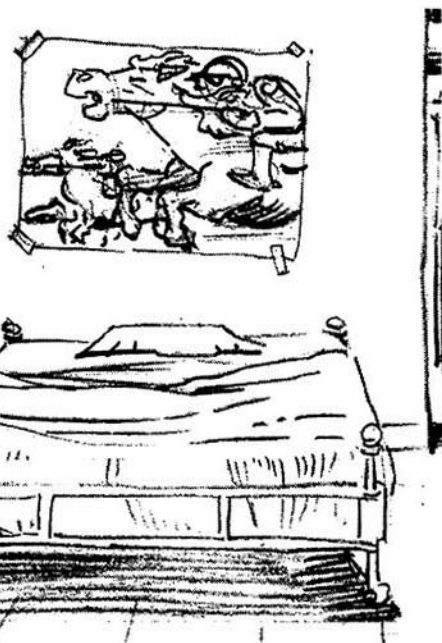
If guards are aware that you are in the building, you must roll a luck roll before exploring any item listed above. If you get double numbers on the dice, turn to 128C. Otherwise, continue exploring.

When you are ready to go on to the next room, go out into the corridor and turn to 93D.

If you think you have learned enough to take action, turn to 86F.

76B

This time of the evening, the bedroom certainly should be empty.
Turn to 82E.

**76C**

Knowing you can't take long, you just take a quick look at the things on the man's desk, but all you see are invoices, order forms, some worn gaming rules, and some half-lettered sale signs.

Giving up, you leave the store and go sit in your car in the parking lot, your mind churning all the time.

If you overheard the conversation in the back of the hobby shop, turn to 90C. If you didn't, turn to 123G.

76D

Your instinct has always told you: when in doubt, go up. But that isn't a choice here; the staircase goes down, and you have a feeling that perhaps the most important things in a place like this will be hidden underground.

Whatever's down here, you're going to have to discover it very fast and get out, or you'll get caught in any thorough search of the building.

Turn to 25E.

76E

If you think it might be helpful to let this man know you are here, turn to 136C. If you think it's better not to, close the door and move on to the next room on your map (turn to 93D).

76F

You turn toward Leroy, a quizzical smile on your face.

"Couldn't find anything?" The big man leans horribly close to you, and you can smell the garlic from his breakfast omelet.

"No," you reply. "I came in here thinking I knew what I wanted, but after seeing all that role-playing stuff, I'm confused. I'll talk to my gamemaster and see just what I should be buying. I'll be back, though."

"That's good." He removes his hand from your arm. "Leroy likes to see new gamers coming along. Playing makes them happy and it makes me happy, too."

"I'll be back," you say again, opening the door. It's a good thing you read some of the boxes!

Turn to 80D.

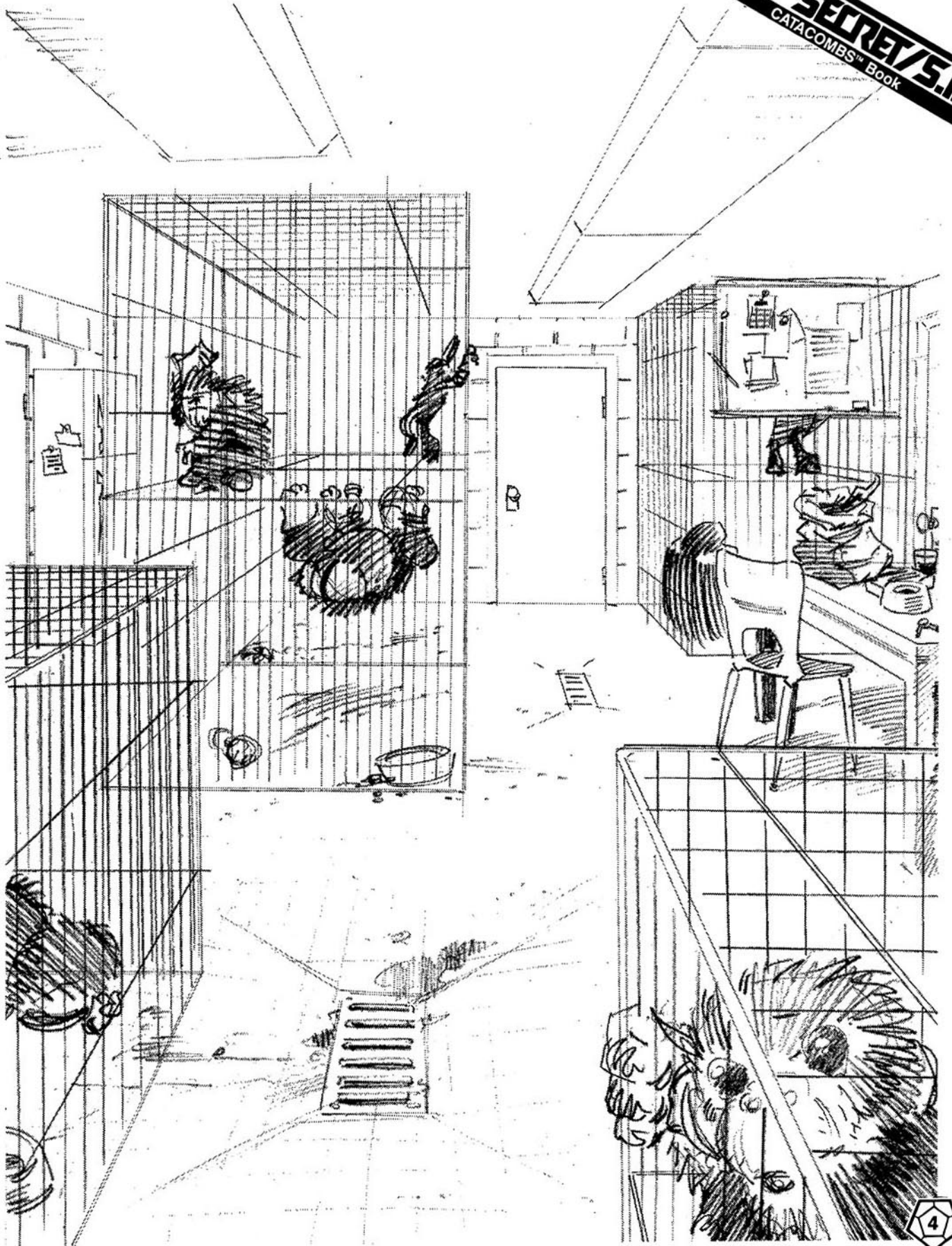
76G

The kitchen area of the apartment shows a bit of the old Foster. You find some cans of fine, imported seafood—probably bought with a windfall—and neatly washed and stored utensils and dishes. Looking further, you find a parimutuel betting stub dropped in a clean coffee cup.

Looking around, as if there might be someone there watching you, you replace the ticket with a hundred dollar bill. Maybe he'll think he left it there by accident at a time when he was more flush.

Embarrassed by your own action, you hurriedly check the small, grubby bathroom and find nothing.

If you've checked the closet, turn to 23B. If you haven't, turn to 112D.



78A

You find nothing in the animal-room refrigerator except regular animal food and a can of soda. You're stepping out of the room, wondering where to go next, when you feel a gun jabbed into the small of your back.

Turn to 11A.

78B

In a metal toolbox, you discover a wrench with the name "Stein" etched onto the flat surface. You wonder who Stein was, and why he left his tools here. [1X]

Return to 127G to make a second roll. Otherwise, turn to 104A.

78C

With some exceedingly elegant driving, the Web agent manages to bring her car to a stop safely and without doing any damage to a wheel rim. You stop some distance behind her, just in time to see her shut off the lights. Hearing a car door open, you open yours, too.

"What now?" she shouts into the night. "You must have stopped me for a reason!" In the faint moonlight, you see her standing behind her open car door, looking eagerly for motion that shows where you are.

"I want the bacteria cultures," you call back. "They aren't safe in your hands."

"I'm not giving up a year's worth of isolation," she says firmly. "You'll have to come get them."

This is no inexperienced lady on your hands. You're the one who has to make a move of some kind, before she decides to get back in her car and make a break for Moorland.

You move through the night, trying to get around behind her, where the car door can't protect her any longer. But can you do it quietly? Roll the dice. If you get more than your Dexterity score, turn to 126D. If you get the score or less, turn to 60F.

78D

You head for the stairs and go down to the basement. Pulling the key from your pocket, you open the door to the little room where Dr. Sarah Graham has been waiting all this time.

Not the least bit doctorlike, she tumbles into your arm, the panic on her face turning to joyous relief. "What's happening, Sebastian?" she cries. "Why is the fire alarm ringing?"

"Shhh, shhh. I set it off because I found that someone had set some dynamite to blow up the building. Everyone's getting out, and I've come to get you. Remember? I promised I would get you out of that room. And now I'm going to take you away from here where you'll be safe."

You give her a moment to run to her bedroom at the other end of the basement to grab her purse and a coat. Then you take her trembling arm and lead her out of the room and up the stairs. You're about to step into the corridor when you hear a voice at the front of

the building shout, "I'll look around inside and see if I can find anything."

You would have liked to find the cultures that the lab has been working on and destroy them, but with a guard searching the building and the building set to blow, it isn't feasible. All you can do is try to get Sarah away from there as quickly as possible.

Sarah shows you the easiest window to get out of at the back of the building, and soon you are walking through the darkness down the hill toward your rental Firebird.

As Sarah sinks into the soft seat beside you, she sighs, "I was really beginning to think I'd never get out of there alive. But I did, thanks to you. Now I'm beginning to wonder how we're going to keep those cultures from being delivered."

"Don't you worry. I'll take care of that. I know that Aleta Marcus will have them on the train going to Los Angeles. I'll be on that train, too."

On reaching the bottom of the mountain, you drive to a nearby town and sign Sarah into a motel. Then you call headquarters to send a Titan Team to look after her, learn all she knows, and go to the laboratory and investigate everything that is left there.

You drive back to Moorland, prepared to catch the train to Los Angeles with Aleta Marcus.

Turn to 28G.

78E

You manage between shots to duck around the truck and come out the other side, in full view of the angry woman. She doesn't expect you to be so bold, so she's unprepared when you step out and fire directly at her. The woman you first saw—and admired—in Denver falls to the oily floor of the garage.

Dr. Pachezny, seeing her fall, runs toward her and lifts her pale head. He's sobbing, "Aleta, my beautiful Aleta."

If there's someone in the building you promised to "rescue," turn to 18F. If not, turn to 56C.

78F

You're just about to enter the room you think is the bedroom, when you hear a familiar rustle. You pause. What is it? You listen at the door again, and then you recognize it. The room is indeed the bedroom, and the peculiar sound is the noise bedsprings make when . . . uh, when passion has taken over.

As you turn away, you hear the additional sounds of a woman's sultry laughter, followed by a man's deeper chuckle. This is no place for you right now. Maybe you can come back later. [1X]

Turn to 93D.

79A

Several games are scattered on the table, as if they had been played in desultory fashion. Others are in the shelf near the coffee maker. You glance through them hurriedly.

Roll one die. If you get an odd number, turn to 36A. If you get an even number, turn to 89C.

79B

Sneaking up behind the listening woman, you take every step as if it might be the last, which, indeed, it might.

Roll the two dice. If you get more than your Dexterity score, turn to 92B. If you get your score or less, turn to 67F.

79C

You leap up and manage to grasp the peak of the gable. Holding tight, you run your feet up the adjacent wall and pull yourself as far back onto the roof as you can, just as two men come running from the surrounding woods. Relieved that you hadn't chosen to return to those woods, you poise yourself to leap, at just the right moment. . . .

NOW! You drop onto the two men's shoulders, trying to bang their heads together in the same movement. Roll the two dice. If you roll your Strength score or less, turn to 41D. If you roll more, turn to 22D.

79D

You find no other notes of interest on the desk, so you turn to the drawers. The central one contains all the usual stuff—staples, paper clips, pencils with the erasers chewed off, pads of paper, a couple keys, and some antacid tablets. Seems that Pachezny, the administrator, is under some stress.

If you want to look in the drawers on the left, which include a deep file drawer, turn to 11C. If you think the ones on the right would be more productive, turn to 28D.

79E

Let Aleta sleep. She's had a busy day.

You manage to lower the blanket again without ever causing a change in the slow, slightly raspy breathing of the lovely woman. But when you step to the door, the first thing you do is accidentally let go of the handle, causing it to click sharply. You glance back at the bed and see the large pile of quilt begin to move. Aleta, gorgeous even with her tousled hair and sleep-filled eyes, rises, quilt clutched to her breast, to stare at you.

She says slowly and evenly, "Who the hell are you?"

"Cord," you reply. "Sebastian Cord."

She quickly manages to suppress the surprise that flashes in her eyes. Somehow, she's heard of you.

"I am Marcus, Aleta Marcus," she says in a droll imitation of your own tones. "And you, Mr. Cord, do not belong here."

Her other hand flashes from beneath the pillow and a knife is flying straight toward your heart.

Roll the dice against your Reflex score. If you get the score or less, turn to 104G. If you get more, turn to 136D.

79F

The best hiding place you can find in the garage is the Toyota truck. You crawl into the front seat, leaving the door unlatched, and lie on the padded cushions, comfortable for your wait. Note: *You may stop keeping track of time now.*

You've almost fallen asleep in the comparative comfort of the truck seat, when you hear the inner garage door slam open. You raise yourself on one elbow and see Aleta Marcus entering the garage, with Karl Pachezny carrying a red picnic cooler.

As they go to the Ferrari, you quietly open your door and lean out, aiming your gun at the woman.

"Stop right there," you say, stepping out of the truck. The two of them halt, startled, but then Aleta grabs the picnic cooler and thrusts Pachezny toward you with one gesture.

The scientist stumbles and falls toward you. Roll the dice. If you get your Dexterity score or less, turn to 150D. If you get more, turn to 63F.

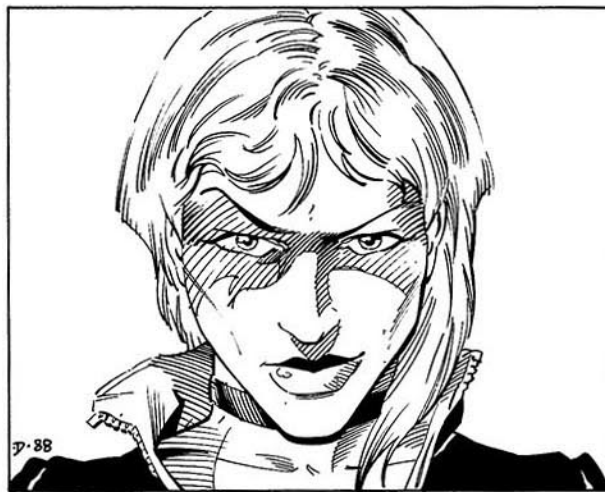
79G

Listening at the door, you think you hear a soft shuffle. But when you don't hear it again in some minutes, you open the door and slip inside.

. . . And stop right where you are. A slightly balding man is handing stuff to Aleta, who is leaning into a red Ferrari sports car.

Knowing that your reasoning now could prove critical to the success of your mission, you step quietly back into the hallway and consider what you've seen.

If you decide that you've got to learn more before you take any action, turn to 92G. If you think you know why the redheaded woman is leaving, turn to 41G.



80A

With some exceedingly elegant driving, the Web agent manages to bring the Ferrari to a stop in a sudden braking skid that turns it across the blacktop, parallel to the roadblock. She opens the door and leaps out, using the door as a shield against you.

"What now?" she shouts into the night. "You must have stopped me for a reason!" She keeps her head moving, looking for motion that shows where you are.

"I want the bacteria cultures," you call back. "They aren't safe in your hands."

"I'm not giving up a year's worth of isolation," she says firmly. "You'll have to come get them."

This is no inexperienced lady on your hands. You're the one who has to make a move of some kind, before she just decides to crash through your barrier and drive on to Moorland.

You hurry through the night, trying to get around behind her, where the car door can't protect her any longer. But can you do it quietly? Roll the dice. If you get more than your Dexterity score, turn to 126D. If you get the score or less, turn to 60F.

80B

As you move around, the guard dog lies by the closet, bewildered and whimpering. Whenever you try to pet him to reassure him, he just growls and bares his teeth.

Ignoring the dog, you check the bags stored on the luggage rack. None of the tags give any useful information, but you're certainly not tempted to take time to open every bag.

On the bigger rack, where boxes are stored, you find a small microwave oven.

Turn to 134A.

80C

You cringe back to make the newly arrived guard think you are cowed. A fleeting smile of satisfaction crosses his ill-shaved features; clearly he enjoys being in such a powerful position. You just wish you could see his face change when you take off at a low run toward the front door.

But what you didn't know, of course, was that when the alarm sounded, the outer door locked automatically. There's no place to turn before a bullet catches you in the back, to the accompaniment of the guard's self-congratulatory chuckle. What a stupid way for Sebastian Cord to die!

80D

Once out of the store, you quickly see Aleta walking at a leisurely pace under the covered walkway toward a gift shop. As she enters it, you sit down on a bench to think things out.

You think you have enough evidence that Berner is not straight to convince Burkhart to trust Brittany Farrell. He desperately needs her back after the death of Ed Charnoff. And obviously he won't be able to

count on Berner. Well, it'll be up to Burkhart now to handle that sticky little problem.

You're convinced that the investigation must be continued. You think you know who arranged the break-in, but there's still a "why" to sort out. And the answer to that seems to be wherever Aleta is headed. So, that's where you're going, too.

Then you wonder, what if she makes an important stop on the way? So, the decision you have to make is whether to fly there (41F), or to drive, following her car (74F).

80E

You take your knife or tool and—holding your breath, as if that would make a difference—cut the two wires running from the battery to the blasting cap. Roll one die. If you roll an odd number, turn to 96B. If you roll an even number, turn to 74B.

80F

You duck over to the other end of the couch in the front room where you at least have a little cover. Then you call, "DeWitt! Stop shooting, this is Sebastian Cord!"

"What the hell are you doing in my apartment, Cord?" You can hear his steps coming from the bedroom into the living room. You peer out and see the man, a shirt thrown on, standing in the door, his gun still at the ready.

You hold your gun up, pointed at the ceiling, and rise from behind the couch. "Sorry 'bout that, DeWitt. There was no answer when I knocked. But I'm investigating the dead man in the computer room."

"And you suspect me?" His gun goes down, and there's a tone of joy in his voice, as if he's delighted to be counted as someone that the great Sebastian Cord, S.I. agent, could suspect of anything.

"Just checking every possibility, DeWitt. You know that."

"Oh, sure. Every possibility. Well, if you want to look around, go ahead. I have to report to work in a few minutes anyway. I'm on after Needham."

If you are wounded, turn to 94G. If not, turn to 140B.

81A

Your gun and knife have been taken away, and your wrists are handcuffed behind you. You have no choice but to march when the guards say, "March!"

If this is the first time you've been captured, turn to 120E. If it's the second time, turn to 115A.

81B

As you shuffle quickly through the cards, you discover an extra little piece of paper stuck in among them. Written on it are the words: *Third shift, Sunday, October 26.*

A sudden chill hits your heart. That is the shift during which the computer room was invaded and the man killed. The shift of which Brittany Farrell claims to remember nothing.

You slip the deck of cards and the note in your pocket.

Turn to 124F.

81C

You glance into the room where you think you remember the computer being, but you don't know if you're right because the lights are off. All you can see is a thin line of light under the door.

Then that door opens, and a light is turned on. You jump back, startled, then slowly move your head back so you can see in. A woman has entered. It's Aleta, the woman from Denver, and she's carrying a bundle in her arms.

You watch as she surveys the room. Apparently satisfied with what she sees, she walks to a bookcase and shoves the bundle, with a little black plastic box attached, under the bottom shelf. Standing up, she throws her head back, giving a laugh you hear through the glass. Then she switches out the light and leaves.

You may not get another good chance to enter the building. So you carefully pull the window open from the outside and step up onto the frame. Feeling carefully with your foot, you step down into the room. You're in safely. Using a tiny flashlight, you begin to look around. [2X]

Turn to 50B.

81D

You drive a fist into Leroy's fat face, and the fight is on.

Conduct hand-to-hand combat. Leroy has a Basic Melee skill of 40. If you knock him out by filling in all the boxes for the head, chest, or abdomen, turn to 114C. If he knocks you out, turn to 48C.

81E

The large, comfortable couches surrounding an unusual coffee table make up a friendly conversation pit. The table looks as if a long and perhaps smoky and alcoholic conversation had taken place there recently. But in the middle of the table, coated by cigarette ash, is a reddish tri-fold brochure touting the Mountain-

Midlands Express, a fancy-schmancy train for those who like to travel slowly and expensively.

You check the couches thoroughly, especially under the cushions, but all you find are a few coins, a rubber band, and an old *TV Guide*.

Return to 20A.

81F

On the other hand, you do have something that the guards didn't take from you—your Orion card case. It's not like an ordinary card case, except in that it does indeed hold cards. But you can use it for something else.

You take the small metal case from your pocket, and by maneuvering some almost imperceptible bumps along the edge, you make it pop open along one edge. It's now primed. You press a few strategic spots along the top, invisibly setting a timing mechanism for the minute-but-powerful explosive it contains to go off.

You have no way of knowing if a guard is just outside the door, but surprise ought to slow him down if there is one.

You place the magnetic card case on the door, directing the force of the blast right at where you suspect the lock to be. Then you duck behind the easy chair and count . . . until you feel your eardrums almost pop from the strength of the explosion. The remaining piece of door swings open in the smoke, and you leap up and hurry out of the room.

Turn to 73F.

81G

You cringe back to make the newly arrived guard think he has you cowed. A smirk of superiority crosses his face as he wrenches your Mauser from your hand. Your heart drops a little; you always hate to see anyone else handling that gun.

"Thought you could get in here so easily, huh?" he sneers. "Well, we'll just have to learn what brings you here. And I hope you won't tell us *too* easily."

You are beginning to regret putting yourself in the hands of an obviously sadistic gun hand when you feel a gun butt strike you on the head, and you begin to sink into blackness. . . . [2X]

Turn to 142G.

82A

You glance into the room where the computer and bookshelves are, expecting it to be empty, but a young man with longish curly hair and wearing a white lab coat is seated at the computer. You don't think he's working, though, because he watches the screen, thinks, then alternately looks self-satisfied or grumbles as he types something in. Must be some kind of computer game that has him intrigued. [1X]

Well, you certainly can't enter the building here. Move on to the next room in your diagram and return to the chart on the inside back cover.

82B

You are just about to turn away from the workbench when you realize that you didn't look back in the darkness of the bottom shelf.

Remembering the "BE METICU, LOUSE!" sign, you bend down to look . . . and find a bundle of dynamite shoved to the back of the cupboard, closest to a solid wall where it can do the most damage. Attached to the bundle is a battery and a small black radio receiver.

This place is set to go off! [3X]
Turn to 92C.

82C

A description of the feeding routine calls for the animals in cages labeled "A" to receive the special "enzyme-producing food." Those in cages labeled "B" are the controls and receive regular food. [1X]

To roll again, turn to 86A. Otherwise, return to 76A.

82D

Confident that no one will remember exactly how the chairs were placed around the table, you crawl under it and pull most of them in as far as they will go. Then you carefully squeeze yourself onto their seats so that you are lying full-length beneath the table on two sets of chairs. Fortunately, the table isn't very wide, so there's only a couple inches of space between the seats, just enough to make you feel vaguely uneasy, but not enough to dump you to the floor.

Reaching beneath you, you pull the last chair into place under you and then relax, ready to wait out the action as long as necessary.

Just as you are wondering if you're relaxing so much you might take a welcome nap, you hear some men enter the room and begin searching it furiously. The first place they look is the pantry. You can tell from their excited chatter that they not only look behind the refrigerator, but *inside* it, too. But they never think to look between the chairs and the underside of the kitchen table. Soon they are gone. [4X]

Now you are free to explore the kitchen.

Turn to 124A.

82E

You stand motionless outside the door for a moment, listening. When you hear nothing, you quickly open the door and slip inside. You find yourself inside a rather luxurious bedroom, unexpected in a place like this.

As you close the door behind you, you see the large pile of quilt on the bed begin to move, and Aleta, the woman from Denver, gorgeous even with her tousled hair and sleep-filled eyes, rises up, quilt clutched to her breast, to stare at you.

She says slowly and evenly, "Who the hell are you?"

"Cord," you reply. "Sebastian Cord."

She quickly manages to suppress the surprise that flashes in her eyes. Somehow, she's heard of you.

"I am Marcus, Aleta Marcus," she says in a droll imitation of your own tones. "And you, Mr. Cord, do not belong here."

Her other hand flashes from beneath the pillow and a knife is flying straight toward your heart.

Roll the dice against your Reflex score. If you get the score or less, turn to 104G. If you get more, turn to 136D.

82F

The cards on and around the card table look as if they were thrown down and scattered in anger. You wonder what was going on, but it's just an idle thought, because you can't imagine how a card game ending in anger could be relevant to your work.

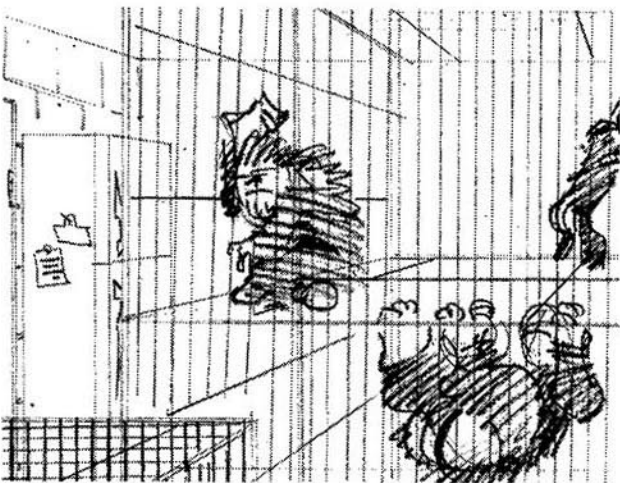
Return to 20A.

82G

Convinced that survival is the better part of something or other, you shout, "Hold it!" then toss your gun down, and hold up your hands.

"Okay, keep those hands high!" You do as he orders, until two more guards come running from the open hallway. You quickly find yourself handcuffed. One guard, the leader, you guess, commands, "All right, take him to the boss."

Turn to 81A.



83A

There's nothing special about the drinks and bar supplies, except for the fact that they're in a bedroom. There must have been some major partying going on in here. You discovered the bad effects of alcohol so long ago that you've forgotten what it tastes like. [1X]

Return to 136A.

83B

You walk through the night to your rental car, hidden in the bushes down below. You know you'll have to come back to help the Titan Team clean up, but right now, the fresh air of the mountain night and the knowledge that you prevented a grotesque Web enterprise from reaching its evil conclusion, are sufficient to make you smile.

83C

You glance into the room where you think you remember the computer being, but you don't know if you're right because the lights are off. All you can see is a thin line of light under the door.

You may not get another good chance to enter the building. So you carefully pull the window open from the outside and step up onto the frame. Feeling carefully with your foot, you step down into the room. You're in safely. Using your flashlight, you begin to look around. [1X]

Turn to 50B.

83D

The only way you can think of to break the mechanism is to use the explosive in your Orion card case. But you have already used the case.

Then you remember the flexible diamond strip-saw you carry in your shoe.

Cringing at the thought of having to put your hands in the ooze, you lift your foot and gingerly remove the shoe. You then get the tiny tool out of its hidden compartment of the inner heel.

You leap from the ooze to where you expect the diagonal strut to be . . . and get it! The muscles in your shoulders screaming with pain, you spend long minutes investigating the whole structure with your hands. The only place thin enough to possibly break through is a bolt to which the diagonal strut is attached.

During the coming hours, you lift yourself again and again to the mechanism, each time staying a shorter and shorter time to saw at the bolt. Your muscles are quivering in pain before you're even halfway through.

If you were put into the pit after eleven o'clock, turn to 19B. If the time was before eleven, turn to 44C.

83E

Standing at the top of the stairs, you listen carefully for how far the footsteps of the guard and the struggling scientist go along the basement corridor. It's not far at all. You hear the steps stop, a door open, a screaming, "Damn you!" from Sarah Graham, a door shut again, and a small scrape of metal. Then the single set of footsteps goes on down the basement hall, probably toward the other staircase.

You hurry down the steps, glad for your rubber-soled shoes. At the bottom of the stairs, you find yourself in a short hallway, with several doors off it. And the first door at the bottom has a key hanging on the wall outside the door. It's still swinging, so that must have been the scrape of metal you heard.

You take a quick look at the other doors, discovering two that are closed, a utility closet, and one open door that leads to a hallway on which are clustered a number of small bedrooms in a dormitorylike arrangement. You'll have to check those out later. Right now, you return to the door with the key hanging outside.

Turn to 47E.

83F

You settle onto the road, following its curves carefully as you gradually accelerate. However, you quickly realize that you're being *too* careful. The lady's getting away! You've got to accelerate more than that if you're ever going to catch her in time!

Putting your foot to the floor, you try to get all the speed you can out of the truck and make the curves at the same time.

Roll the two dice. If you roll more than your Driving/Automobile skill, turn to 155B. If you roll the score or less, turn to 138B.

83G

Listening at the door, you think you hear a soft shuffle. But when you don't hear it again in some minutes, you open the door and slip inside.

. . . And stop right where you are. A slightly balding man is handing stuff to Aleta, who is leaning into a red Ferrari sports car.

Knowing that your reasoning now could prove critical to the success of your mission, you step quietly back into the hallway and consider what you've seen.

If you decide that you've got to learn more before you take any action, turn to 92G. If you think you know why the redheaded woman is leaving, turn to 41G.

84A

You take the key down and then discover that the door is open anyway. Inside is a rather empty room, with just an iron bed, an easy chair, and—to your dismay—a straight chair with handcuffs attached to it. What is this room for?

You hear footsteps on the floor above, coming toward the stairs. Do you want to take time to return the key to its hook outside the door (94F) or quickly get out of sight behind the easy chair (45A)?

84B

The small apartment is still, having already been cleaned up for the day by the maids. You close the door behind you, free to explore the apartment for anything that might be significant.

Turn to 96A.

84C

Check your Time Card. If it is now between eight and nine-thirty, turn to 151B. If it is any other time, turn to 120F.

84D

You listen a moment at the door, and hearing nothing, you open it, to be met by a blast of oil-permeated air. You're in a garage, with all the fascination and grease of any garage or repair shop anywhere.

You've loved such places since you were a kid, and garages—as much as a frequent need to save your life—are responsible for your considerable driving skill.

You look with envy at the Ferrari someone has been working on. It's a far cry from the rental Firebird you drove to the mountain.

But you've got to do something, quickly, before the guards start hunting for you in here.

Somehow, you're certain the guards will look in the sports car. So you can hide in either the little Toyota truck (90D) or crawl under the tarp that is partially covering the snowmobile (40B).

84E

You're outside Berner's apartment when he comes out late Tuesday morning. He couldn't have had much sleep, if any, but he looks completely fresh and eager to go wherever it is you're following him to.

You're convinced that Berner is the culprit. He lives too high on the hog, with little apparent income. There are too many questions about him that can't be answered in some other way, as they can with Foster Needham.

Berner pulls out in a highly polished black Trans Am, which he drives smoothly and with apparent joy. You follow more sedately in your rented Firebird, sedate only so that he won't notice you.

Roll the two dice. If you get more than your Intelligence score, turn to 124C. If you get the score or less, turn to 28H.

84F

You're heading toward a corner in the hallway where you're sure you noticed a fire alarm before, when you hear a shout, "Hey, you're the one!"

You must fight a guard armed with an automatic. He has a Pistol skill of 35.

Conduct combat. If you win, turn to 60E. If you lose, by taking full damage to your head, chest, or abdomen, turn to 135B. However, if no one is dead after three combat turns, turn to 45F.

84G

Unlike Aleta's letters, these were never mailed. You find yourself almost blushing with shame as you glance through them. They are the adolescent outpourings of a grown man who has become completely captivated by a more experienced woman. Between the phrases of adoration and gratitude, you discover that the man, Dr. Karl Pachezny, feels he was saved from a life of unrecognized genius by Aleta Marcus who chose him to head this fantastic project. He just wishes she would trust him enough to tell him who is funding it, and how the result—which he quotes her as calling "the final bug"—will be used. [2X]

Feeling slightly soiled, you return the letters to their place beneath Pachezny's conservative and expensive socks. Return to 136A.

84H

You think a minute, then ask, "How would the man have known how to get into the computer?"

"Well, we presume that's what Ed Charnoff was forced to tell him."

Yeah, poor Ed. You remember the operator from when he worked with you on a case involving a Web-backed conglomerate taking over a computer firm. Nice guy. You hope they didn't hurt him too much before he died.

When you say as much to Smith, he nods somberly and says, "The people who aren't in the front-line of the action—people like Charnoff, Farrell, and the other operators—aren't expected to have to withstand interrogation. I just hope that this guy"—he points to where the body had been—"was one of the ones who killed Charnoff." There's a vicious note in his last words.

Turn to 42E.





86A

Over the worktable is a large corkboard with lots of papers and reminders tacked onto it. You look at some of the papers at random.

To see what you discover, roll one die. You may continue to roll as long as you don't get the same result twice.

If you get:	turn to:
1-2,	121C
3-4,	82C
5-6,	116F
7-8,	124E
9-0,	66D

86B

Even though Brittany has not been back to her apartment since she reported for work twenty-four hours ago, the bathroom still smells of her perfume. The aroma makes you smile and remember, but you find nothing important in the room.

To explore more of the apartment, return to 118A.

86C

Preparing for anything, you drive your foot to the floor, urging the Toyota past the Ferrari on the left side of the mountain road. Suddenly, the road turns sharply left. If you're going to pass her, this is the time to do it, but can you maintain control on the curve?

Roll the two dice. Deduct 10 points from your Driving/Automobile skill because of the truck's acceleration. If you roll more than the modified skill score, turn to 116A. If you roll the modified score or less, turn to 70C.

86D

You note that the program disk still in the computer is on the word processing program. Perhaps he was using it earlier. You scroll up the screen until you can read the report from the beginning. However, it means nothing to you, so you scroll up the screen farther. As you watch the words of the report disappear off the bottom, you find a short message that apparently came in over the modem:

Ready to receive?

Marcus: All personnel not involved in the overall picture are to be terminated at the conclusion of the project. Be sure that all relevant notes are gathered in case work needs to be duplicated, although such an event MUST BE EXCEEDINGLY UNLIKELY. Signed, Trajan.

You know that the word "terminated" is a perfectly acceptable one in personnel circles—you have even been threatened with it on occasion—but you have a distinct feeling that in this case "terminated with prejudice" might be a more familiar and apt term to use.

Somehow you're going to have to deal with the possibility of murder, too. [2X]

Return to 48A.

86E

Your muscles shaking with the strain, you somehow manage to land your blows in the right places. Hank falls backward into the next car, and you follow him in. But it must have looked as if Hank was pulling you, because, as you close the door behind you, you hear the conductor in the other car say, "That's all, folks. Hank took care of the trouble."

Finding yourself in the baggage car, with an angry dog barking its fury at you, you admit that there's no longer any chance of searching the train quietly, so you might as well do it in earnest.

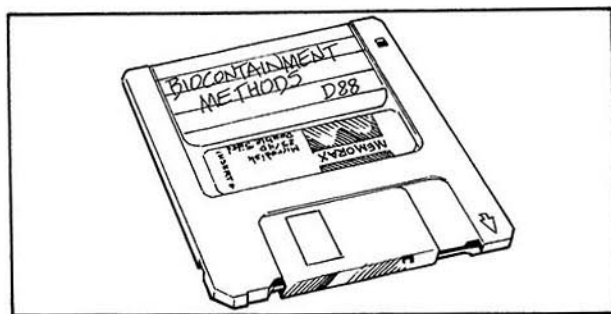
You tie the big trainman up and manage to squeeze him into the tiny employees' restroom at the far end of the car. The dog goes to the door and lies there, whimpering. Hearing the *whoosh* indicating that the door to the passenger car has been opened, you quickly squeeze your bulk onto the toilet, to avoid standing on the unconscious trainman, and pull the door almost shut. Peering through the opening, you see Aleta Marcus and the conductor pass, on their way to the private car. In a minute or two, the conductor returns alone, and you are free to start exploring.

Turn to 26A.

86F

You feel as if you've learned everything you need to here in the isolated laboratory. Now it's time to act. But you have to decide which is the most important action to take first.

If you know exactly what the geneticists were developing here at the laboratory, turn to 61E. If you don't, turn to 16E.



87A

At the end of the car nearest the passenger car, stands a large, ornate wardrobe for the convenience of passengers who don't want their coats getting in their way during the trip. You open it and stare at the coats hanging on the row of hangers on the pole, which is rather higher than usual. Must be so that boots and shoes can also go into the closet, you think as you close the door again.

Turn to 56A.

87B

Then you realize that you don't have the key, and there isn't one in the ignition. You're going to have to hunt for it. You just hope it's nearby, here in the garage.

Roll one die. If you get an odd number, turn to 11D. If you get an even number, turn to 34D.

87C

Turn to page 105 and glance at the picture. Do not study it in detail and do not read the text.

You watch the interior of the garage/workshop for a few minutes, afraid that someone might come in to do some work. When all remains silent, you start to open the small door next to the large rolling door. However, just as you do, you hear a noise and see the door on the far wall open. A woman carrying a bundle is entering the garage. As she stands inside, looking around, you realize that she is Aleta-of-the-Red-Hair.

She leans down to inspect the space under the large workbench, then pushes the package she's carrying into the space, packing it tightly against the wall in the shadows. Before rising, she checks something attached to the bundle, and pushes a tool box or something over it, making sure that it can't be seen.

She checks what she's done, throws her head back in what is apparently a laugh, and goes back out the door. [3X]

The garage is silent again, and you can enter if you want to. If so, turn to 24A. If not go to the next room on your diagram and turn to the inside back cover to find out what section to go to.

87D

You listen outside the door of what you think must be the library and computer room. You hear nothing, but you wouldn't if someone were just working quietly at the table. Besides, you wouldn't hear the computer through the door.

You open the door very carefully, so that the latch doesn't click. As soon as you do, you hear the slight plastic click-click of a well-made computer keyboard. Taking care to move slowly, you close the door again and go on to the next room. [1X]

Return to 93D.

87E

Trying to stay out of sight, you peer in the door. You see the red Ferrari facing the big rolling door, ready to go. Karl

Pachezny and Aleta Marcus are moving around the car, checking that their bags are all in place. The man seems to be busily checking things quite methodically, and Aleta is urging him to get a move on.

Finally, annoyed by her impatience, Pachezny turns to her and demands, "Is there some good reason why you are in such a hurry? The train will probably be late anyway!"

"No, no reason!" she quickly asserts. She steps to his side and gives him a swift kiss. "No, darling, no reason, except I am very eager to get to the train, so we can be together for the trip to Los Angeles."

Appeased, the scientist looks happy and just says, "Well, I'll go get the stuff from the refrigerator, so we can be on our way."

If you think you know which refrigerator the "stuff" is in, hurry off to get there ahead of the scientist; turn to 30D. If you have no idea, stay where you are until the Ferrari takes off. Then turn to 154A.

87F

You stand in midkitchen and take out your sketch pad, knowing how that helps you concentrate on what you're doing.

It's clearly a kitchen that has none of the coziness and personal care that a home kitchen receives, but it isn't quite as cold and unfriendly as an industrial kitchen. From the number of dirty dishes sitting in the sink, it seems that probably only one person is responsible for dishwashing. That and the fact that there are only a few chairs around the fairly narrow table tell you that not very many people work here at this mountaintop retreat. . . . Unless, of course, everyone eats in shifts. The implication of that is not a welcome thought.

You open some cupboard doors at random, seeing only dishes and glassware, plus the odd box of sugar cubes and packets of coffee creamer that seem to inhabit kitchen cupboards everywhere in the world.

Your chuckle breaks off at a sound behind you. Then you feel a gun in your back, and you know that you should have tried to leave. Your hands are cuffed behind your back, and a voice says, "Take him to the boss." [2X]

Turn to 81A.

88A

Foot to the floor, you aim right for the back of Aleta's car. She maneuvers just as you anticipate, and you're able to smash right into the beautifully sculpted tail end of the Ferrari. In your headlights you see the startled Aleta frantically trying to control her car.

Roll two dice to see if she succeeds. Because the truck is so much heavier than the Ferrari, first deduct 15 points from Aleta's Driving skill of 45. If you get more than her modified skill of 30, turn to 36B. If you get 30 or less, turn to 142H.

88B

You listen at the lounge door, then open it, ready to step in. But suddenly, you hear noises that you know don't come from the TV. A man is clearing his throat and another is whistling. Quietly backpedaling, you close the door and move on to the next room. [1X]

Turn to 93D.

88C

The moment you leave the road, the truck dips to an angle of almost forty-five degrees off the horizontal, and the ground is filled with ruts and rocks and branches. All you can do is go down and do the best you can.

Within seconds, you realize that you're going to have to make a choice: reduce your speed and be safe on the rough ground (32H) or keep going as fast as you can and hope your driving skill is enough to keep you zigzagging between the dangerous trees and rocks (107F).

88D

The small room is occupied almost entirely by the computer and racks of tapes. But you explore it all, finding virtually nothing. No telltale cigarette butts—they're a thing of the past for investigators. No cryptic pencil marks made by a doodler who must be left-handed. No scuff marks made by one special kind of exotic rubber.

As you're about to forget the room itself, you see the only thing vaguely out of place. There is a crumpled sheet of paper in the wire wastebasket next to the keyboard. You fish it out and study it.

Turn to the pocket at the back of the book and take out the paper labeled "Anomalies Report."

As you read the paper, you smile. You've always loved Anomalies Reports. You can't help thinking that one man's anomaly is another man's routine. But Edward Matheson, grand high muckamuck back in New York, is a firm believer in them, having once predicted a major Web operation based on some rumors recorded in the Anomalies Reports.

Roll the two dice. If you get more than your Intelligence score, turn to 28E. If you get your score or less, turn to 92E.

88E

Leaving Pachezny sobbing on the floor of the laboratory, you leave the building and go down the hill toward your car. You've got to get to Moorland and call headquarters to send a Titan Team to come in and completely study and clean up this place.

If you found some dynamite, turn to 148B. If not, turn to 83B.

88F

You think of the other people that must be in the building. Sure, some of them are Web employees, and you must admit, you're not going to try too hard to rescue them, but some of the people are innocent, unwitting assistants, who don't know who's really behind the genetics project. They don't deserve to be blown up.

Well, no one does, you grudgingly admit. Not even the Web people.

Recalling that you've seen several fire alarms mounted on the walls of the hallways, you make for the door. It doesn't seem fair that when you're trying to save lives, you should also be taking a chance on getting shot by a guard, but sometimes life isn't fair.

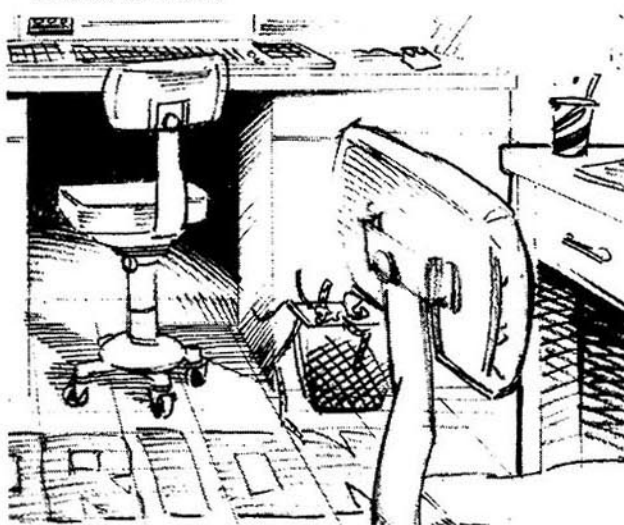
You step out into the corridor, looking hurriedly for a fire alarm. To see if a guard sees you, roll the two dice. If the guards don't know you are in the building, one accidentally runs into you if you roll any double number. If the guards are aware that there's an intruder in the building, one sees you if you roll either a double or any number with the tens digit being a 0.

If a guard sees you, turn to 84F. If not, turn to 104D.

88G

As you're about to turn away from the library table, you catch a glimpse of some shadows on the notepad. When you look closer, you see that they are indentations, made by writing on the sheet above. Remembering the various mysteries you've read, you pick up the notepad and lightly rub the side of a pencil across the indentations. Gradually some words become visible: "At L.A., courier: plaid shirt, work clothes." [2X]

Return to 110A.



89A

You stand by the door, listening. From within comes a noisy chattering of animals, squeals and grunts and hoots. It must be where the laboratory animals are kept; you wonder what the scientists are doing with them. You also wonder why they're being so noisy now; do they do that all the time?

You listen a bit longer, but you're not sure if you hear a human's voice inside, too. [1X]

If you want to take a chance and go in, turn to 31G. If not, return to the corridor and go to 93D.

89B

You time the oven for an additional sixty seconds after the agar starts to boil. Then you remove the hot flasks and let them cool for a few minutes. Finally, you return them to the cooler, chuckling at the idea of Aleta Marcus delivering to her Web contacts in Los Angeles flasks of dead, useless bacteria.

Turn to 29C.

89C

Inside the board of a chess game, you find a small pad of stationery. Someone has written a letter on the top sheet and forgotten it.

Turn to the pocket at the back of the book. Remove the item with the white seal and read it. [2X]

Return to 148A.

89D

"Where are the other guards?" the newcomer says. "Aleta says there are supposed to be two of us on duty at all times."

You mumble something about "bathroom," and continue on through the door. As it swings shut, you hear a shout behind you, but it isn't a desperate shout. However, you've got to hurry and get out of sight. [1X]

You find yourself in a narrow corridor, facing one door (57G). There's another door just to your right (132C), and a cement-block staircase going down on your left (76D).

89E

Like some sort of juggernaut, you march up the stairs and through the corridor, your whole being concentrated on one thing—stopping the Web-spawned evil that is Aleta Marcus.

Remembering that the double doors at the back of the guarded entrance lobby are behind the desk where the guards sit, you go to those doors and yank them open. You surprise a lone guard seated at the desk.

Hooking your right arm over his head, you grab his gun with your other hand. One blow knocks him out—and maybe kills him; you don't much care at this point.

You're just about to search for Aleta, when the woman walks into the lobby, saying, "Pete, after Karl

and I—" Sight of you stops her cold. As you fire, she turns and disappears back through the door. You run after her, but you've taken only a few steps down the corridor before she reappears, this time with her own automatic in her hand.

You're now in combat with a Web agent with a Pistol skill of 54. You know as you fight that this time there will be no compromises. One of you will die.

If you win, turn to 14D. If you lose by taking full damage in your head, chest, or abdomen, turn to 127F.

89F

With a harsh squeal, your car makes the turn on two wheels, and you find yourself following the Trans Am into a residential neighborhood. As you leave the turn, you realize that if you hadn't been such a good driver, you would probably have failed to make the complete turn and would have found yourself on a ramp going down to an expressway, with no way to get off. Berner would have lost you.

As it is, you think he thinks he has lost you. You stay way back, and he appears not to be pulling any more tricks. In a few minutes, he turns into a small shopping center. You drive on past and go into another entrance and park just in time to see him enter Leroy's Game and Hobby Shop.

Because Berner has met you, you can't just walk in behind him, at least not looking the same. You can't do much about your black beard; it's trimmed too neatly to even mess up much. But you can comb your hair so that it comes down over your forehead. And from your pocket you take a pair of black-framed glasses with plain lenses. The two changes revise your appearance as much as you easily can. At least you hope so.

Turn to 32A.



90A

Whatever else might be going on in this mountaintop hideaway, this room is dedicated to science. It is all tiled, sparkling clean, looks thoroughly organized, and has had no expense spared. [1X]

You may search the:	by turning to:
air system	23E
lab tables	151C
refrigerator	44A
cupboards	136G
laundry	75E

If guards are aware that you are in the building, you must roll a luck roll before exploring any item listed above. If you get double numbers on the dice, turn to 63B. Otherwise, continue exploring.

When you are ready to go on to the next room, go out into the corridor and turn to 93D.

If you think you have learned enough to take action, turn to 86F.

90B

Turn to page 49 and glance at the picture. Do not study it in detail and do not read the text.

You peer into the small office, your eye caught once again by the wonderful red-leather couch. If this place belongs to Web, they certainly are treating their people well, these days.

The only sign of life is in a dimly lit fish tank on a shelf along one wall. The image of it is so serene that you're tempted to climb in, but then you realize that there's only one door; you could get trapped there. If you're going to climb into a window, it can't be this one. [1X]

Move on to the next window and return to the chart on the inside back cover.

90C

As you sit in your car, you become more and more convinced that you must act on the little bit of information you heard through the door of the hobby shop back room. 'Lab at Moorland.' You've learned enough to clear Brittany Farrell, and Burkhart is going to need her very badly, what with the death of Ed Charnoff, and the defection—or whatever—of Bob Berner. That leaves you free to try to find out *why* this has all happened.

Turn to 41F.

90D

You climb in the cabin of the little truck and squeeze down between the seat and the pedals. It's an uncomfortable position for a big man like you, but it's only a few minutes before you hear the door open and two guards come in to check out the garage.

They're pretty casual about it, because one man says to the other, "He's got to be long gone." They glance inside the back of the truck, but ignore the

front. Then one says, "Can't wait for snow. That's my snowmobile over there. Gotta start getting it cleaned up." Then, "Come on. Let's go. He's not here."

You stay motionless for a few minutes, relieved that you hadn't gotten behind the snowmobile. [3X]

If it is between nine and ten p.m., turn to 17H. If not, turn to 12D.

90E

You step into the garage before the roar of the Ferrari even stops resounding between the cement-block walls. There appear to be only two vehicles with which you would stand a chance of preventing Aleta from getting away with the cultures—the small Toyota truck and the Kawasaki motorcycle.

You have just a split second to decide how you're most likely to catch up and deal with Aleta Marcus. If you use the Toyota truck, maybe you can be aggressive and ram the lady's delicate Ferrari. But if you take the motorcycle, you maybe can use it for shortcuts that will let you get in front of her.

If you select the Toyota truck, turn to 138C. If you choose the Kawasaki motorcycle, turn to 64B.

90F

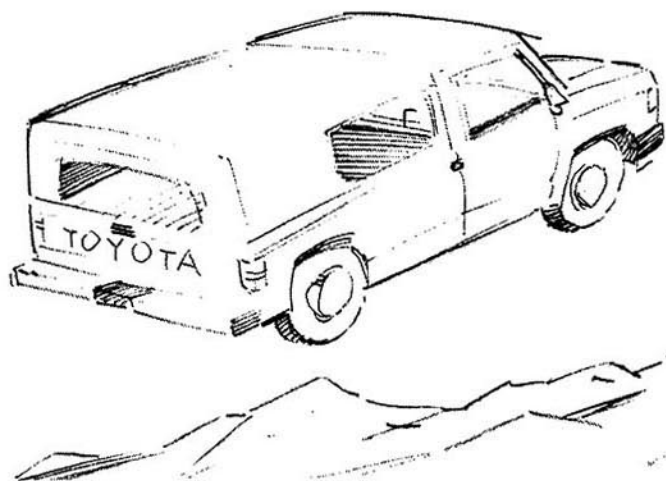
You marvel at the entertainment area of Berner's apartment. It features a great big TV screen, which doesn't surprise you, but what does is the fact that the very comfortable chairs in front of it have stereo earphones built into the headrests, so that all you need do is lean back, relax, and listen to music as if you were in the very best concert hall. You feel a momentary surge of jealousy, then move on.

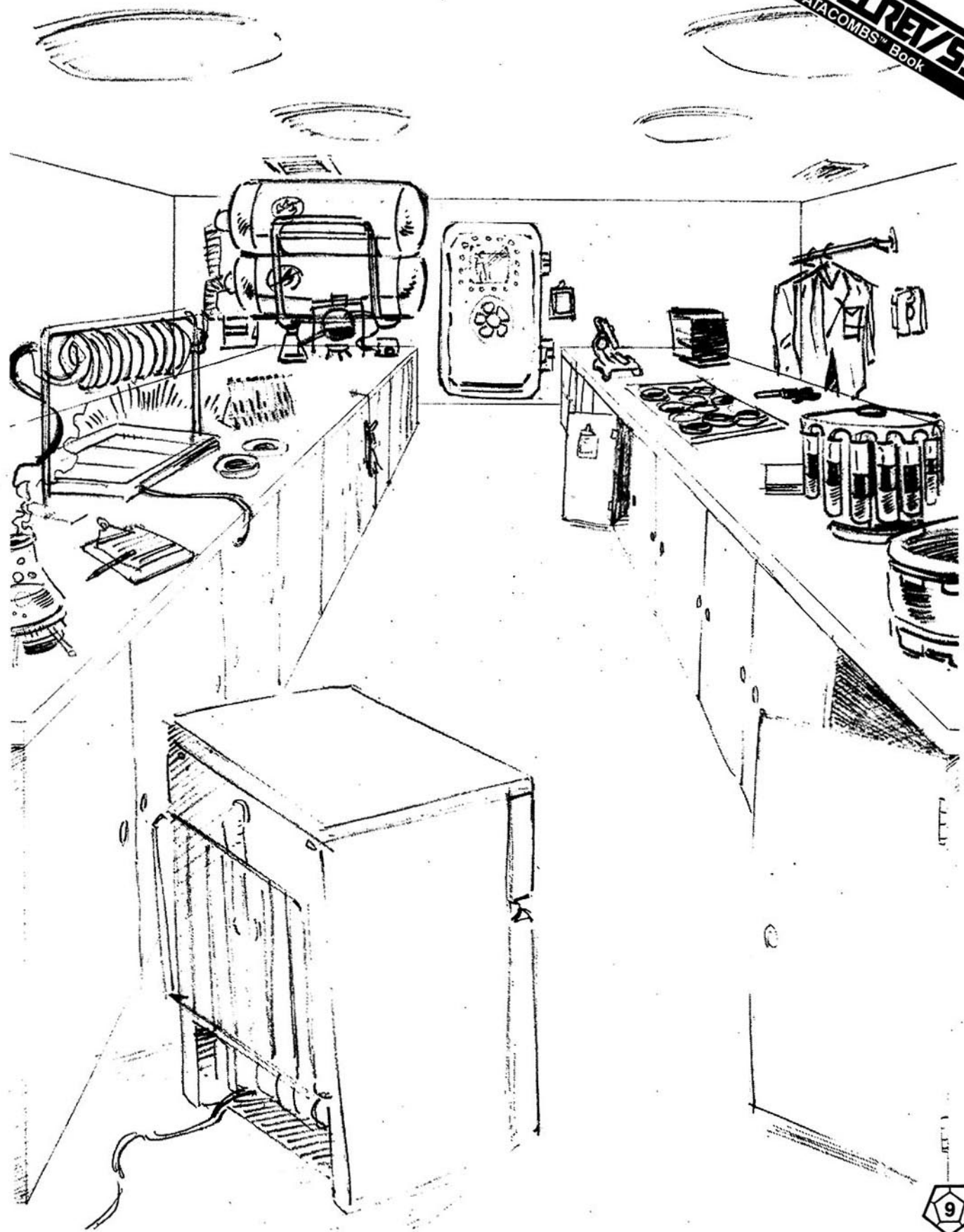
Return to 20A.

90G

Although you try to keep your wits about you and lay the bike into the skid so that it isn't hurt, you know the instant you fly off it that nothing is going to go right. And it doesn't.

Turn to 30C.





92A

Within minutes, you become convinced that Bob Berner never cooks meals in this apartment. He might be able to put together an emergency shrimp cocktail with the ingredients in his refrigerator but that would be all. Lots of things to drink, though.

Otherwise, nothing of interest. Return to 20A.

92B

Something about your clothing, or your shoes, or the moonlight, or Aleta's sixth sense tells her that something is happening behind her, and before you can get more than a few feet, she turns around abruptly and fires.

Conduct combat, with Aleta firing first. Web takes care of its own, so Aleta normally has a Pistol skill of 54, but she is firing into darkness, not sure where you are, so roll against a skill of 41 for her.

If you win, turn to 102B. If you die by taking full damage to your head, chest, or abdomen, turn to 116G.

92C

An immediate chill touches your heart. The Web people don't take any chances. The work must be finished here, and they don't want anyone to get away and talk about what was done.

The dynamite has been fixed to be set off by a radio signal, but that could be at any time or from any place. [1X]

If you want to take time to try to dismantle the dynamite, turn to 26F. If you think there's probably more explosive set elsewhere and it's better to try to get people out of the building, turn to 88F.

92D

Reluctant to leave things unfinished, you place the briefcase back where you found it. Then you return to the bedroom of the private railway car.

Aleta murmurs deliciously as you return to the bed, ready to spend the hours until Los Angeles in the pleasantest way possible.

Turn to 31D.

92E

You're about to thrust the paper in your pocket when you wonder if it is from before the intruder got into the computer room or afterward.

"Perry," you call to the computer genius who's been sitting out in the operators' room waiting for questions, "would you please print out the Anomalies Report from last week as it now stands in the computer files?"

Perry Smith agrees, and in just seconds you have another copy of the Anomalies Report in your hand.

Comparing the two copies side by side, you see that the newest copy is missing the Moorland, Colorado, item. AR#20735 now reads as if it came from Carney, Australia, and the word "zombies" has been changed to "hippies" and "trances" to "drugs." Clever, you

think; it now reads as if it has to do with a totally different subject.

You don't comprehend why only those items should have been changed, but then you don't understand how the computer works to relate items. It seems to have ways of thinking that you don't. But then, that's why you're not a computer operator. Return to 8.

92F

At first, the small apartment is still. Then you realize that you're hearing water running from the bathroom by the bedroom. Before you can turn around and leave, the bathroom door opens. Mark DeWitt emerges with no clothes on. He sees you, so you can't dash out.

Deciding to make the best of things, you just hold up your hand and say, "Hi, Mark." But the man who wants to be a top agent grabs a gun from a nearby dresser—a gun he shouldn't even have—and starts firing.

You draw your gun and return fire, but more to try to get his attention than to kill him, so you deliberately miss. However, he's shooting in earnest.

Conduct combat, with Mark DeWitt shooting first. He has been practicing, so he has a Pistol skill of 42. If, after three rounds of combat, you are both still alive and shooting, turn to 80F. If you have won, turn to 60B. If you have lost by taking full damage to the head, chest, or abdomen, turn to 142D.

92G

You hang around, out of sight, until the car is long gone, and things have been quiet for a while. Returning to exploring, you are surprised at the ease with which you move around. The guards appear to be guarding nothing. It's as if their job ended with the departure of the Ferrari.

Just as you decide that you might as well leave the building and return to your car, you hear a deep roar from under the building. The floor trembles slightly, and you wonder if Colorado is having an earthquake.

Very unlikely, you think, just as another explosion occurs right beside you, and the building comes tumbling down on top of you. The mountaintop laboratory was dynamited by Aleta Marcus. Now no one will know what was going on here . . . or what became of the late Sebastian Cord.

93A

In the split second while you realize what is happening, you remember that you found the table bolted to the floor. Now it might *save your life!*

Roll the two dice. If you get your Dexterity score or less, turn to 52D. If you get more, turn to 37F.

93B

You were told what time it was when you arrived on the mountaintop. Until you leave the mountain, most decisions you make will take up time (indicated at the end of sections by 1X, 2X, 3X, and so on). When you make a choice or a die roll and turn to a new section, you may not turn back; you are committed to the action given and the time it takes.

To keep track of time, tear the "Mountaintop Time Card" from the pocket in the back cover and write on the first line what time you arrived. As you take actions—investigate, hide, whatever—cross off time boxes on the card, one for each X indicated. When 4 boxes are filled, one half-hour will have passed, so write the next half-hour on the blank provided.

During play, various circumstances will occur depending on what time it is, because life goes on even in a secluded mountaintop lab, whether you're there or not.

Turn to 54F.

93C

By the time you grab a quick cup of coffee in the Orion canteen, it's already two o'clock. You've got to start somewhere, so who looks like the best bet for investigating first? Foster Needham, of course, went on duty when you cleared out of the operators' room. If you want to investigate Needham first, while he's at work, turn to 58E. However, if you want to check into someone else first, see the list below. Then, when you are ready to go to Needham's, turn to 152E.

Mark DeWitt, who Britt says wants to be a big-time agent like you, will be on duty starting at three o'clock. But he might be out of his apartment now, so if you want to check his place, turn to 132D.

Then, of course, as much as you would like to, you can't ignore the possibility that Brittany is lying. You must check into her personal life; turn to 118A.

Bob Berner, who just started full-time work as a result of Ed Charnoff's death, will be substituting on the night shift for Brittany. To check his place, turn to 53F.

93D

You're going to have to duck quickly through the hallway to the next room or the stairs to the basement to avoid being seen in this busy place. Here is where you're most vulnerable.

Because you'll always listen carefully and move as quickly as you can, your skill is not involved in the outcome. The only thing that controls whether or not you are seen by a guard is pure, simple, bad luck,

which is indicated by a roll of double numbers on the two dice.

You are more apt to be unlucky if the guards are actively looking for you. If the guards know you are in the building, roll the two dice, and any double number (two 2s, two 7s, etc.) or any single digit number (the tens digit—left-hand page—is a 0) will mean a guard has seen you. However, if the guards don't know you are in the building, it will be pure chance if one sees you. For that to happen you must roll doubles of any number.

If a guard sees you and you must fight, turn to 113H. However, if you successfully make it to the next room without being seen, turn to the bottom, shaded number shown for that room on the chart on the inside back cover. However, if you decide to go take the stairs to the basement, turn to 25E.

93E

The caged animals fall strangely silent as the smell of the guard's blood permeates the room. At last, the only sound is the guard's final grunt of pain as he falls to the floor.

First taking a moment to catch your breath, you pull the guard away from the door and leave him heaped by the refrigerator.

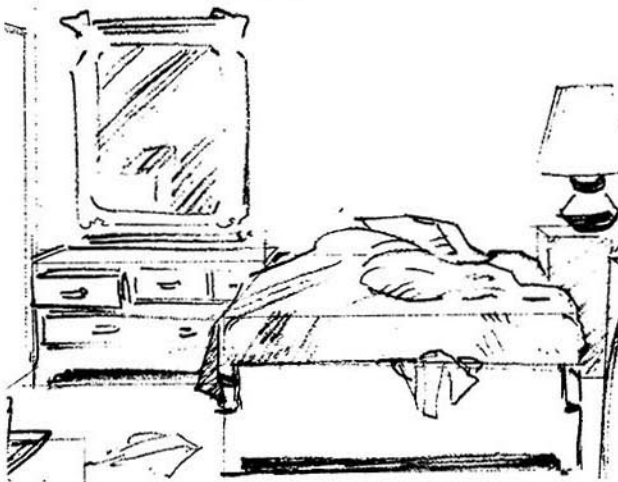
He was alone when he found you. But the other guards may miss him and start hunting for him. So you have only a few minutes to study this room. [3X]

Turn to 76A.

93F

The first thing that you discover in the woman's dresser is that she likes really nice things—the high-quality *Christian Dior* lingerie says that—and that she was prepared to live here on the mountaintop a long time. There are some letters tucked away in a corner, all addressed to Aleta Marcus at a post office box in Moorland, the town at the bottom of the mountain. [2X]

If you think you should read the letters, turn to 146D. If you decide it will take too much time, turn to the man's belongings (66B).



94A

This time, you accelerate more smoothly, taking it at a slower rate, and the truck responds as a good pickup should, handling the turns with ease, until in just a few minutes, you realize by the glow reflected from the trees ahead that you are just behind Aleta's Ferrari.

Turn to 12C.

94B

As you start to look around the main thing that catches your attention is the elegant, little red Ferrari.

If it is between ten-thirty and eleven-thirty, turn to 59B. If it is before ten-thirty, turn to 51G. If it is after eleven-thirty, turn to 136F.

94C

After listening a moment and hearing only a little banging that could be a restless animal in its cage, you begin to open the door to the room where the laboratory animals are kept. Just as you do so, you hear a man's voice saying, "Okay, fella, got your food right here. Now, let's see how you are tonight." A metallic clang tells you that a cage is being opened.

You quickly close the door, going back out into the corridor. Move on to the next room in your map. [1X]

Turn to 93D.

94D

You're certain that you saw some mention in the Mountain-Midlands Express brochure of a refrigerator being located in the baggage car . . . toward the back end of the car, near the passenger car. It was meant for medicines or drinks or things like that.

You look at the ornate wardrobe. That's where it was meant to be, you're certain.

You open the door and stare at the coats that are hanging in it. Realizing that the coats are hanging considerably higher than they would be in a normal closet, you push them aside and find, hidden beneath, a small refrigerator.

Inside is a bottle of champagne, a cola or two, and a red picnic cooler sitting on the bottom shelf.

You remove the cooler and open it, expecting, truth to tell, to see the trainman's sandwiches. But there, nestled into some carefully carved plastic foam, you see two Erlenmeyer flasks with carefully sealed stoppers in their tops.

These must be Aleta Marcus's bugs.

If you want to destroy the bugs now, while you have the chance, turn to 112C. If you want to leave them there for Aleta to try to deliver in Los Angeles, turn to 56A.

94E

The small utility room is mostly occupied by a rather filthy sink, with some mops leaning against it. There's nothing of interest and no place for you to even think of squeezing in.

Hearing steps in the corridor above you, you realize that you've got to hide somewhere, and quickly. [1X]

If you want to try the door with the key, turn to 18A. If the closed doors look as if they might conceal a good hiding place, turn to 46C. If the row of bedrooms looks safest, turn to 72C.

94F

Reaching around the door, you quickly put the key back on the hook, then close the door and duck behind the easy chair.

Holding your breath, you squat, motionless, prepared to leap up if the guard should see you. You hear the door being thrust open. The guard must make a cursory look, then the door closes again.

You remain where you are for five minutes, until all sound of searching in the basement has ended and the footsteps have receded upstairs.

Taking a quick look around, you discover absolutely nothing of interest, except, of course, the curious handcuffs. [2X]

You go back out into the hallway, where you can check out the closed doors (142F) or the row of bedrooms (51E). However, it is now safe to go back upstairs. If that is your choice, turn first to 93D. You are then free to explore the rooms on the main floor; go to the next one on your map and follow the shaded numbers on the chart on the inside back cover.

94G

You phone Aaron Burkhart and he sends an Orion physician over to the hotel apartment to check on you and Mark. You don't feel you're wounded badly, but the doctor turns officious and insists on taking you to a small, private hospital for treatment.

Several hours later, you are forced to admit that coming to the hospital was a good thing; you're no professional at first aid. But now it's time to get on your way again. (Deduct half the damage points you've taken at each location because of the treatment.)

You sign yourself out and return to Mark DeWitt's apartment, this time with his blessing. Which, of course, makes you wonder if you should bother. If DeWitt's so eager to have you search his place, there can't be much worth hiding. However, Sebastian Cord is nothing if not thorough.

Turn to 96A.

95A

As you stand up, you smile in satisfaction, though the smile is tinged with sadness. Even that smile fades, though, as you realize that though you've kept the notes out of Web's hands, you don't know what will happen when the train reaches Los Angeles. Presumably Aleta had the samples hidden somewhere on the train.

You shrug, dismissing something you cannot change, and turn toward the tracks, hoping to find a road somewhere ahead.

Turn to the pocket at the back of the book. Remove the item with the red seal and read it.

95B

The wires must not have been set very tightly, because they come loose with your jerk on them, and the danger of the dynamite exploding is past.

As you breathe a sigh of relief, you remember that there could still be danger from other caches of dynamite. [2X]

Turn to 88F.

95C

You can't seem to get the leverage either to get your second foot up on the window frame or to pull the first one back. Your body is just too bulky to get through such a space. You decide to just let go and fall forward—out the window, you hope—when the door from the entry room opens and you are well and truly caught, weaponless and almost with your pants down.

Weapons at the ready, the guards help you down from the sink and then cuff your hands behind your back. "Take him to the boss," says a voice. [1X]

Turn to 81A.

95D

It's a peculiar setup. The door is almost like a spaceship door, with the anteroom being an airlock chamber. That thought makes you notice that the door to the corridor also has a rubber gasket on it, unlike any other door you've seen in this place. The door into the lab has an even heavier rubber gasket around it, and clearly, when the wheel is turned, the door is sealed tight. You wonder what the door is meant to keep out . . . or in.

You know that there must be some important answers beyond the door. You push on it, and nothing happens. You turn the wheel, and again nothing happens. Then, thinking seriously about airlocks, you realize that the outer door must be sealed before the inner door can open. Turning the leverlike handle on the outer door downward, you feel it seal tightly and hear a slight whirring sound. The inner door will now open. [3X]

Turn to 90A.

95E

Hoping it isn't locked, you press the latch on the small white cosmetic case. It opens, and you quickly lift the lid

just enough for your hand to get into it. Feeling around blindly, you touch nothing that feels like it might have come from a genetics laboratory—no test tubes, no flasks.

You're just deciding that you need to lift the lid and look inside when you hear a shriek in the aisle. "That man's stealing something from my bag!"

It's Aleta Marcus, and she's seen you!

As if you had every right to be doing what you're doing, and astonished that someone should question you, you take time to close the lock on the bag and then stand up as the conductor rushes forward. "The bag fell to the floor. I don't think anything is broken, though. Perhaps the lady should check." You smile at the Web agent and hold the bag out to her, as if it were the most natural thing in the world to do so.

For them to believe you, you have to be at your most earnest and acceptable. Take the average of your Intelligence and Willpower scores and add 10 points for each of your Social Grace advantage points. Then roll the two dice against your final figure. If you roll more than the total, turn to 134F. If you roll the total or less, turn to 74A.

95F

Moving gradually, so it appears that you are studying the merchandise, you head toward the door. You walk out, giving a small wave to Leroy. As you go toward your car, you look back and see Berner standing in the door watching you, an enigmatic expression on his face.

Turn to 22C.

95G

You look again at the names on the board. "Kraboul" rings a bell. It takes a minute for you to remember that it was the name of the place in South Africa mentioned in the Anomalies Report you found in the computer room back at headquarters. The people of Kraboul had turned very strange, like "zombies," it said, and had only done what they were told to do.

Since the Web man who broke into the computer had made a change in that report, Kraboul must have something to do with this operation. Maybe they were testing one of their genetic inventions on the people of Kraboul.

You shudder at the callousness of such an idea. [2X]
Turn to 139B.

96A

Mark DeWitt's apartment consists of two narrow rooms, plus a small bathroom. The living room, which has a tiny open kitchen at one end, has all the charm of a railway station waiting room.

The bedroom is decorated in the unimaginative, simple style of the living room but has been augmented by DeWitt's personal touches of several bookcases containing primarily spy novels.

You may investigate the: by turning to:

living room	19D
bedroom	57B
bookshelves	114B

When you're done in this apartment, turn to 37E.

96B

The jerking motion sets the blasting cap off, and it, of course, sets off the whole bundle of dynamite. The explosion doesn't do a great deal of damage to the building, but no one can figure out who the strange man was who was blown to bits by the blast.

96C

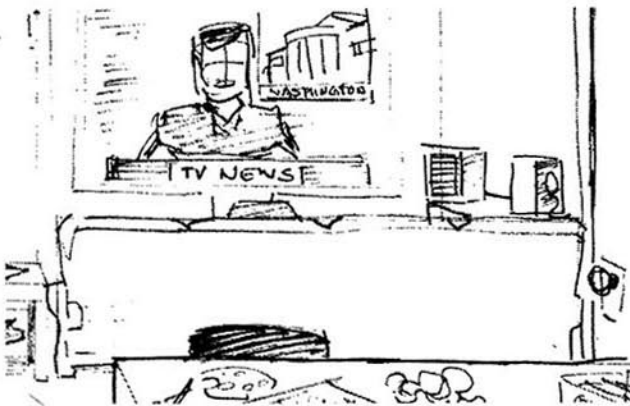
You run down the corridor, pulled by Sarah's small, smooth hand. She opens a door and pulls you in after her, locking the door behind her. You find yourself in a small anteroom, with the laboratory itself visible through a little window in the thick, rubber-edged inner door.

If it is between ten and eleven in the evening, turn to 19F. If it is any other time, turn to 29B.

96D

You listen carefully at the door, but hear nothing. However, when you open it and slip in, you discover that someone certainly has been here. A red Ferrari, which you covet with all your heart, stands in the middle of the floor, pointed toward the big garage exit. The car's doors and trunk lid stand open and there are suitcases on the floor nearby.

Knowing that if you're wrong, you could ruin your mission, you think about who is leaving and why. If you think you know, turn to 37A. If not, turn to 46F.

**96E**

You listen carefully at the door you think leads to the bedroom. Hearing nothing, you quickly open the door and slip inside.

It is indeed a bedroom, quite a luxurious one—satin comforters, well-equipped bar on the table, shaving sink, as well as a separate bathroom. But it's also a mess, with empty drawers flung open, hangers lying on the floor, and all the other signs that someone has packed hurriedly and left. [1X]

About the only thing that seems undisturbed is the bookshelf. To check it, turn to 112F. However, if you want to go to the garage and see if, indeed, someone is about to leave, turn to 18C.

96F

Closing the door of the refrigerator, you study the room.

Return to 90A.

96G

Before his fear can make his fingers release the flasks, you leap toward Pachezny and grab the two glass containers. Before you've stopped yourself from running into the wall, the scientist has dropped his face in his hands and is crying, "Oh, what have I done! What have I done!"

You leave the forlorn man alone as you and Sarah gather all the notes and records on the experiments from the laboratory. Handful by handful, you drop them into the fire you set in one of the lab sinks. When you start to throw the flasks in, too, Sarah says, "Wait, Sebastian, that's too dangerous. Here, put them in the autoclave. The heat will destroy the bacteria without releasing them." She thrusts them in the metal sterilizing cabinet and presses some buttons.

Turn to 56F.

96H

The only place you can find to hide is in the corner of the room between the large-screen TV and a bookshelf. No matter which door guards enter, they would not see you there just with a quick, casual glance—you hope.

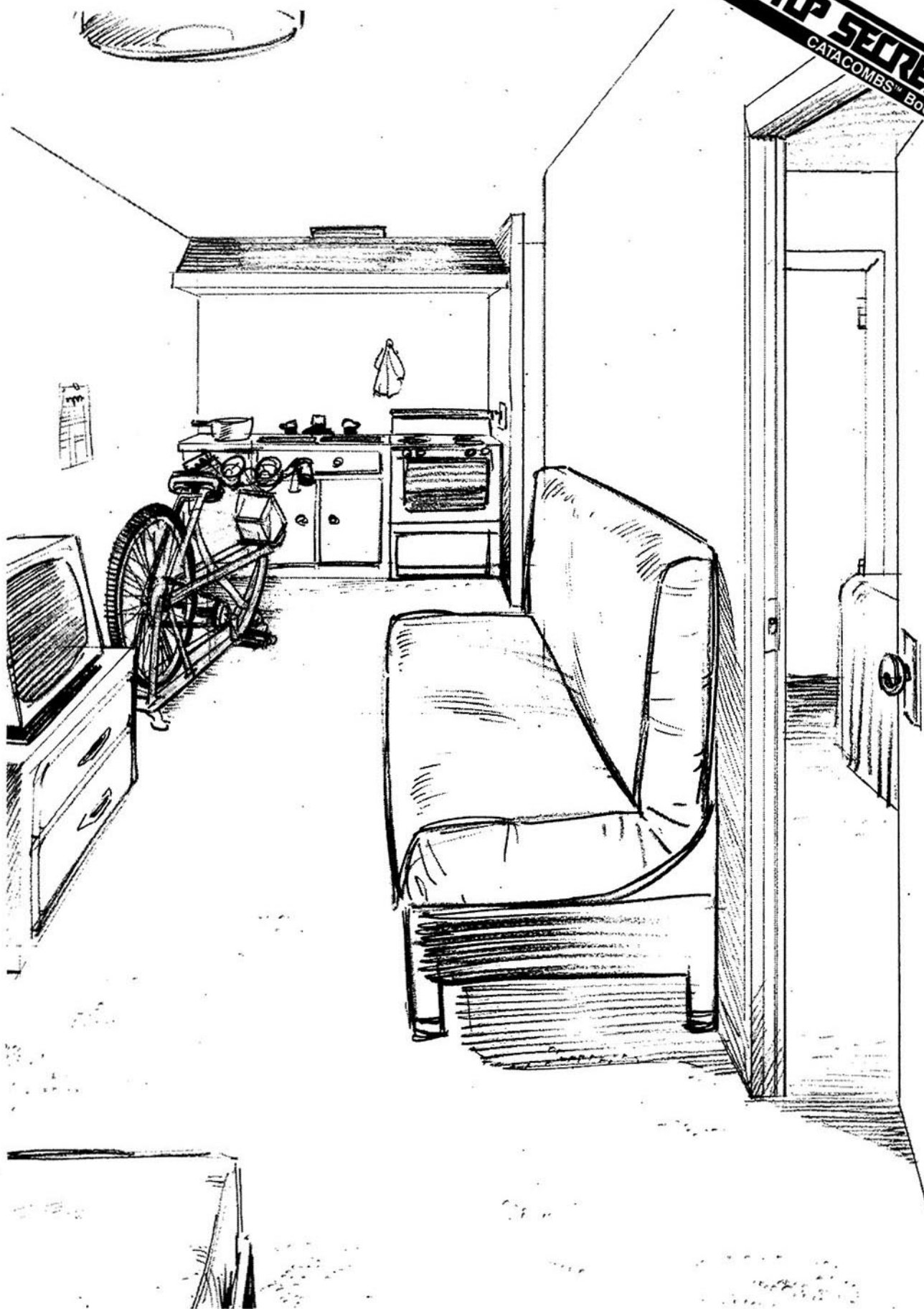
You've just tucked your bulk as neatly as you can into the corner, when a door opens.

Roll the two dice. If you roll your Dexterity score or less, turn to 38C. If you roll more, turn to 141D.

96I

Unless it's out in a hallway that you haven't seen yet, the pantry has to be behind one of the doors in this room. You check the one on the left and, sure enough, you find a walk-in pantry with enough food to feed an army. Somebody wants the people isolated up here to eat quite well, to keep them happy.

If it is after eleven o'clock, turn to 75F. If it is before eleven, turn to 115B.



98A

As you're about to turn away, you notice another flask tucked away in a corner behind the rack. You pull it out and find that it contains a bright blue ooze that has spread from the culture medium up the funnel-shaped sides.

The flask is tightly stoppered, and around the stopper is pasted a label that reads: "Do not open without the permission of Dr. John Carrier. DANGEROUS!"

You quickly replace the flask and go wash your hands. [2X]

Return to 90A.

98B

You find a personally autographed copy of Robert Ludlum's *The Matarese Circle*. DeWitt has it wrapped in plastic, so obviously he values it very highly.

If you want to roll again, return to 114B. If not, turn to 96A.

98C

You stand for a moment, listening outside the door you think leads to the bedroom. Gradually you hear sounds—the lighter voice of a woman laughing, the heavier rumble of a man's voice. [1X]

This is no place for you. You've got to hunt for another room. Turn to 93D.

98D

At the first sound of trouble, you're ready for action. But the guard manages to protect himself with the door he just entered.

Suddenly, you've got a problem. The sound of gunfire draws a second guard, so there's someone fresh to fight, as well as having to finish off the first guard.

If you want to keep on fighting, conduct combat. If you win, turn to 28F. If you lose, turn to 13A. However, if you decide that it might be wiser to give up and see what happens, turn to 52B.

98E

You are in a small, rather unfriendly room. There's a bed, a lumpy-looking easy chair, a small straight chair (which, you see, your eyes widening, has a pair of handcuffs attached to its arm). This is no friendly bedroom for someone who lives and works on this mountain. It's a prison and—you try the door—you're the prisoner.

You explore the room, your mind automatically checking off the possibilities. The door is locked. There's no window. The vents in the wall are only large enough for an agile kitten. There is no keyhole on your side of the door. Your gun is gone. And you don't have a sharpened spoon to scrape away the mortar between the cement blocks. You do have a small diamond strip-saw curled up in the inner heel of your shoe, but it's too flexible to use on the dead bolt of the door.

So, the only thing that remains is waiting until

someone comes in to see you, which they must do sooner or later . . . unless, of course, they mean to leave you here to starve to death. [4X]

If you still have your Orion card case, turn to 81F. If not, turn to 113D.

98F

You see several uniformed guards, a young man in a white coat, the older balding scientist, and, of course, the glamorously efficient leader of them all, Aleta Marcus.

They are all talking at once, wondering if there's a fire, asking where the rest of the guards are, and, finally, when nothing has happened for a few minutes, demanding that someone go inside and see if there's any sign of fire.

One voice—you think it's the young lab assistant—keeps asking if anyone has seen Sarah. No one answers.

The restless chatter continues while one guard goes into the building to look around. He comes out a few minutes later, bearing a bundle in his arms. It's the dynamite!

"Look what I found," he says in dead flat tones. "Someone has tried to bomb the building!"

For a few long seconds, there is absolute silence in the clearing before the laboratory entrance. Then the chatter starts again, even more forcefully. [3X]

If someone saw you while you were in the building, turn to 40F. If no one did (or if those who saw you are dead and tucked carefully away somewhere), turn to 132B.

98G

You step in through the outer door of the laboratory, open the inner door, and head for the refrigerator. In it you find two flasks with gray, powdery stuff inside, growing on a gelatinous substance in the bottom. It's hard to believe that such innocuous-looking stuff can be so dangerous.

Looking around, you see the big autoclave used to sterilize laboratory equipment with high heat. You thrust the flasks inside and turn it on.

"All that work!" moans a voice behind you. You drop down to the floor, seeing Aleta Marcus standing in the doorway, and Karl Pachezny standing beside her.

As you drop to the protection of the big laboratory worktable, a burst of gunfire rakes across the tabletop. To see if you are injured, roll the dice. If you roll your Dexterity score or less, turn to 70B. If you roll more, turn to 17G.

99A

You get around the table and to the end nearest the door without Aleta catching sight of your movement. You listen a moment, then, taking a chance, pop your head out for a look. The woman is still staring at where she saw you last.

You raise your gun, lean out, and pull the trigger. Taken by surprise with a bullet in her abdomen, Aleta Marcus dies, raking the ceiling of the laboratory with machine gun bullets.

If there is someone in the building you promised to "rescue," turn to 18F. If not, turn to 88E.

99B

Your car seems to take over, and there's apparently no way you can avoid the big cement barrier. You crash into it at sixty miles an hour. You're not killed, but you might as well be as far as Orion is concerned. You face many, many months of rehabilitation, and the doctors doubt if your hands will ever again deal cards.

99C

The guard, confident that he has come across some unprepared intruder, quickly finds that he is wrong. As each of your successful shots hits him, he becomes more and more careless, until, finally, one more bullet gets him in a vital spot, and down he goes.

Walking over to check on him, you hear a choked cry from the woman scientist where she is leaning against the frame of the open door. "What is going on here?" she cries.

You gently lead her back into the room, saying, "That's what I'm here to find out. But to do so and to keep you safe, I think you'd better stay in here. As soon as I find out what's going on, I'll let you out, I promise." You smile into her green eyes, which sparkle with burgeoning tears.

She nods a weary agreement.

"But first I want to hear everything you know. You sit down and I'll be right back. I don't want anyone to see the . . . uh, guard."

You hurry back into the hall. By some miracle, no one appears to have heard the shots. You drag the dead guard into the utility room and cram him under the sink, then close the door. You then return to the scientist's side.

Turn to 10A.

99D

As you back away from the soaring heat, you see a red picnic cooler in the front seat of the Ferrari begin to melt. Certain that the culture samples are inside it, you rejoice in seeing it dissolve in the fierce heat of melting plastic.

You turn the truck back toward Moorland, knowing that when you reach the bottom of the mountain you will call Orion headquarters to send in a Titan Team to come and clean up the mess here. They will investigate the whole setup and make sure that the final

bugs created here are never allowed to be let loose on an unsuspecting world.

99E

Ever since you walked into the room, you have been trying to avoid looking at the slot machines. But then you say to yourself that you haven't really done a thorough job of checking out the room until you investigate them. And thoroughness, above all, is important. Right?

There are two identical fruit machines next to each other, looking just as if they had come from Las Vegas. Glancing into the coin window, you see that both of them are full, probably about ready to pay off. They are both nickel machines. And there's no way that you, Sebastian Cord, are going to leave these things untested. Not with your record as a gambler.

You start putting in nickels and pulling the handles, first on one machine, then on the other. They pay you back enough to keep playing.

Roll one die to see how much time passes before you quit. Divide the number rolled by two, rounding up. You can't spend less than 1X of time. Be sure to cross the time off on your Time Card.

If you spend 4X or more, turn to 146B. Otherwise, return to 148A.

99F

In a paperback copy of Patricia Moyes' *Season of Snows and Sins*, you find rough notes on how to keep bacterial cultures refrigerated during transport. [1X]

If you want to check out some other books, return to 66G and roll again. If not, return to 48A.

99G

You step to the door of what you think is the laboratory, listen a moment, and, on hearing nothing, step inside. Instead of being inside the laboratory itself, you are in a small anteroom. There's a rack of clean white lab coats along one wall and a door with a large round wheel in the middle of it, with a small, thick-glassed window above it. When you look through it, you see the actual lab beyond the door.

Turn to 95D.

100A

You fiddle for a few minutes with a tiny blade that you carry in your shoe. It's not really a lock pick, but you hope it might work. And, strangely enough, something you do does work, and the lock clicks open.

The briefcase is filled with papers, some of which appear to be stuffed in, as if she gathered them in a hurry. You pull a big handful out and spread them on the table to study them.

Roll the two dice, adding the results. If you get 2-6, turn to 74G. If you get any other number, turn to 61C.

100B

Feeling certain that there's something more to be discovered about this vent, you feel around the walls with your fingers. That's how you find a low door that opens up, revealing a small room containing special air-conditioning equipment. There's an "air scrubber" that takes all the air drawn from the laboratory, heats it to kill anything that might be in it, then conditions it, adding oxygen, and recycles it back to the outlet vents.

All of this tells you that the work going on in this laboratory involves something—germs, viruses, or other airborne bugs—that could be dangerous to the inhabitants of the building if they were let loose through the airlock anteroom.

Your mind floods with images of chemical warfare, biological killing mechanisms, and science fiction. You can't imagine what's going on here, but you're certain that Web has some horrible plans for the stuff.

You feel a new sense of urgency as you return to searching the whole room. [3X]

Return to 90A.

100C

Burkhart immediately gets the bottle of small white pills to an analyst, who says the procedure will take some time. You'll just have to be patient.

If you have found a brochure you want to look into, turn to 141A. Otherwise, if you've been to all the operators' homes, there's nothing more you can do tonight. You decide it's time to rest, turn to 69C. If you haven't, return to 93C.

100D

As you stare at your sketch, another image enters your mind, an image of Brittany standing at the table in her hotel room/prison putting sugar substitute in her cup of coffee.

The little white bottle she is using in your memory is square, as is the bottle you've just sketched. But the container in the photograph Burkhart gave you is round!

You don't know what that means, but the niggles in your mind has stopped, so you have a feeling it must be important.

Turn to 141E.

100E

You recall seeing a brochure for the Mountain-Midlands Express in DeWitt's drawer at headquarters. This envelope from Berner must be where it came from.

If you want to roll again, return to 114B. If not, turn to 96A.

100F

The bottom drawer immediately gives you a sense of sadness. You don't know whether it really has a "my-owner-is-never-coming-back" look or if it's just because you know he isn't coming back. You find yourself automatically wondering about the strange aspects of Ed Charnoff's death, then remind yourself that it is now someone else's business to investigate, not yours. You have to clear Brittany.

Actually, when you come to think of it, you're surprised that Ed's stuff is still here; his shifts were taken over immediately by the primary substitute, Bob Berner.

Charnoff's drawer contains all the evidence of a steady, married man—kids' drawings, grocery lists, an origami bird (badly misshapen), a clean (ironed!) handkerchief, sunglasses, and a note from the Department of Motor Vehicles reminding him that his car registration needs to be renewed.

You pile all the stuff into a box to check later (maybe), leaving the drawer empty for Bob Berner to use when he comes on duty next. As you realize what you're doing, you look around quickly to be sure no one saw you doing that; they might think you were being helpful . . . or something.

Return to 106D to inspect another drawer, or 64A to look at something else.

100G

The pressure of the explosion in the enclosed area sends shock waves through your body that make your breastbone and eardrums throb with pain. But as soon as you hear a heavy metal clank, you look up and see the ceiling above you falling open and light pouring down into the pit where you now will not die.

You start to shudder uncontrollably as the tension and horror you had not acknowledged are released. But you overcome the shuddering enough to leap upward and grab hold of the edge of the floor section. Your fingers catch the top, and you pull yourself up into the classroom. [6X]

Turn to 89E.

101A

Glancing into the lounge, you see that one man is there alone, a young one with longish hair and wearing a white lab coat. As you watch, you realize that he isn't paying any attention to the TV or anything else. Instead, he seems to be arguing with himself. He holds himself tensely and paces, then sits abruptly for a few minutes, then paces some more. [2X]

If you think that this man is one you dare talk to about what is going on here, turn to 28B. If you decide that such a move is probably unwise, go to the next room in your diagram and turn to the chart to see where to go.

101B

The guards probably wouldn't hear anything short of an air raid siren through those heavy glass doors, but maybe you can get them to come out and investigate something else.

Maybe a blast would bring them out. You could use your special exploding Orion card case to blow up a rock or something; that would get their attention. If that's what you want to do, turn to 126C. However, you may need your card case later; perhaps you shouldn't waste it just to get in the place. If that's your decision, turn to 140E.

101C

Making a quick check to be sure that you have all your belongings, you open the door and step onto the platform of the baggage car. Waiting for one of the periodic times when the train slows down for a curve, you toss the briefcase off and then jump off yourself.

You roll through the grass by the side of the tracks, just letting the energy of the jump expend itself in the roll, then you stand up, uninjured.

If you managed to destroy the bacteria cultures before getting off the train, turn to 108A. If not, turn to 71A.

101D

You take a last look around the place but see nothing more to keep you. You're beginning to get antsy about the things that you have found. They need looking into, so you rush back to headquarters.

If you want to check into a brochure you found, turn to 141A. If you need to get a chemist to analyze something, turn to 100C.

101E

You only have to wave the cloth a few seconds before you see one of the guards look up, shake the other's arm, and point out into the darkness where you're hidden. You slowly pull the long stick back, so that the "ghost" seems to disappear. Then you let it reappear a few feet farther away.

Again the guards look up, and, just when your arm begins to object to holding out the long stick, one guard pushes the other forcibly toward the door. The

other grabs the first one's arm, and as they open the door, you hear the pushed one say, "... 've got to come, too!" There's a slight sound of panic in his voice.

You let the "ghost" be seen a few yards farther on, as the men come out the door, their pistols drawn. Then you withdraw the "ghost," shrink back into the woods, and begin to circle around to where you can sneak into the front door while they walk away from it.

Roll the two dice. If you roll your Dexterity score or less, turn to 54E. If you roll more, turn to 144A.

101F

Hank is very big and very determined. You can feel each of his blows landing firmly and painfully. When blood starts to come from your nose, you hear the conductor behind you say, "Hank, please, all these people! Take him into the next car!" You're too tired to smile at the sound of disappointment that comes from someone in the group of passengers.

Hank grabs you by the shirt and drags you through the doors into the next car, obviously planning to finish you off there, out of sight of the passengers. But you let yourself go limp, using the opportunity to pull your gun from your shoulder holster.

As the door closes behind you, you realize that Hank has dragged you into a baggage car. There's a large dog barking loudly behind Hank, adding to the noise of the train.

When Hank draws back his fist, preparing to finish you off, you shove your gun under his chin.

"Hold it right there," you demand.

And big, tough Hank turns into a quivering mass at the sight of the gun. It's a matter of seconds to tie his hands behind his back, force him onto the floor in the tiny employees' restroom at the far end of the car and tape his mouth and ankles. A threatening gesture with your gun guarantees that he's not going to make any noise.

Turn to 26A.

101G

You can't believe your eyes! And you're very glad no one from Orion is around to see it, but you missed every single shot!

If you want to try again, return to the last paragraph of 31C and repeat your actions. However, if you've tried shooting twice or if you don't want to try again, your only other choice is to try to get ahead of Aleta and set up a roadblock.

Turn to 86C.

102A

Quickly looking around, you see a pantry that might be big enough to hide in. The only other possibility that comes to your mind is a trick you remember from childhood: hiding on the chairs that are pushed under the large kitchen table. If that is what you want to do, turn to 82D. If the pantry seems better, turn to 120D.

102B

It pains you to do so, but you know where she is and she's shooting at you—you must shoot back. As usual, your aim is excellent, and it isn't long before you hear a cry of pain and no more shots come from the Web agent.

Moving slowly, ready for a trap, you walk toward the car. But there's no trap. She is indeed down. Her silver necklace sparkles in the moonlight. As you kneel beside her, you have to remind yourself that Aleta Marcus was a Web agent, determined to take a horrible bug—the "final" bug—away from the mountain for use in distant places.

You lift the woman's body and place her gently into the Ferrari. Then you move your vehicle out of the way, clearing the road for whoever might come along. There's no more danger here.

Driving the Ferrari, you head on down the mountain. At Moorland you'll call headquarters to send a Titan Team to help sort out the mess and to destroy the bacteria cultures that ride beside you in an innocent-looking, red picnic cooler.

102C

You discover a book of "ancient and well-tested gambling secrets" which absorbs you so much that you spend quite a lot of time studying it before you realize you must get back to work. [3X]

If you want to check out some other books, return to 66G and roll again. If not, return to 48A.

102D

You pause at the door you think leads to the lounge and listen for a moment. When you hear nothing, you quickly open the door and slip in.

But it's occupied after all. A young, curly-haired man in a white lab coat, apparently in deep thought, looks up at you, startled.

"Who are you? A new guard?" he asks. "I haven't seen you here before." There's just curiosity in his voice, not anger or consternation.

If you think it's safe to talk to him about what's going on here, turn to 136C. If you don't dare, turn to 129F.

102E

You dash past the passenger car and leap onto the platform of the car behind it, just before the doors automatically close.

Not knowing the routine of the people on the train, you quickly look around the baggage car for a

hiding place and find it, to the accompaniment of a growl from a watch dog, in a tiny employees' restroom at the far end of the car. You squeeze in and leave the door just slightly ajar.

Perfect timing, because you hear the *whoosh* of a door opening, footsteps, some tinkles and clanks, and then a small door being closed. The steps retreat to the passenger car again.

You're just about to step out when the car door opens again. This time, there are two sets of steps, a man's and a woman's. As the steps near your end of the car, you peer through the slightly opened door and see Aleta Marcus walking confidently past, followed by the conductor carrying her suitcases.

"The private car is just ahead here, Ms. Marcus," the conductor says. "I'm sure you'll find it satisfactory."

Again there's a *whooshing* sound, followed very quickly by the conductor's return. Then, in a few minutes, you feel safe to leave the tiny restroom—although you're not certain your muscles will ever move again—and you take a look around.

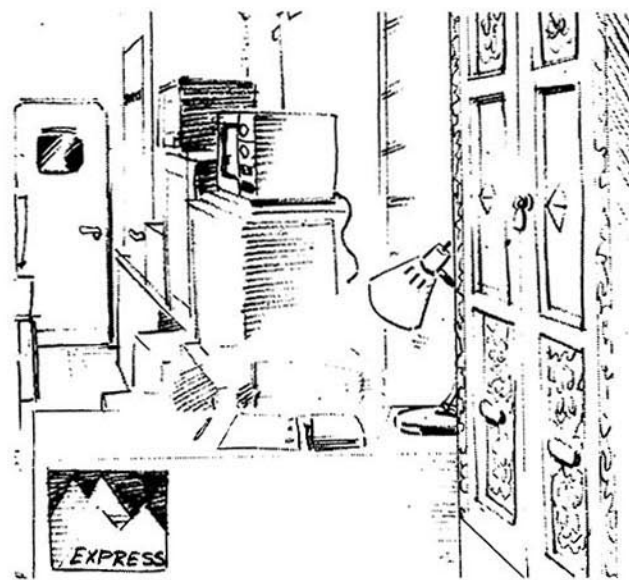
Turn to 26A.

102F

The guard knows this place better than you, and he manages to protect himself from the full impact of your shots.

Suddenly, you've got a problem. The sound of gunfire draws a second guard, so now there's someone fresh to fight, as well as having to finish off the first guard.

If you want to keep on fighting, conduct combat. This guard also had a Pistol skill of 35. If you win, turn to 31E. If you lose, turn to 13A. However, if you decide that it might be wiser to give up and see what happens, turn to 52B.



103A

The thing that surprises you most is that the operators, all of whom are on different shifts, must know each other fairly well. Maybe they chat about more than work as shifts change.

If you want to roll again, return to 114B. If not, turn to 96A.

103B

Turn to page 137 and glance at the picture. Do not study it in detail and do not read the text.

You stare at the pile of blankets on the bed, wondering if there's a person sound asleep underneath it. You doubt it. This just isn't the time of day when people are asleep. Of course, there might not be much more to do up here on the mountaintop if you don't like TV or games. [1X]

If you want to take a chance and enter the bedroom, turn to 57F. If you'd rather not, move on to the next room on your diagram by turning to the chart.

103C

Struggling, you concentrate on keeping the guard's gun pointed anywhere but at you, while he is just as determined to aim it at you. Gradually, your strength prevails, and with a snapping sound like that of a bone breaking, you turn the gun toward the guard himself. With one quick push against his own trigger finger, you send a bullet into the man's chest at point-blank range.

Leaping back from the spattering blood, you turn to face the other guard, only to find him standing quietly with his hands up, as a quaking Sarah Graham holds his own gun on him.

"Good work, Sarah," you say, taking the gun from her. You pat her hand to try to calm her. "Now, where can we lock him up?"

The scientist shows you a small cleaning closet off the hallway. You shove the man in, give him one solid blow across the head so that he crumples to the floor, and lock him in. Sarah, looking askance at you, leads you to a door farther down the hall. She opens it and pulls you in after her, locking the door behind her. You find yourself in a small anteroom, with the laboratory itself visible through a little window in the thick, rubber-edged inner door.

If it is between ten and eleven in the evening, turn to 19F. If it is any other time, turn to 29B.

103D

You can't seem to get the leverage either to get your second foot up on the window frame or to pull the first one back. Your body is just too bulky to get through such a space. You decide to just let go and fall forward—out the window, you hope—when the door behind you opens and you are well and truly caught, weaponless and almost with your pants down. The guards grab you from behind and pull you back into the room.

"Take him to the boss," one growls. [2X]

Turn to 81A.

103E

Turn to page 91 and glance at the picture. Do not study it in detail and do not read the text.

You glance into a scientific laboratory and see two women—the luscious Aleta and a blonde in a white lab coat—talking together . . . no, not talking, arguing. You can't hear a word they say, but their gestures clearly indicate that they are quarreling about something very important, and that Aleta obviously has the upper hand.

You wish you could hear what they're saying, but the window, you see now, doesn't open. In fact, the glass is mounted into the wall itself. Where the glass joins the cement, there are heavy rubber gaskets sealing the joints. Someone must want very badly to keep something out of the lab . . . or is it keep something in? Whichever, there's no way you can use the laboratory to enter the building. [1X]

Move along to the next room on your diagram and return to the chart on the inside back cover.

103F

You push open one side of the window and put a leg through. It's farther to the ground than you expected. You're going to have to maneuver very carefully to avoid falling once your second leg is through the window. Roll the two dice. If you roll your Dexterity score or less, turn to 118F. If you roll more, turn to 103D.

103G

There's no cover except the corner of the building. You dash behind it between shots, leaving the guard out in the open, zigzagging as much as he can. And screaming at the top of his lungs, "PETE! CURLY!"

You watch for someone to come running to help the guard, but you don't notice when someone—is it Curly or Pete?—creeps up behind you and delivers a blow to your head. [2X]

Turn to 142G.



104A

The garage is very different from the other rooms in the building. In the first place, it's quite dirty, though you doubt if anyone has ever managed to keep a garage from being greasy. Second, it's quite cluttered; seemingly it is the collecting spot for all the things that have gone to pot elsewhere in the building. And third, it's the only place that seems to admit that the occupants might have a life somewhere other than here on this mountaintop.

If you have to leave this place without an opportunity to get to your own car, here's where you'll have to come. Smiling, you have a sudden vision of your large body on fragile skis sliding down on a mountainside without snow. [2X]

You may investigate the: by turning to:

sports car	94B
truck	16C
motorcycle	141F
other vehicles	43C
other items	127G

If guards are aware that you are in the building, you must roll a luck roll before exploring any item listed above. If you get double numbers on the dice, turn to 128C. Otherwise, continue exploring.

When you are ready to go on to the next room, go out into the corridor and turn to 93D.

If you think you have learned enough to take action, turn to 86F.

104B

You can't get the computer-aided design program to work. [1X]
Return to 138A.

104C

You manage somehow to keep control of the careening truck, but you've lost Aleta for the moment. The road is still wide. Do you want to try to shoot out her tires (31C) or pass her and set up a roadblock (86C)?

**104D**

You pull the red lever mounted on the wall, and instantly an ear-jangling clatter sounds through the entire building. As you stand in a doorway watching the corridor, you realize that while there are not many people in the building, they are all making their way to the front door. [2X]

Or are they? If there is someone you promised "no matter what" to rescue, turn to 78D. If not, turn to 54B.

104E

You explore the room, your mind automatically checking off the possibilities. The door is locked. There's no window. The vents in the wall are only large enough for an agile kitten. There is no keyhole on your side of the door. Your gun is gone. And you don't have a sharpened spoon to scrape away the mortar between the cement blocks. You do have a thin diamond strip-saw curled up in the inner heel of your shoe. But it's too flexible to use on the dead bolt of the door.

So, the only choice remaining is to wait until someone comes in to see you, which they must do sooner or later . . . unless, of course, they mean to leave you here to starve to death.

If you still have the Orion card case, turn to 140D. If you don't, turn to 117D.

104F

By some miracle, you manage to miss the cement divider between the ramp and the regular road, but you only do it by aiming for the ramp. You find yourself on an expressway going somewhere you don't want to go.

Hours later, you return to Berner's apartment. Determined to follow him when he goes out, you find that this time you have no trouble doing so. And you learn nothing.

For days you follow the man, knowing you have reason to suspect him, but you learn nothing. Finally, Burkhart demands that you quit. You can do nothing to keep him from firing Brittany Farrell. You failed her, and you failed the Orion Foundation.

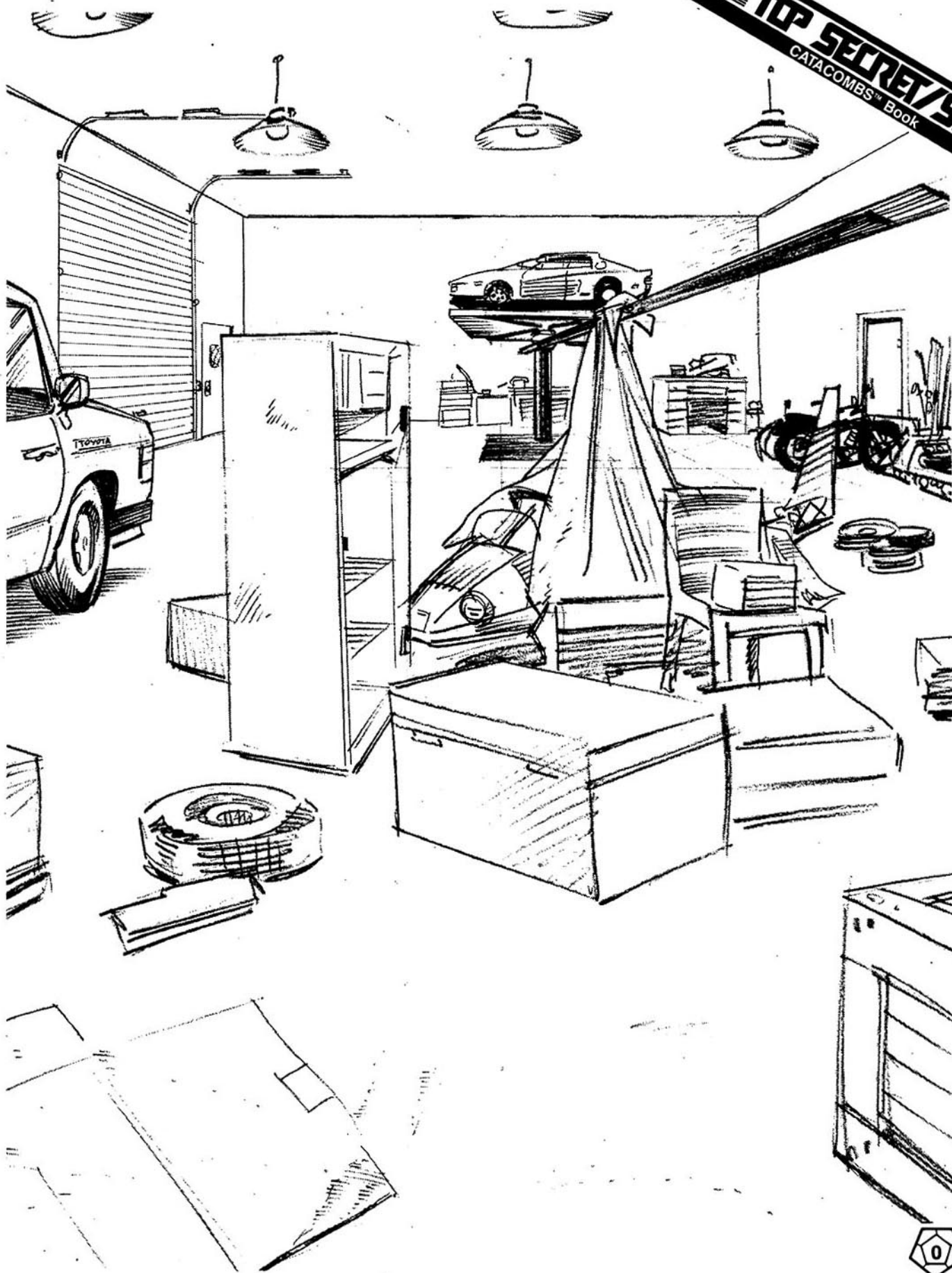
104G

The instant you see the muscles in her arm start to tense, you know something is about to happen. You duck and dive toward her at the same time, just as the knife whizzes above your head. The woman must sleep with a blade under her pillow. Well, I wouldn't want her in my bed anyway, you think, grabbing the knife from the bathroom door and flinging it back at her.

It misses, but her automatic reaction of ducking under the covers gives you time to get to the door and out of the room.

There's nothing you can do at this point to keep Ms. Marcus from calling the guards, so no matter where you go, they'll be searching for you. [2X]

Turn to 93D.



106A

There are no doorways or shadows or trash cans to hide behind, but there is a wooden gable above the window you were peering in. Roll the two dice against your Climbing skill. If you roll the score or less, turn to 79C. If you roll more, turn to 29D.

106B

This disk contains a report on the individual animals in the laboratory animal room. It seems there's a pair of rhesus monkeys called Claude and Darryl. Claude has been given something called *E. coli* that is doing "as anticipated," causing him to eat lightly but obediently. He plays when given a ball to play with, but mostly ignores Darryl when Darryl wants to play. Claude never gets in a bad mood and is completely docile when being used for tests. [1X]

Poor Claude, you think, putting away the disks and returning to 138A.

106C

Even though you fell, going off-road has still paid off. You reach the lower road just seconds before Aleta and just have time to position the big Kawasaki across the narrowest part of the road, by a giant rock. You leap away and hope that the motorcycle is going to be enough to stop the woman in her Ferrari.

Turn to 50A.

106D

The desk looks a bit like government surplus, well used by lots of duty officers. Someone has tried to carve initials in the top, but it didn't work as well as it always used to on school desks.

Leafing through the desk calendar, you find nothing but stray doodles and all the *O*s in *October* filled in. The only reason the calendar's there, of course, is so that the operators can accurately date their entries; they're not expected to have to keep written notes on anything.

The large file drawer on the left side of the desk holds supplies, such as pencils and blank disks, the PC instruction manual, matches, very dusty cough drops, staples for which you don't see a stapler, and a chain of paper clips. Nothing catches your eye there, so you move on to the smaller drawers, on the front of which someone, with more efficiency than charm, has written the names of the operators.

There are three drawers on the right side of the desk. The top one belongs to Brittany (23H). The middle one bears the name of Mark Dewitt, the youngest operator (14E). Ed Charnoff's drawer at the bottom (100F) is still labeled with his name, though he is dead. And finally, Foster Needham's drawer (129A) is beneath the file drawer.

When you have checked all the drawers, return to 64A.

106E

Pressing down on the bed and discovering it to be soft, you figure maybe you can hide in the covers after all. Moving quickly, you lie flat on the bed under the heavy quilted cover. Twisting around, you pull the cover completely over you and then sink down into the bed so that there's more cover gathered up over you. Then, gun in hand, just in case, you lie as still as you can.

You hold your breath as you hear the bedroom door open. There's a brief commotion as steps move around the bed and go into the bathroom. You hear the shower curtain being pushed back, then finally, a voice says, "Not here. Come on, there's still the rest of the building to go."

Feeling yourself almost sink farther into the soft mattress with relief, you continue to lie perfectly still for another few minutes. Then, throwing back the cover, you rise and try to replace the quilt as you saw it originally. [2X]

You are free now to explore the room. Turn to 136A.

106F

You head for the window of what you think must be the bedroom. It's dark inside, but the window shade is up, so you doubt if anyone is in there. As you stare into the darkness, your eyes adjust and gradually you can make out the shape of a large king-sized bed. There's a thin line of light under a door that must lead into the corridor.

And the fresh-air devotee who occupies the room has kindly left the window open. All you need to do is climb in, and you're free to explore. [1X]

Turn to 136A.



107A

As you explore, taking care not to disturb things, you discover among some clutter in a dresser drawer a small, round white bottle. It contains tiny white tablets, which look very much like sugar substitute tablets.

If the bottle has some interest for you, you slip it in your pocket. Return to 20A.

107B

You're about to head for the vehicle you've selected when you remember that you can't leave yet. You've a promise even if it means letting Aleta get to the train with the culture samples.

You run back into the building, heading for the stairs to the basement. You pull the key out of your pocket and open the door to the little room where Dr. Sarah Graham has been waiting.

Her beautiful face lights up as she realizes that it is you. "You kept your promise!" she exclaims, falling into your arms.

You give the geneticist just one minute to grab her coat and purse from her little bedroom down the hall, then you leave the building and head toward your own Firebird parked down the slope among the trees.

You just reach the car when you feel a rumbling under your feet, then the top of the mountain above you explodes into the air. Aleta Marcus must have left her own gift behind for her employees.

Sarah's face turns white in the moonlight. "I—I might have been in there!" She huddles close to you, trembling, as you drive on down the mountain.

At Moorland, you check Sarah into a motel and call headquarters to send a Titan Team to take care of her. You have a train to catch.

Turn to 28G.

107C

When you finish looking at the paper listing the guards currently on duty, you flip the paper up, thinking it was the last in the file. But you find one small torn slip of paper that says:

Carrier
trice Farquhar
tin Stein
rus Washington
ject results were found
lethal, each of the above
resign. Their employment terminated
ordered. All traces of their presence
here removed.

You're appalled. Something horrible was going on in this place long ago, and it could happen again to the people working here now. You feel a renewed sense of urgency about your mission. [3X]

Return to 11C if you want to look at a second file. If this was the second, you can check out the drawers on the right (28D) or other objects in the office (48A).

107D

There are words on the board that might as well be Sanskrit or something equally esoteric. That's the way you always felt about algebra.

Just doing your job, you walk through the room, glancing at everything you see, though from the first this room felt too unused to be a place where anything important might show up.

As you start to walk out, you accidentally bump into the library table. Roll the two dice. If you roll your Intelligence score or less, turn to 22E. If you roll more, turn to 29E.

107E

The only window in the kitchen is over the sink—nice for the person washing dishes, but a little awkward for you. It's a double window that opens outward by turning a leverlike handle. There is no screen.

If you want to try to get out of the building through the window, climb up into the steel sink and turn to 132F. If you prefer not, you can think again about hiding in here (102A) or going on to the next room. If the latter is your choice, leave the room and turn to 93D.

107F

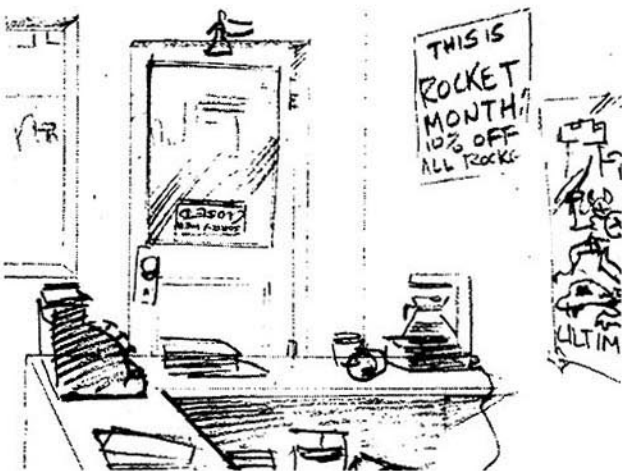
Determined to get ahead of the speeding lady, you let the Toyota build up speed as it bounces down the mountainside, with you trying to keep it from hitting anything too large.

Roll the two dice. If you get more than your Driving/Automobile skill, turn to 47A. If you get the score or less, turn to 120C.

107G

Suddenly, the door is rammed into your face by a blow from fat Leroy, and you reel uncontrollably backward, hitting your head on a metal cabinet behind you.

The last thing you hear is an evil chuckle and the words, "Tsk-tsk, shouldn't listen at doors!" You don't even know when your body is removed for surreptitious disposal by a squad of Web's goons. . . .



108A

As you pick yourself up, you smile in satisfaction. You not only kept Web from getting the bacteria samples, but you also prevented them from easily repeating the process of reproducing them.

Following the tracks, certain that there will be a road somewhere ahead, you breathe deeply and walk toward the dawn.

108B

You reach the laboratory anteroom, and are opening the heavy door, when Dr. Karl Pachezny arrives, too.

"What are you doing here?" he demands.

"I've come to get the cultures," you say coolly. "I can't let you and Aleta take them on the train."

"What!" he shrieks. "You—you can't stop us. It's ours!"

"No, it's not, Dr. Pachezny. It belongs to an organization called the Web, which is going to use your work to do horrible things to people."

"NO!" His shrill voice squeals in horror. "No, it's a good medicine that is going to help people."

He dives toward the refrigerator, gets it open, and starts to pull out a red picnic cooler before you grasp his shoulder and pull him back.

"You can't stop me!" he screams, and the infuriated scientist grabs a heavy piece of glass from the worktable, breaks it, and starts to attack you with the pointed shard of glass.

Karl Pachezny is no fighter. To see if by some miraculous chance he strikes you with the shard, roll the dice. If you roll more than his Basic Melee skill of 15, turn to 66E. If you roll that score or less, turn to 25C.

108C

You kneel in front of the shelves of videotapes, looking at the labels on each. Several catch your attention and you sit down on the floor in front of the shelves to pull them out to study the blurbs on the packages: *Phantom of the Opera*, *The Manchurian Candidate*, Cagney's *Public Enemy*, *Kind Hearts and Coronets*, and others. Suddenly, you realize you'd better get on with searching some more. [3X]

If you want to continue checking out the entertainment system, turn to 121A. Otherwise, return to 148A.

108D

You listen for a minute at the door of what you think must be the computer room. At first, you think it must be empty, but when you open the door a crack, the rhythmic clack-clack of plastic computer keys reaches your ears. Someone is in there working. You'll have to go to another room. [1X]

Turn to 93D.

108E

The first thing you discover in the bathroom is that Aleta colors her hair. So that glorious red hair you saw isn't

really natural. You don't know why, but somehow that knowledge makes you feel sad.

On the back of the toilet is a booklet, one that takes you by surprise as bathroom reading. It's a manual for the Ferrari. It must be the woman's new toy. [1X]

When you begin to feel like a Peeping Tom, you decide it's time to go back into the bedroom. Return to 136A.

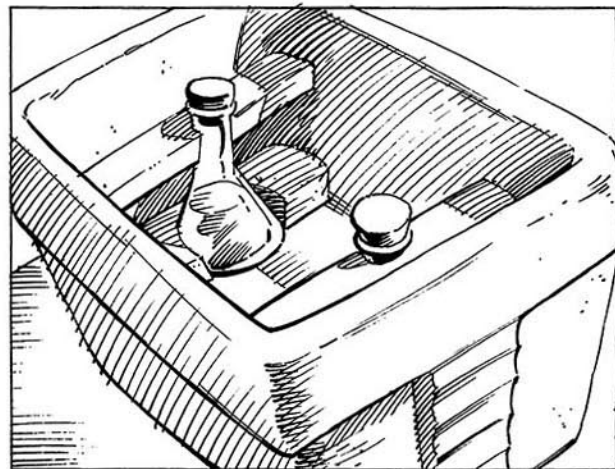
108F

At first, you don't understand a word of the exotically worded plan for creating and cloning a useful recombinant gene. But gradually, it becomes clear to you. Scientists cut and splice sections of chromosomes that create enzymes affecting the willpower centers in human brains.

The scientists then insert the chromosomes into a common human intestinal bacteria (*Escherichia coli*), and grow colonies of it by normal laboratory procedures. The *E. coli* is then fed to one of a pair of test animals. The whole point being to develop animals that lose their personalities and desires, they are always low key and easy to handle.

You shudder as you realize that the plan's missing conclusion is that the bacteria are fed to humans, who will then turn into a race of will-less slaves, automatically doing anything that the person controlling them commands.

Roll one die. If you get an even number, turn to 64C. If you get an odd number, turn to 112B.



109A

You come to the door of what you're sure must be the laboratory. When you listen carefully and fail to hear anything, you open the door and slip in. You find yourself in an anteroom. There's a rack of clean white lab coats along one wall. The other door has a large round wheel mounted in the middle below a small glass window. When you look through the window you see the actual lab beyond the door.

And you also see an older, balding man in a white lab coat moving with confidence around the laboratory. He is checking with several sealed glass flasks, verifying the labels on them against a handwritten list. Near him on the table is a red picnic cooler. You wonder if he's taking a picnic or lab samples somewhere.

The man starts to look satisfied and glances around, as if checking that he's done everything he intended to do. You decide it's time to get out of there. [2X]

Check your map for the next room, and turn to 93D.

109B

Staying out of the guards' line of sight, you move toward the glass entrance. The two guards appear to be holding an absorbing conversation and don't even glance your way. You are certain that you can get off two quick (and quiet, because of your silencer) shots as soon as you open the door and before either of the guards can react.

Roll two dice *twice*. If you get your Pistol skill or less both times, turn to 148D. If one roll is more, turn to 25G. If both rolls are more, turn to 130E.

109C

You time the oven for an additional thirty seconds after the agar starts to boil. Then you remove the hot flasks and let them cool for a few minutes. Finally, you return them to the cooler, chuckling at the idea of Aleta Marcus delivering to her Web contacts in Los Angeles flasks of dead, useless bacteria.

Turn to 37C.

109D

Each of the hurriedly written papers in the "Schedule" file starts from an "absolutely final" date of October 31. "Must be in Los Angeles," one paper says. The others work backward, showing various stages in a scientific procedure, laboratory tests, and so on. You don't understand any of it except that October 31 is tomorrow! [1X]

Return to 11C if you want to check a second file. If this was the second, you can check out the drawers on the right (28D) or other objects in the office (48A).

109E

A look of alarm crosses the guard's face as he realizes that you're much better at hand-to-hand combat than he is. Before you can stop him, he shouts at the top of his

lungs, "CURLY! PETE!"

You quickly aim another blow at the man's gut, a blow that connects soundly, driving the breath out of him. As he drops to the ground in agony, you deliver another blow to his jaw, and he falls unconscious.

So much for surreptitious entry into this place. The only answer now will be to shoot the other guards as they come. . . . Or is it? [2X]

You don't know which way the guards are going to come around the building in answer to the other's call, so maybe you'd better dash back into the trees and put the guards out of commission from there. If this is your choice, turn to 19E. However, if you are still in reasonably good health (haven't taken more than 5 points of damage to a vital part), there's an alternative; turn to 106A.

109F

You run down the corridor that surrounds the guardroom, pulled by Sarah's small, smooth hand. But as you round the second corner, you come within sight of two guards descending the open staircase to the right of the building's lobby. They are still discussing the strange explosion they heard and the probability that it was in the basement, when they see you.

"Hey, they're supposed to be locked up!" one shouts. They're after you now and you're without your gun.

Your main concerns are to get to the laboratory, and to protect Sarah. But the guards are in your way. Instead of turning and running away as they expect you to do, you run toward the startled guards and take a flying leap at them.

In the first unexpected moment, you manage to wrench a gun away from one of the guards and toss it to Sarah. She catches it, but then looks at it with fear and puzzlement.

You're fighting two guards, one with a gun and one without. You turn your attention first to the one with the gun, trying to ignore the blows rained on you by the other guard.

Roll against your Strength score to see if you can wrest the gun from the guard. If you succeed, turn to 103C. If you fail, turn to 133B.

110A

This room doesn't look at all as if someone lives in this building. It is strictly dedicated to research and computer use. However, computer use can also involve games, you think to yourself, as you see a *Zork* manual lying open on the computer table.

You suspect that if you're going to find out what's going on here without talking to anyone, this is where you'll discover it. [1X]

You may investigate the: by turning to:

computer	138A
microfilm machine	52C
bookcase	20F
library table	66C

If guards are aware that you are in the building, you must roll a luck roll before exploring any item listed above. If you get double numbers on the dice, turn to 128C. Otherwise, continue exploring.

When you are ready to go on to the next room, go out into the corridor and turn to 93D.

If you think you have learned enough to take action, turn to 86F.

110B

You find nothing of interest except some pornography you rather wish you hadn't seen. Return to 20A.

110C

You look into the window and see mainly darkness. The one night-light left burning by the far door reveals that you are looking into a laboratory. At first, the darkness makes you think that here is the place where you can enter the building, but then you realize that the window itself is very different from the others. The glass is mounted into the wall itself, and where the glass joins the cement, there are heavy rubber gaskets sealing the joints. Someone must want very badly to keep something out of the lab . . . or is it keep some-



thing in? Whichever, there's no way you can use the laboratory to enter the building. [1X]

Move along to the next room on your diagram and return to the chart on the inside back cover.

110D

Suddenly you hear Aleta Marcus say, "Well, you all are going to have to take care of this place. It's time for Karl and me to leave now. Quintessential is absolutely adamant about our meeting them in Los Angeles tomorrow, and the train leaves Moorland in forty-five minutes."

She pulls Karl Pachezny by the sleeve, and you hear her whisper, "I'll go get the car ready. You go get the stuff out of the refrigerator."

"All right, Aleta. See you in the garage in a few minutes."

If you know which refrigerator the "stuff" is in, hurry off to get there ahead of Karl; turn to 30D. If you have no idea, follow them to the garage, staying out of sight until the Ferrari takes off. Then turn to 90E.

110E

The small utility room is mostly occupied by a rather filthy sink, with some mops leaning against it. But as you're about to close the door, you realize that there's an oddly shaped package on the floor under the sink. Curious, you pull it out, and discover that it is a bundle of long, waxed-paper-wrapped rods, with a small black box and a battery attached to it.

You've found dynamite, and it's set to go off!

Turn to 92C.

110F

You're just about to put another disk in the drive when you hear noises out in the hallway. A quick glance shows you that there's no place to hide in here, so it's the window for you.

Turn to 103F.

110G

There is one personal computer on the operators' desk, where they enter material onto disks to be transferred into the big computer. You can learn nothing from it.

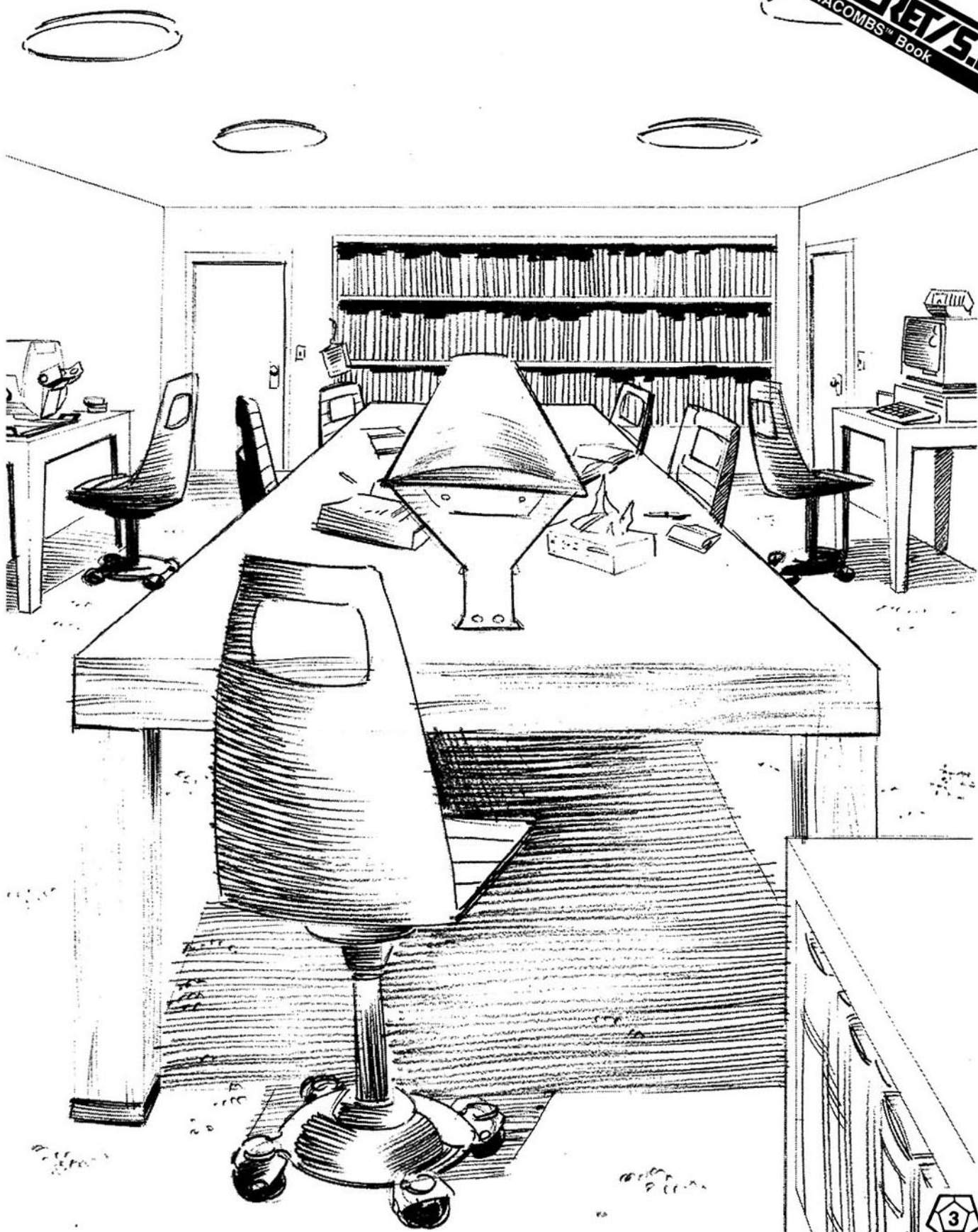
Return to 64A.

110H

You know that Aleta and Karl Pachezny are planning to catch a train at Moorland at twelve-thirty. And you rather imagine that she's going to be driving down in that neat little red Ferrari in the garage.

You decide to go to the garage and hide until you see them preparing to leave.

To find out if you're unlucky enough to be seen by a guard, roll the dice. If you get a double number, a guard sees you and you must fight (73C). If not, go straight to 79F.



112A

You stay by your games, itching to hear what is going on. But a few minutes later, the door they entered slams backward, where it would have struck you if you had been trying to listen. The door is closed again, and several minutes pass before Leroy, Berner, and the woman return to the front of the shop.

Turn to 57A.

112B

You're about to remove the disk when you wonder if there's another file on it. You check the directory and find one called "Project Report."

Pulling the file in, you discover a quite long report describing a misadventure in recombinant genetic engineering that occurred here at the lab some months ago. The author (Aleta Marcus) tries very hard to downplay the mistakes that were made, but it's clear that the scientists who were here then (she says clearly that they were "terminated") accidentally developed a special slime mold that eats animal flesh! Instead of the usual golden color of slime mold, this variety is bright blue in color because the recombinant gene responsible had been marked with a tracking dye that is carried along as cells split and re-split.

Aleta goes on to say that the mold developed had been "suitably disposed of," but a small sample had been kept in case someone else in the organization has a use for it someday. She closes with full assurances that the specific will-destroying bacteria requested by her superiors would be developed by late fall.

Appalled by what you read, you remove the disk with a renewed sense of urgency. [3X]

Return to 138A.

112C

Smiling to yourself, you remove the flasks from the cooler and return it to the refrigerator. No matter what happens next, at least you're going to take time now to get rid of the dangerous bugs.

You know that it's going to take heat to kill the bacteria. If you were back in the laboratory, you would use the autoclave. But here all you've got is the microwave oven.

You stand the flasks in the oven and turn it on full power. Watching through the glass door, you soon see the agar at the bottom of each flask begin to boil. But how long is it going to take for the bacteria colonies growing on the agar to be destroyed?

If you think you should leave the flasks in the oven for thirty seconds, turn to 109C; sixty seconds, 89B; ninety seconds 26C.

112D

You can tell by the closet of clothes that he is still trying—things are hung neatly, spots have been cleaned off as well as possible—but nothing succeeds in preventing the deterioration from showing. On the closet shelf is a little jar of potpourri; he must be hoping that its

lovely fragrance will do something to offset the miasma of the building.

Your habit of thoroughness makes you check the pockets in the man's suits, and there you find the probable reason for the downward spiral he appears to be trapped in—parimutuel tickets. He has taken up betting on horse races in a big way, apparently compulsively. Each losing ticket is carefully torn across the middle and stored in his pocket. He's probably reluctant to throw them on the ground, where they might be seen.

And now he's here, in this slum.

If you haven't checked the kitchen, turn to 76G. If you have, turn to 23B.

112E

Figuring that audacity is the only thing that will work, you say, "Someone told me that there was a princess here in a lovely coach. But now I see that it's the princess that makes the coach lovely, not the other way around." Gary Grant, watch out!

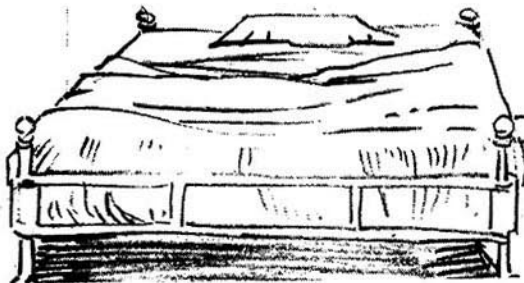
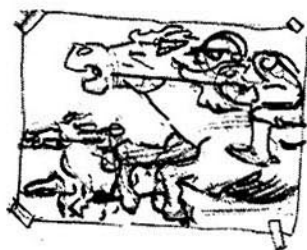
You see her suspicion change to willingness to hear such words. But she's not naturally stupid, either.

Average your Willpower and Intelligence scores and add 10 points for each of your Social Graces advantage points. Roll the two dice. If you get more than the total, turn to 72F. If you get the total or less, turn to 73D.

112F

The bookshelf contains mainly technical books that must belong to the chief scientist here. From the evidence of the room, you doubt that he's done much book research while he's been here. You also find a highly illustrated confusing copy of *A Layman's Guide to the Implications of Recombinant DNA*. [1X]

Now, if you want to go to the garage and see if someone is about to leave, turn to 18C. Otherwise, to continue exploring, turn to 93D.



113A

Somehow, you split your mind and reflexes so that you can concentrate both on firing and on driving at the same time. For a moment, you think you'll lose control, but you quickly feel the tires grip the blacktop again in response to your command.

Look again at your four dice rolls. If none of your shots is less than the modified Pistol skill, turn to 101G. If one shot is less, turn to 20E. If two or more are less, turn to 32E.

113B

Ignoring your wounds, you leap around a table in order to get at the guard using the truck as a shield. But the other is ready for your second of exposure, and you feel another bullet enter your body. The searing pain turns your thoughts black, and you feel yourself fading. How revolting, to die in a pool of oil. . . .

113C

Turn to page 125 and glance at the picture. Do not study it in detail and do not read the text, then return here.

You have to stand on tiptoes to see into the high kitchen window.

Immediately, you see that there are two men in guards' uniforms lounging around the kitchen table, eating and drinking. There's no way you're going to try to enter the building here. [1X]

Walk around to the next room on your diagram and return to the chart on the inside back cover.

113D

You lie on the bed to wait for whatever happens next. . . .

Waking to the sound of a key in the door lock, you leap from the bed and stand behind the door, ready to leap at whoever is entering.

But what comes in is a complete surprise. A blonde woman in a white lab coat is thrust into the room. She stumbles forward and falls across the bed, to the accompaniment of the door being closed again and the key turning in the lock. You're too late to take advantage of the door being open.

The woman picks herself up and turns toward you.

"What did you—" you start to ask, but she stamps her foot and shouts, "Now don't you start! Everyone seems determined to scream at me today, and I don't even know why!"

Suddenly, whatever has happened is all too much for her. Her stiff upper lip begins to quiver, and tears start to flow. She sinks down onto the bed, her face in her hands.

Then you hear from the depths of her despair: "Why have they got me locked in here? I'm . . . I'm frightened!"

You sit beside the woman and wrap an arm around her, and soon her tears are soaking your shoulder.

Turn to 10A. (NOTE: You do not have to keep track of time anymore.)

113E

Despite the swaying of the speeding car, you manage to plant your blows where you want them, and finally, the big trainman goes down. You tie him up and push him into the tiny employees' restroom at the end of the car. The dog comes to lie beside the door, whimpering.

You turn your eyes to the desk (134A).

113F

Certain that there is nothing in this mountaintop lab of interest to you, you leave by the window, unwilling to take a chance of running into a guard who might still be earnest about his job.

As you run toward the trees to make your way back to your car, you feel a rumble beneath your feet. Then a blast of noise and dust consumes the world around you.

The place is gone, and probably everyone inside with it. You just hope that no one who wasn't connected with Web was in it. But you acknowledge that that isn't likely; otherwise, why blow the place up?

You need to get out of here before someone sees you and decides that you are responsible.

As you hurry back down the mountain to your rented Firebird, you accept that this route at finding Web is probably at a dead end. But at least you managed before you left Denver to convince headquarters of Brittany's innocence. At least part of your job is done.

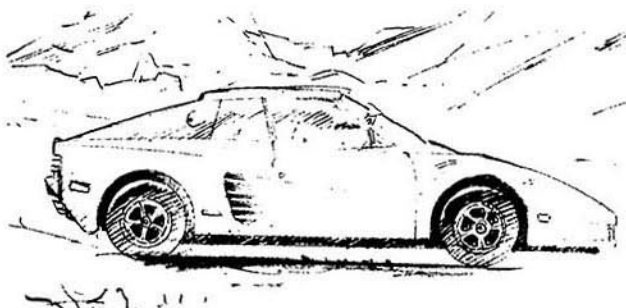
113G

Roll the two dice. If you roll your Movement score or less, turn to 150F. If you roll more, turn to 133F.

113H

You are speeding along the corridor, clinging close to the bilious-green, cement-block walls, when you come across a guard, armed with an automatic.

If you are wearing a guard's uniform, turn to 26D. If not, turn to 152C.



114A

Now that you've looked in all the rooms, you know you must get into that building, and you don't have a lot of alternative ways to do it. You can go through the front door, knowing you'll have to get by the guards somehow (014A), or there might be an open window that you can crawl through (038F).

114B

The bookcases are the only personal furniture in the room. You sit on the floor in front of them and leaf at random through the books and magazines stacked in them.

Roll the two dice and add the numbers.

If the total is:

2-5,
6-10,
11-15,
16-20,

turn to:

37B
20C
98B
30B

114C

At first, the man's sheer bulk threatens to overwhelm you, but the strength of your punches gradually begins to win. Finally, like a whale landing on a boat deck, down he goes.

Panting and straining, you move the man into his back room so that a chance customer won't see him. There you drop a Jack of Spades on his fat stomach and then leave him on the floor while you take a quick look over his desk.

Roll the two dice. If you roll more than your Intelligence score, turn to 76C. If you roll the score or less, turn to 63D.

114D

As Brittany raises her cup of coffee to sip, you again see her putting a small white tablet of sugar substitute into her coffee.

"Britt, do you use those little white tablets at work?"

"Certainly. I'd rather be able to eat rich desserts once in a while than use real sugar in my coffee. Why?"

"Where do you keep them at work? In your purse?"

"No. In my own drawer. It's the top one on the right side of the operators' desk. Although why Orion won't give us each our own desk, I've never understood." She rests her hand on your arm. "But Sebastian, again, why?"

"Because that may be how you were put to sleep. A little mickey in your sweetener bottle."

On that thought, you kiss her good-bye and return quickly to Orion headquarters.

Turn to 26E.

114E

Creeping quietly up the stairs into the small upper hall area, you find yourself back by the door to the guardroom; that's certainly no place to go. So you turn to the door facing it, on your left. Check your map for the first room to the left of the guardroom, and go to the chart on the inside back cover, reading the shaded type.

114F

At first, you don't understand any of the exotically worded plan for creating and cloning a useful recombinant gene. But gradually, your own education begins to creep toward the front of your mind. You soon understand that the plan for the laboratory was to cut a section of the chromosome of a peculiar virus that creates an enzyme affecting the willpower centers in the brains of humans.

The scientists then insert the chromosomal section into a vector—either a plasmid or a bacteriophage. Then inserting the vector into the common human intestinal bacteria *Escherichia coli* K12. They grow colonies of that by normal laboratory procedures. Then the *E. coli* is put into food and fed to one of a pair of matched test animals. The whole point being the development of animals that lose their will and become easier to handle.

You shudder as you realize that the missing conclusion, which Web would not want the scientists to realize, is that the bacteria are fed to humans, who will then turn into a race of will-less slaves, who will do anything the person controlling them commands.

As you take the disk out of the computer, you have a whole new sense of urgency. You were first just trying to protect Brittany. Now you must save whole populations! [2X]

Return to 50D.

114G

As Karl's footsteps near your door, you quickly leap away into the corridor to stay out of sight. You spend only a few minutes around the corner in a side hallway before you see the man return to the garage, this time carrying a red picnic-type cooler. Then you hear the roar of the Ferrari pulling out of the garage.

Turn to 92G.



115A

Aleta enters the guardroom, fingering a machine gun.

"I thought we'd seen the last of you, Mr. Cord. Well, this time I'll make sure of it!"

She orders you to turn around, and jabs the gun into your back. "Just walk ahead of me, Mr. Cord."

You think you're going to have a chance to turn abruptly and grab it from her, but when she tells the guards to return to their duties, that she'll take the problem from here, she moves back a bit. You can't reach the gun, but she's not too far away to miss you if she pulls the trigger.

If you think you know enough to try to bluff her into some action other than killing you, turn to 14F. However, if you think you'll probably be able to figure out some way to prevent her taking final action against you if you go with her now, turn to 131D.

115B

The shelves bear a large supply of canned goods, but in small sizes, so probably each person fixes his or her own meals. There are, however, large barrels of flour and rice and pickles on the floor beneath the bottom shelf. [1X]

Return to 124A.

115C

Fortunately, just as you realize that you're about to follow Aleta into the garage, you also realize that the refrigerator in the garage is completely dilapidated and the door is off. They certainly wouldn't be keeping the cultures there.

You stay out of sight until you see Karl dash into the garage, carrying a red picnic cooler. "Here it is," he shouts as the door closes.

Within seconds, you hear the beautifully modulated roar of the Ferrari.

Turn to 154A.

115D

You glance into the room where the computer and bookshelves are, expecting it to be empty, but a woman—whose glorious red hair catches your attention—is seated at the computer, doing some work. You note that a telephone receiver is resting in a frame by the computer; you assume it's a modem and that she is talking to a computer somewhere else. Then you realize that the woman is Aleta, the one you followed here. [1X]

Well, you certainly can't enter the building here. Move on to the next room on your diagram and return to the chart on the inside back cover.

115E

Turn to page 125 and glance at the picture. Do not study it in detail and do not read the text.

Standing beneath the kitchen window, you realize that you will have to enter over the sink if you use that window. As you're about to turn away, though, you

see a side door open into the kitchen, and a woman enters. As her hair catches the light, you realize that she is Aleta, the woman you saw at the hobby shop in Denver, and she's carrying a bundle.

Aleta opens a door that you thought was an exit, but she disappears inside it. You can see her shapely backside as she apparently kneels down for a moment. When she stands again, her hands are empty.

As she closes the door, she throws back her head in laughter, then leaves the kitchen. How curious, you think. [2X]

The kitchen is vacant, so you are free to enter if you want to; turn to 154C. If not, return to the chart on the inside back cover and move on to the next room.

115F

Before you can moan again, you feel someone kneel beside you and take your head in her hands—soothing, cool hands. This time, when you open your eyes, you see what you assume is an apparition above you: a beautiful blonde woman wearing a white lab coat and a worried frown.

"Take it easy," she says. "Give your poor head a chance to rest. My name is Sarah." You wonder if this is some new kind of angel.

The soothing hand on your forehead does the trick, and in a few minutes you sit up. "How long was I out?"

"About fifteen minutes," she says. "Why did they do this to you? Knock you out, I mean. And who are you? I've never seen you here before."

"I'm a . . . kind of investigator," you reply. "I'm looking into some reports of funny things going on here on this mountaintop."

"I never saw anything strange or funny . . . until today, that is. I started asking some questions about why Aleta and Karl were regarding the work as finished. They didn't want to answer, and when I got mad, I found myself being locked in here."

"Just what's going on—uh, what is your name?"

"Cord, Sebastian Cord."

"What do you think is going on, Mr. Cord?"

"Sebastian," you remind her. "I'm not sure, Sarah. Tell me about the place."

Turn to 10A.

116A

Out of control, the truck swings out into a curve that cuts through the woods and sends you crashing into a large tree. The crash breaks the gas tank, and a small spark from the torn metal sets the gas exploding into the night, and you die, alone on a mountainside, wondering what vicious plans Web has for the world now.

116B

You press close to the man in the flannel shirt, hoping that he'll try to preserve his personal space by holding the cooler out, away from his body. But that time-honored trick of thieves doesn't work. He just holds it closer and takes a tighter grasp on its handle.

You're going to have to be a little more overt about this if you're going to get those bacteria cultures. You have an idea.

Roll the two dice. If you roll more than your Intelligence score, turn to 32C. If you roll the score or less, turn to 146A.

116C

Listening carefully at the door and hearing nothing, you open it and slip through.

You find yourself in a small, barren anteroom. There's a rack of clean white lab coats along one wall, a chair, and a door with a large round wheel in the middle of it. Strange. There's a small window above the wheel through which you see that there's no one in the laboratory. You get a sudden feeling of being in a spaceship airlock, like those you've seen in science fiction programs on TV. In fact, that's it! Regular air must not be allowed to get into the laboratory . . . or is it out of the laboratory?

You close the door to the outer corridor securely and realize that it nestles into a rubber-lined frame that will not permit any air to get out. Then, without your doing anything, you hear a whooshing sound from vents on the walls and feel a coolness to the air that tells you it is moving. You have a sudden panic that maybe all the air is being evacuated from the room, but then you realize it is being replaced by fresh air from another vent.

The handle on the outer door turns, and someone bangs on the surface. But the guards don't appear to think much of the chance that you might be in here. Nor do they care. You hear one say, "That's one place I'm not goin'."

You find yourself free to enter the laboratory. Perhaps here you'll find some answers. [2X]

Turn to 90A.

116D

You come to the door of what you're sure must be the laboratory. You listen carefully but hear nothing, so you open the door and slip in. You find yourself in a small anteroom. There's a rack of clean white lab coats along one wall. The door has a large round wheel mounted in

the middle, below a small window. When you look through the window, you see the actual lab beyond the door.

And you also see a woman who looks lovely even in a white lab coat and with a hair net over her blonde hair. In the space of just a couple of minutes, you see her scrub busily at the worktable, stamp her foot while apparently talking to herself, slam a cupboard door, carefully rearrange some fragile Petri dishes, and restlessly study the contents of a small refrigerator.

You're not sure who she is, nor are you sure she might not come storming out here at any moment. You'd better get on your way to another room. [1X]

Turn to 93D.

116E

Turn to page 49 and glance at the picture. Do not study it in detail and do not read the text.

What catches your eyes immediately is not the room itself but the two people moving hurriedly around in it. Aleta, the woman from Denver, and a balding man are sorting through papers and throwing most of them into a wastebasket. You suspect they're probably too preoccupied to see you, but you'd better not take a chance. [1X]

Return to the chart and look for the next room on your diagram.

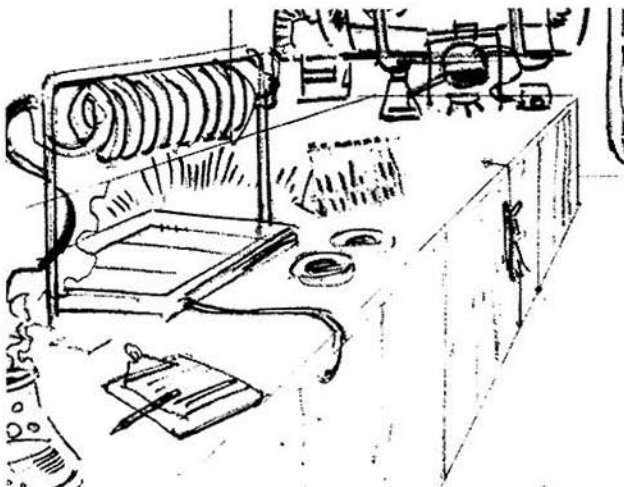
116F

One piece of paper tacked on the board is a short memo from "A.M." saying that food supplies for use after October 31, should not be ordered until further notice. [1X]

To roll again, turn to 86A. Otherwise, return to 76A.

116G

By all probabilities, you should have no trouble avoiding Aleta Marcus's shots, but the fates seem to be against you tonight. And on a dark mountain, somewhere in Colorado, the life of Sebastian Cord, Orion's top agent, comes to an end.



117A

This room is clearly an office, not even a very big one—perhaps twelve feet square. A large red-leather couch impresses you instantly; it would look great in your suite.

Return to 150A to place another room or move on.

117B

Brittany's kitchen is very compact and easily disguised with elegant tapestry panels that stand to one side. You suspect that she rarely has more than breakfast or mid-night snacks in this kitchen.

As you rummage around in the small cupboards, you see several partially used, small, square, white bottles of sugar substitute. Brittany must use it all the time and want to make sure that she has enough on hand.

If you and Brittany had a discussion about sugar substitutes, turn to 140A. If not, turn to 26B.

117C

But she's had training, and she's prepared for you. Instead of you being able to take Aleta by surprise and grab the gun, she surprises you, with a pistol shot point-blank at your chest. As you fall to the floor, your closing eyes see the night rushing by the windows of the train car, and death carries you into that night, forever.

117D

Wishing you hadn't already used your Orion card case, you sit on the bed next to the beautiful scientist. "We'll figure something out," you say gently. "After all, they have to come see us or feed us or something soon."

But there's where you're wrong. You and Sarah have been put out of Aleta and Karl's minds now, because they have many things to do to prepare to leave.

After a couple hours (*you may stop keeping track of time*), Sarah cries herself to sleep in your arms, and you, too, are drifting into sleep, when you hear a key in the lock. The door opens and a balding man sneaks into the room.

"We're leaving now. Aleta wanted to just leave you here and let you rot, but I couldn't do that. Don't let her know I opened the door. . . . She would kill me." He hurries out, and you hear him climb the stairs.

"Maybe I can catch them," you tell Sarah.

She shakes her head to wake up, and suggests, "They'll take the Ferrari, but one of the other vehicles in the garage should work. I'll come with you."

"Only as far as the garage!" you say firmly. "Then you'll go down the hill to my rented Firebird. Here's the key. I want you safe—both because you're a brave, beautiful person and because you need to tell us more of what's been going on."

She agrees, most reluctantly, as you grab her hand and pull her toward the stairs. As she brings you to the garage, you hear the roar of a high-powered sports car. You quickly tell Sarah where to find your car, then

you open the door.

Turn to 154A.

117E

The device goes off with a roar that amazes you, just as it has every time you've heard it. You are poised to run in as soon as the guards come out.

One man thrusts the door open and heads out into the open, toward the little bit of lingering smoke. The other follows immediately, and you're inside in an instant, heading toward the left-hand door, which they can't see from outside. [2X]

You find yourself in a narrow corridor, facing one door (57G), and there's another just to your right (132C). A cement-block staircase goes down on your left (76D).

117F

You're investigating the room again, and your heart rate has settled down to nothing-terribly-dramatic-is-happening, when the door bursts open and you find yourself staring into a large machine gun held by a quite lovely woman with red hair, the woman you know as Aleta. However, she's probably not the least bit interested in the fact that you find her lovely.

"So this is the man who persists in destroying my guards. Look, men"—she glances at two guards who are standing behind her—"this is all you need to do. He's not so tough after all."

"You appear to have the advantage of me," you say coolly. "My name is Cord, Sebastian Cord." You nod your head as if she had responded to your introduction, but in fact, she's walking toward you. Obviously, she's completely in control of that nasty weapon she's carrying.

You hope she'll step close enough for you to grab her weapon, but she's too experienced for that. She just comes near enough so that there's no chance she wouldn't miss if she had to shoot. Then she says, "Bring those cuffs over here."

One of the guards, who had been standing wide-eyed during the action, hurries behind you, roughly grabs your arms, and quickly has your wrists handcuffed behind you.

"Now, Mr. Sebastian Orion Cord," the woman says, "tell me just what you do know." [3X]

Turn to 131D.

118A

Since Brittany herself gave you the key to her place, you have no problem getting into the beautiful old brownstone house where she has the top floor. As you climb the stairs behind Britt's front door, you find yourself wondering who else has the key to her house.

None of your business, Cord, you remind yourself.

You know that Brittany doesn't like little, closed spaces, but even so, you are surprised when you step into a huge room that is really a whole apartment in one. It's decorated in a traditional—and pretty expensive—way that makes it homey and luxurious all at once. As you sketch, you find yourself wondering if you can somehow have your suite at the Atlantic City hotel redone like this room.

You may investigate the: by turning to:

bedroom area	135C
bathroom	86B
library area	67E
kitchen	117B

Return to 93C to search another operator's home. If Britt's is the last one, turn to 69C.

118B

Time's awasting, and you don't need to use it up by playing with animals. [1X]
Return to 76A to choose something else to study.

118C

Inside the book, which has the name "Aleta Marcus" written inside, is a newspaper clipping about a town in South America called Mustinqua, where businesses are thriving because the labor force always does exactly what is asked of it. There is no absenteeism except when someone has a serious accident. The workers do not take breaks, although the manager has to force them to eat lunch each day. The youngsters in each family want desperately to start working, too.

It seems that some anthropologists want to investigate the place, but the town officials, at the behest of



the main business in town, have refused to allow them in. [2X]

You return the clipping to the book and go back to 124A.

118D

You have no choice but to go into the passenger car and try to buy a ride from the conductor.

He's very reluctant—"Passengers are absolutely required to buy their tickets before boarding"—and he tries his best to make you feel lower than a worm, but you're not buying it. However, the conductor is perfectly willing to ignore your wormhood when you slip him a hundred-dollar bill.

You spend what's left of the night lying on the semicircular couch of one of the small but luxurious seating arrangements, and the next day you dine leisurely in the elegant dining car.

Late that afternoon, the train pulls into Los Angeles.

Turn to 47B.

118E

Just before you get to the door, you realize that there is a security grid mounted into the floor in front of it, and you almost stepped on it. Relieved that you didn't, you go to the larger door and press the button at the side until it rolls up just a few inches. Then you lie down on the floor and roll under it quickly.

Resting in the driveway, you decide that you must go back into the building. But you can't go through the inner garage door. [4X]

If you entered the building the first time through a window, turn to 14A. If you entered past the guards, try a window this time (38F).

118F

Keeping your rear end low, you pull your leg back and then manage to crouch with both feet on the window frame. Turning sideways, you put that foot out again and leap away with a push from the second foot. You land heavily but apparently without any damage. There's no shout from within the room behind you, so you were apparently not seen. Hoping your luck holds, you run into the protection of the ring of trees down the hill from the building. [2X]

Turn to 151A.

118G

If you don't know what has been developed here at the laboratory or when it is leaving, you haven't paid any attention while exploring the building. You must not be the real Sebastian Cord.

You're still wandering around the building, trying to figure out what's happening, when you feel a deep rumble beneath your feet, and suddenly the building blows sky high, into a million pieces, carrying you with it.



120A

Each sheet of paper in the "Test Subjects" file gives the background and current physiological records of one of the test animals being used. They are all in matched pairs, one for testing and one for the control. There are also some notes on the parallels between humans and other primates like those in the laboratory, including ways to control "willfulness" in such animals. [2X]

Return to 11C if you want to look at a second file. If this was the second, you can check out the drawers on the right (28D) or other objects in the office (48A).

120B

The fish tank on the shelf contains simple freshwater fish that are pretty to look at and easy to care for. Though you inspect the aeration apparatus and even stir up the sand a bit, you discover nothing of interest. [1X]

Return to 48A.

120C

The rattling and bouncing go on seemingly forever. By the time you finally see a road ahead of you again, you feel as if you've held your breath for eternity. But as you settle onto the road and gradually slow the truck in its careening journey, you spot the lady's headlights behind you on the zigzag mountain road and know it was all worth it. Now you turn your vehicle across the road to block it, then leap out and into the trees at the side of the road, not knowing if the lady will be able to stop in time or not.

Turn to 50A.

120D

Knowing from experience that searchers don't usually search all that well, you look at the pantry and decide that you can fit into the space beneath the bottom shelf of canned goods. Setting aside some big bags of sugar and flour, you squeeze in behind them and try to pull them back against the shelf again so that they block you from sight.

But when the excited, searching guards reach the pantry, one of them, just a little too avid in his work, kicks aside one of the bags and glances behind it. There you are, unable to reach your gun, unable to try to escape, unable to do anything but be pulled ignominiously out by the none-too-gentle guards.

When you're standing on your feet, hands in the air, you start to try to give some halfway reasonable explanation of who you are and what you were doing hiding in the pantry, but before you get a word out, a gun butt hits your head, and you feel blackness consuming your brain. . . . [4X]

Turn to 142G.

120E

They sit you down to wait in the guardroom-cum-entrance. In a few minutes, in comes "the boss." You recognize her immediately as Aleta, the woman you fol-

lowed up here. She has a figure like a Greek goddess even in her blue pantsuit, lustrous red hair that flows about her shoulders, skin that would make alabaster weep, and an angry frown on her lovely oval face.

"How did a stranger get in here?" she demands of the guards.

They immediately go into the "Don't-ask-me-I-just-work-here" mode, which only makes the woman angrier. By the time she sits down across from you, she has no inclination to be hospitable.

"Don't tell me. You were just going for a leisurely walk on top of this mountain! Now, who the hell are you?"

"Tsk-tsk-tsk!" you cluck. "Such a welcome!"

Your sarcasm makes her even angrier. "Just lock him up in the room downstairs," she demands of the guards as she rises to her feet. "I've got better things to do."

Before she has even reached the door, the guards are hustling you down the open stairway on the right side of the room. You are hurried through a small corridor with several doors off it to one door that has a key hanging on the hook beside it. One guard opens the door with the key, and you are shoved in. About forty minutes (5X) have passed since you were caught. If it is before nine o'clock, turn to 98E. If it is nine or after, turn to 69F.

120F

The dimness of the room draws your eye right to a slightly open door, with light streaming through the narrow opening. It comes from a bathroom and reveals that you are looking into a bedroom. Must be the manager's.

Return to 150A to place another room or move on.



121A

Lying on top of one of the stereo speakers, partly under a compact disk, is a single key with a cardboard label attached. The label says, "Kawasaki." If you know of some reason to take it with you, put it in your pocket. If you're afraid someone might miss it, leave it. [1X]
Return to 148A.

121B

You get into the word processor and discover that you have found a report of some kind to "Headquarters." It says: Reporting by modem: The work, according to Pachezny, is just about done. He claims the recombinant virus needs a lot more testing, but he does admit that the thing will do what we want and is ready to use on significant populations. After the fiasco at Mustinqua, he'd better be right.

We will leave Moorland on the 12:30 M-ME train and have the stuff with us when we arrive in LA at 5 p.m. on the 31st.

A.M.

Tomorrow is the thirtieth, so they must be leaving tonight. Something is about to happen here. [2X]
Return to 50D.

121C

Pinned to the top of the board is a feeding schedule that indicates which of several different guards will feed or water the animals at 9 a.m., noon, 5 p.m., 8 p.m., and 10:30 p.m. [1X]

To roll again, turn to 86A. Otherwise, return to 76A.

121D

You saunter out, glancing at the different games and kits, as if you were in no hurry to leave. You wave a brief farewell to Leroy, say, "Thanks," and step back out into the parking lot. Fortunately, Berner's just getting into his car.

You follow the man back to his apartment, and remain outside in your car, thinking all the while about what to do next.

If you heard the talk in the back room, turn to 90C. If you didn't, turn to 60C.

121E

You see immediately that the telephone is purely for internal use, from room to room within this place, and you wonder where the main telephone is. A radio stands next to the telephone.

By the lamp is a paperback version of Dickens' *Oliver Twist*, with the name Aleta Marcus written inside. Immediately, your favorite line comes to mind: "More? The boy wants more?" You've always wanted more, too. When you first saw Aleta in Denver, she struck you as a woman who also wants more . . . of whatever she can get.

You find yourself oddly reluctant to look in the table drawer, but you pull it out with a defiant ges-

ture. Inside is a bottle of aspirin and a packet of tissues. Under the packet is another book, this one a small diary. Glancing through it, you see brief, random notes about messages sent and received from "the OM."

The only thing that really catches your attention is the word "NEXUS" written and decorated in doodles up in the corner of one page. Nexus is a name you've heard only once or twice as that of the nerve center of Web, the organization that Orion is dedicated to destroying. . . . But it's also a shampoo and a lot of other things. So you don't know if your discovery is important or not. [2X]

If you want to take time—and the chance of possible detection—to use your Orioncomm to ask headquarters if they have any knowledge of an agent named Aleta Marcus, turn to 40E. If you think you'd better not, return to 136A.

121F

After listening a moment, you open the door to the animal room. Just as you do so, the silence is broken. You hear a man cooing—yes, cooing—at one of the animals. Then he says, "Poor baby. You look healthy enough, you eat all right. But you and I know that something's wrong, don't we, baby?" Then he says, more to himself than to the chimp, "I wish I knew what was going on around this place. It's weird." [1X]

If it is before nine-thirty, turn to 129B. If it is later than that, turn to 76E.

121G

As the train rushes through the night, you look around the car. The people in the other seating areas appear to be mostly asleep, with their heads falling forward. Acting nonchalant, in case any of them is really awake, you move over toward the suitcases as if you were trying to see something out close to the window. You can tell by patting it very quickly that there's probably nothing of interest—at least at this time—in the wardrobe bag. You wouldn't put culture flasks into the big suitcase because it doesn't remain in one position. That leaves the cosmetic case, which always sits upright.

Roll the two dice. If you roll more than your Dexterity score, turn to 95E. If you roll the score or less, turn to 30E.

122A

Listening at the door, you realize that you're hearing a rhythmic pattern of blows. Someone inside is working on something with a hammer. No place for you. [1X]

Return to the chart and see where to go for the next room on your diagram, but first turn to 93D.

122B

The bike lands back on the pavement hard, rattling your teeth and making you lose control. The front wheel wobbles back and forth, and the wobble gets bigger and bigger until the whole thing slides out from under you and you go crashing.

Turn to 30C.

122C

The furious woman is so involved with trying to get her hands around your powerful neck that she isn't aware of you turning in her grasp so that your hands can reach into the pocket of her jacket. Just as your fingers grasp the key, you wrap a leg around hers and trip her, sending her crashing into a chair and to the floor.

All those years of manipulating cards to do intricate things pay off in that moment. Working behind your back, with hands still cuffed, you manage to insert the key in the lock and turn it. The cuff slips off and your hands are freed. You catch the metal rings and put them in your pocket.

"Now, Ms. Marcus," you say, grasping her by the front of her jacket and pulling her up, "you're going to help me find the stuff."

Spitting like a cat and struggling to get loose, Aleta Marcus finds herself being shoved forward toward the door leading out of the entrance hall. You grab one of the guns from the rack and hold it to her back. "I don't care if this goes off," you say, "but you might." It's amazing what a calming effect a loaded gun can have on a struggling person.

You march down the hall, slamming open doors. There are no guards around because Aleta sent them all outdoors. Finally, you come to the laboratory, where you're sure the recombinant bacteria cultures must be.

Passing through the small anteroom, you enter the lab and fasten the still-spitting but speechless Aleta by the handcuffs to the leg of a bench. You gather up all the papers you can find and build a small bonfire in the lab sink. After setting the papers on fire (to the strains of a moan of fury from Aleta), you find all the Petri dishes, flasks, and test tubes, that you can find on the counter and smash them into the burning papers. You work with an urgency that drives you to leave nothing to chance. Every item that the scientists might have been working on is consumed in the fire.

Then, remembering biology class, you take the flasks and test tubes from the refrigerator and place them inside the small sterilizing oven you find in one cupboard. After all, sterilizers are meant to kill bacteria, aren't they?

When you can find nothing more to burn, you turn to the beaten Web agent and say, "There, Aleta. That's the result of your year's work. Have fun explaining to your bosses."

And as you finish speaking, you're startled by the sound of applause coming from the anteroom. Artie, the young, long-haired lab assistant, stands there cheering you on.

"Thanks for the appreciation," you say with a smile. "Now, go pack. Your work here is done."

Within half an hour, you've convinced the guards that their job is over and they might as well leave. You've found Sarah Graham, the scientist who did most of the work, and, with Artie's help, persuaded her to leave the mountain. The head scientist, Dr. Karl Pachezny, however, refuses to listen to you. Sitting by Aleta, who has fallen into a horrible apathy, keeps patting her hand, and insists, "Aleta couldn't know anything about using the recombinant virus for bad purposes. Quintessential must have lied to her. Aleta isn't evil. How could she be? . . . I love her."

Leaving the pathetic little man to take care of the woman he loves, you take the hand of the glorious Sarah Graham and walk out of the building into the crisp air and down toward your rental car. You're just turning out onto the road when the top of the mountain above you explodes into a million pieces. Aleta Marcus found her own answer to her problem.

122D

You're about to step into the garage, when you realize that a woman with red hair and wearing a royal blue pantsuit is moving around inside. Pulling the door closed only enough to keep you from being seen while you watch, you see Aleta, carrying a small bundle, inspect the workbench.

She leans down to inspect the space under the bench, checks something connected to the package by a wire, then pushes it into the space, packing it tightly against the wall in the shadows.

She checks what she has done, throws back her head in what apparently is laughter, and heads toward the door.

You duck back into the corridor, around a corner, and wait for her to pass. When she does, you hurry to the garage, in case the woman returns. You head for the workbench to see what she was doing. [3X]

Turn to 144E.

122E

When he doesn't pay any attention, you shake him, and say loudly and slowly, "Karl, get everyone out of the building. Aleta planted some dynamite, and I don't know when it will go off. GET EVERYONE OUT!"

On those last words, the balding man responds, and runs in to pull a fire alarm.

If you've promised to rescue someone, turn to 107B. If not, turn to 29A.

123A

You leave the hobby shop knowing that it's too late to try to follow Aleta. You're just going to have to make do with the assumption that whatever you learn next you'll have to learn at the laboratory in Moorland.

Turn to 41F.

123B

You walk next to the man with the briefcase for about fifty feet, pressing closer and closer to him. As a guardian of your own personal space, you know about how people try to preserve the space around them if possible. As you predict, the man holds his arm out as if he required additional space to carry the briefcase. All of which makes it perfectly easy for you to just grab the handle from the man in one swift move.

In fact, for a moment you almost wonder if the man has even noticed, as you walk swiftly away, consuming large chunks of floor with your big stride. But then you hear a squeal behind you. "Help! Someone stole my briefcase!"

Certain that most people are going to turn around and stare at the man but probably not think quickly enough to try to stop you, you keep on moving.

Roll the two dice. If you get more than your Intelligence score, turn to 35D. If you get the score or less, turn to 29G.

123C

You don't understand a word of the "Genetic Routines" file. It might as well be in Hebrew, although you can read some of that. You just return the papers to the folder. [1X]

Return to 11C if you want to look at a second file. If this was the second, you can check out the drawers on the right (28D) or other objects in the office (48A).

123D

This man is big and determined. You finally admit to yourself that there's no way you're going to win in hand-to-hand combat. His hands are like lethal hams. Finally, you give up this method and go for your gun.

This time there's no resistance from the big man. He's terrified of guns. You tie his hands behind his back and tape his mouth shut before forcing him into the tiny employees' restroom, where you force him to the floor, curled around the toilet, and tie his feet.

The dog, growling, comes to lie by the door while you turn your attention to the desk (134A).

123E

Under a pad of paper at the left side of the desk, you find a thin manila folder containing two newspaper clippings stapled together.

The top clipping is an article from Nutane, Algeria: Government officials in this remote Sahara Desert region of Algeria are puzzled by the strange behavior of an entire village of people.

The villagers—every man, woman, and child—are starving to death for no apparent reason. There is plenty of food in their village stores and, unusual in this part of the world, even plenty of game in the surrounding territory.

When questioned, the village elder said only, "Oh, is that what we're to do now?" and he readily ate the food that was handed him.

The villagers very quickly regained their physical health, but the officials discovered that they would only do the tasks they need to do to survive when specifically told to. Public health officials are concerned now, because the villagers apparently are unable to make decisions for themselves about what needs to be done in the normal course of living.

A meeting of local leaders will be held next week to determine what to do about the inhabitants of Nutane.

Written across the face of the clipping in bold felt-tip pen are the words: "Perhaps too effective! Try again."

Turn to 151D.

123F

First one guard, then the other, goes down and lies still. As silence falls, you realize that Artie is whimpering in the corner.

You pull the bodies over by the couch and cover them with the papers you had used. Maybe they won't be found for a while. Thank Web for the thick walls and solid doors in this building.

"Come on, Artie," you say harshly, grabbing the frightened man's wrist. "Let's go find Sarah. I think she needs us." [2X]

Turn to 145E.

123G

You don't know what was said in the back room of the shop, but you did hear the woman say "Moorland" as she was getting ready to leave. But you know that's a pretty big area, mountainous and difficult to move around in.

If, back at headquarters, you learned what the intruder changed in the Anomalies Report, turn to 34B. If you didn't, turn to 132A.

124A

The kitchen door opens by a small lever instead of a regular handle. You push it down lightly with your elbow and let the door open just slightly to see if you can hear anyone inside. When only silence greets you, you enter the room.

The kitchen has none of the coziness and personal care that a home kitchen receives, but it isn't quite as cold and unfriendly as an industrial kitchen. From the number of dirty dishes sitting in the sink, it seems that probably only one person is responsible for dishwashing. That and the fact that the table is fairly small with only a few chairs around it tell you that not many people work at this mountaintop retreat . . . unless, of course, everyone eats in shifts. That's not a welcome thought. [1X]

You may investigate the: by turning to:

cupboards	23F
refrigerator	131B
table and chairs	12E
anything else	139C

If guards are aware that you are in the building, you must roll a luck roll before exploring any item listed above. If you get double numbers on the dice, turn to 128C. Otherwise, continue exploring.

When you are ready to go on to the next room, go out into the corridor and turn to 93D.

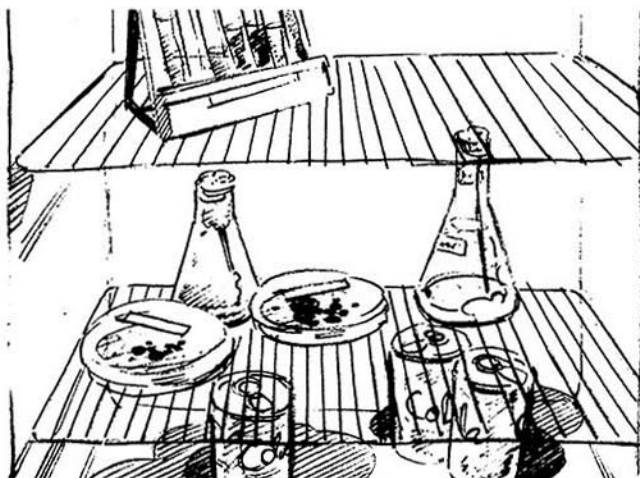
If you think you have learned enough to take action, turn to 86F.

124B

The schedule wasn't a lot of help. If you still haven't checked Bob Berner's apartment, turn to 53F. If you have, turn to 69C.

124C

You've been following the Trans Am through an increasing number of strange turns when you realize that Berner has probably spotted you and is leading you on



a wild goose chase. He speeds up, forcing you to increase your speed, too. But he's got the advantage because he's not driving in a strange city, as you are.

You weave through the traffic, turning behind him, speeding up when he tries to get way ahead of you on a straightaway. He's going faster and faster, when suddenly he makes an abrupt right-hand turn. You were just accelerating, so you have to take the turn at high speed.

Roll the two dice. If you get more than your Driving/Automobile skill, turn to 139D. If you get the score or less, turn to 89F.

124D

As you close the refrigerator door, you realize that the appliance is rocking on its bottom. Your sixth sense makes you question why. Kneeling down, you reach under the appliance, and your fingers find a pack of something long, straight and narrow attached to a small black box and a battery. You pull out the bundle and discover dynamite!

This place is set to go off!

Turn to 92C.

[2X]

124E

A thin pamphlet published by the American Society for the Humane Care of Laboratory Animals describes the minimal requirements for care of primates. After glancing through it, you're glad that you aren't one—either a primate or any other laboratory animal, although you must admit that sometimes the Orion Foundation makes you feel like one. [1X]

To roll again, turn to 86A. Otherwise, return to 76A.

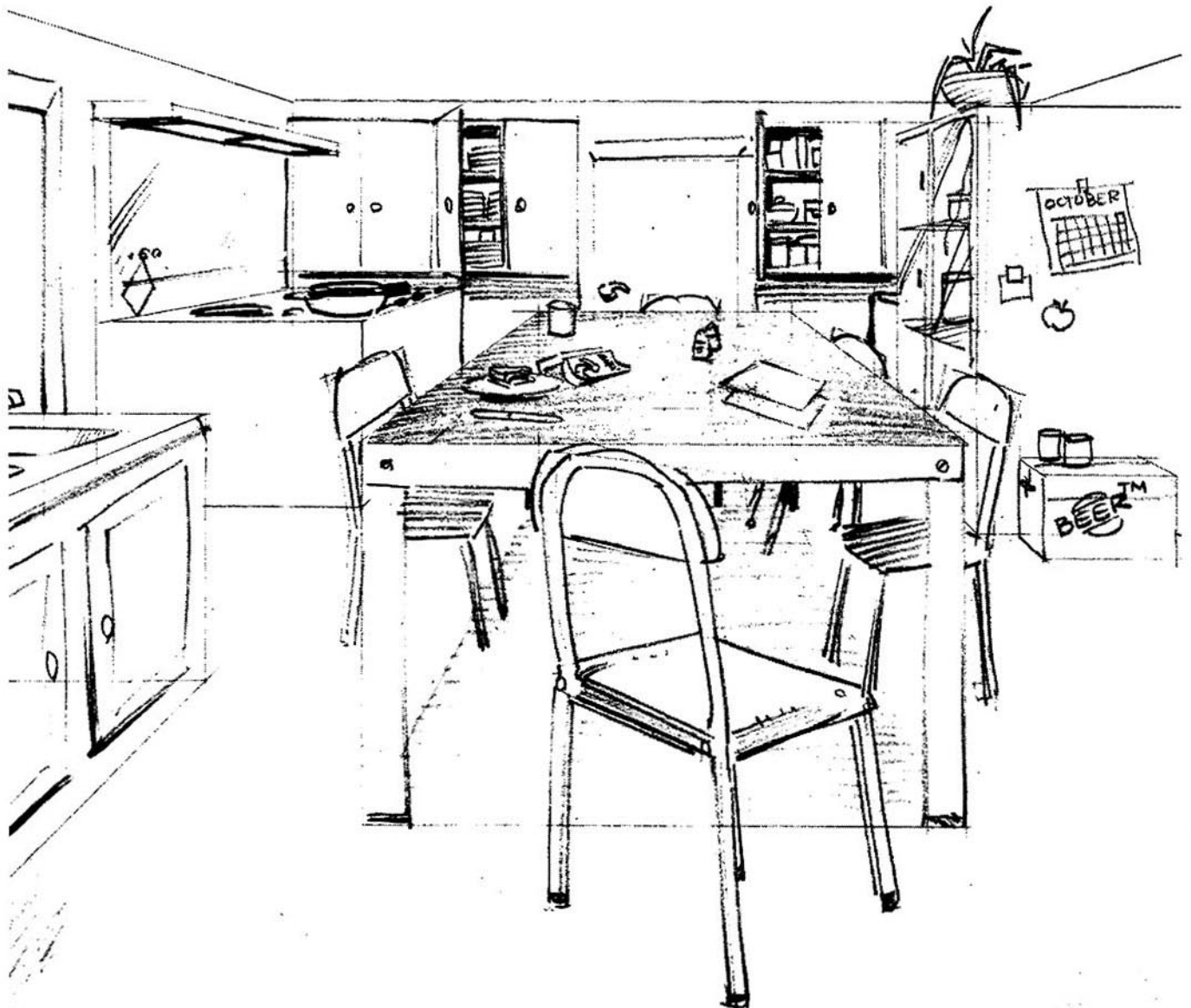
124F

Stirring around the contents of the other bedside table drawer, you notice a small, square white bottle of sugar substitute, but that's all. To explore more of the apartment, return to 118A.

124G

Aleta tries both to swerve and to stop in time. But there's no place to swerve to, and she was going too fast to stop. She skids into a turn that carries the Ferrari first into the barrier, then into the huge rock at the side of the road. The last blow smashes the gas tank, and a tiny spark from the tearing metal starts a conflagration that consumes both the sports car and your own vehicle, as well as, of course, the beautiful Web agent.

Satisfied at last, you walk on down the mountain. At Moorland, you call headquarters to send a Titan Team to help clean up the Web operation. You did the most satisfying part: you cleared Brittany of involvement with Web, and you prevented the bacteria cultures from being used for Web's evil purposes.



126A

Not wanting to announce your arrival on the mountain, you turn your lights off and find a fairly clear spot where you can pull your Firebird off the road. You check that your Mauser is secure in its shoulder holster under your dark sweater. It is just eight o'clock in the evening as you reach the clearing around the laboratory. Make a note of the time, and turn to 93B.

126B

You walk closer to the board and see that the central portion of the chalk holder is made up of a double strip of metal.

Unusual, you think, then you walk away. This is certainly a nothing room. [1X]

Turn to 41C.

126C

Staying out of anyone's sight below the trees, you take out your Orion card case, which is considerably more than the simple card case it appears to be. There are some virtually inconspicuous rough spots along the edge. When you move them in a certain way, the case pops open and becomes a delayed-action explosive.

You set the ten-second delay and place the device under a rock about twenty feet to the left of the main entrance door. Then you hurry through the trees to wait as close to the door as you can get.

Roll the two dice. If you get a double number, such as 33 or 77, turn to 117E. Otherwise, turn to 36G.

126D

Trying to circle the Ferrari, you move quietly through the mud and pine debris, until you hit the road. Then you accidentally step on some gravel, which starts rolling down the blacktop.

The foxy lady must have very acute hearing, because she swings toward you and shoots into the darkness. Her gun sounds like it's a Beretta.

If you want to return fire and conduct combat, turn to 61B. However, if you would rather try to sneak up on her and capture her, turn to 58B.

126E

Aaron Burkhardt has put Brittany Farrell into a small hotel near headquarters, where she can be comfortable but secure. As you go toward the room and see that it is guarded by an Orion agent, you wonder if she realizes that she is under very real suspicion.

The first thing Brittany says after greeting you, though, removes all doubts.

"Sebastian, old friend, you've got to clear me. They think I've been consorting with Web, letting their agents into the computer room. Oh, Burkhardt's acting as if he doesn't believe it for a minute, but he wouldn't be doing his job if he didn't check me out every which way." She's talking very fast, and you see a slight panic in her eyes.

"First, 'old friend,' come here." You pull Brittany

into your arms, where she doesn't even reach your chin. "Now, relax, Britt. I'm here to help. You know that, don't you?"

You tilt her head back so that she is looking straight into your eyes. "Well, don't you?"

She smiles and nods, and you feel some of the tension go out of this particularly beautiful woman with whom you once shared a most soul-satisfying affair. The end of the affair did not end the friendship.

And now, clearly, she needs you.

"Now, tell me everything that happened," you say, watching her graceful movement as she pours you both a cup of coffee from the stubby hotel coffee pot. As always, she drops a little white tablet of sugar substitute into hers from a bottle in her pocket. You admire her as she returns to the couch.

Turn to 58D.

126F

After listening a moment and hearing only a little banging that could be a restless animal in its cage, you open the door to the room where the laboratory animals are kept. A quick glance shows you that no one is inside.

But the moment you enter the room and close the door behind you, all hell breaks loose, with hooting, howling, banging, and shouting. The animals have gone ape!

You stand there bewildered, afraid that someone will come running to see what the commotion is. But after a few minutes you start to think that maybe the residents of this mountaintop retreat are used to such noises. [1X]

If you want to take a chance and study the room while there's no one—human, that is—in it, turn to 76A. If you decide it's too dangerous, leave the room and move on to the next room in your map; turn to 93D.

126G

The moment you leave the road, you start traveling at a steep angle down the mountainside, made more hazardous by the amount of ruts, rocks, and branches that cover the landscape, ready to send your lightly balanced vehicle into a flip.

If you have a map of the mountainside, turn to 51F. Otherwise, you're committed now to the off-road route; turn to 147C.

127A

Turn to page 91 and glance at the picture. Do not study it in detail and do not read the text.

You look into the window to see mainly darkness. The one night-light left burning by the far door reveals that you are looking into a laboratory. At first, the darkness makes you think that here is the place where you can enter the building, but then you realize that the window itself is very different from the others. It is mounted into the wall itself, with rubber gaskets covering the joints.

As you study the window, your eye is caught by a movement. Someone is entering the laboratory through the heavy door at the end of the room. It's a man carrying a bundle. As he passes under the night-light, you see the light reflecting off his balding head. He goes to a small refrigerator not far from your window, opens it, and removes a couple of flasks. At least you remember from high school chemistry what such glass things are called.

He studies the contents of the flasks against the light, puts tape over the cotton plugs in their mouths, and places them in the thing he carried into the room. It's a small red and white box. In fact, you think it may be a picnic cooler. Curious.

Reopening the refrigerator, the man inserts the cooler, closes the door, and leaves the room. You wish you could get in there to see what he is handling so carefully . . . but then, you probably wouldn't know what it was anyway. Besides, you'll never get in *this* window. [3X]

Go to the next room on your diagram and return to the chart on the inside back cover.

127B

You turn the wheel as hard as you can, but it's not good enough, even with your skill. The wheels of the Toyota lock and the momentum of the vehicle flips it over, with you leaning hard over in your seat belt. It skids to a stop in the bushes at the far side of the turn.

You're unhurt, but it isn't easy to get out of the truck; you have to push your door upward to get it open. As you leap to the ground, you listen to the stillness of the forest, and from far down the mountain you can hear the smooth roar of the Ferrari making its way down the mountain. There's no catching her now.

Turn to 16G.

127C

You stand for a moment, listening outside the door you think leads to the bedroom. Gradually you hear sounds—drawers slamming, water running, a man's heavy footsteps. This is no place for you. You've got to hunt for another room. [1X]

Turn to 93D.

127D

You don't see how you could eat any of it without having some garbage to get rid of, and that's not a real good idea. Oh, the grapes would be completely edible, but what might be on them in a refrigerator in a scientific laboratory? They don't appeal to you much.

There's nothing more of interest in the refrigerator, so you turn away. [1X]

If it is after eleven o'clock, turn to 19A. If it is before eleven, return to 76A.

127E

Turn to page 91 and glance at the picture. Do not study it in detail and do not read the text.

You glance into the scientific laboratory and see two people in white lab coats—a man and a woman—at work, although they seem to be doing more talking than working. The woman seems to be very angry, the man more puzzled and apparently trying to calm her down.

You wish you could hear what they're saying, but the window doesn't open. In fact, the glass is mounted into the wall itself. Where the glass joins the cement, there are heavy rubber gaskets sealing the joints. Someone must want very badly to keep something out of the lab . . . or is it keep something in? Whichever, there's no way you can use the laboratory to enter the building. [1X]

Move along to the next room on your diagram and return to the chart on the inside back cover.

127F

But Aleta Marcus knows the building better than you and uses that knowledge to better advantage. She draws you inexorably toward where she knows some guards are, and when they hear the gunfire, they appear and join in. You haven't a chance against all of them. Sebastian Cord, Orion's best Special Intelligence agent, dies bloodily on the floor of a mysterious laboratory in the wilds of Colorado.

127G

Time is running out, and you know you shouldn't spend much more time in the garage. You'll have to trust to luck for what more you investigate.

Roll one die twice, to choose only two more things to look at.

If you get:

1-2,
3-4,
5-6,
7-8,
9-0,

turn to:

136B
31B
78B
41B
37D



128A

You carefully make your way to the kitchen to investigate the refrigerator there. But you find nothing except normal food. As you're accepting that you goofed, you see the red Ferrari starting down the twisting road on the mountain. You're too late. The cultures are on their way . . . unless you can catch Aleta on the mountain.

Turn to 154A.

128B

All you find are lists of items that are to be picked up at various stops along the way to Los Angeles and where they are to be unloaded. You note that a quick stop will be made at one unmanned freight platform in a couple of hours.

Turn to 10B.

128C

Just then, the door bursts open and a guard, armed with an automatic, stands there. You duck, grabbing your Mauser at the same time. But the guard, shouting, "You're not one of us!" is already shooting.

Conduct combat. The guard, with a Pistol skill of 35, has the first shot. If you win, turn to 43E. If you lose by taking full damage to your head, chest, or abdomen, turn to 13A. However, if no one is dead after three exchanges of gunfire, turn to 98D.

128D

You come to the door of what you're sure must be the laboratory. You listen carefully but hear nothing. So you open the door and slip in. You find yourself in a small anteroom. There's a rack of clean white lab coats along one wall, and a door with a large round wheel in the middle of it with a small, thick-glassed window above that. When you look through the window, you see the actual lab beyond the door.

You also see—but cannot hear—two women, apparently quarreling. The redhead—Aleta—is looking very superior and demanding. The other, dressed in a lab coat, is blonde, very pretty, and very angry. She keeps shaking her head and pointing toward the door, as if demanding that Aleta get out.

Now's not the time to be here. One of the women could come storming out at any moment. [1X]

You leave the room and turn to 93D.

128E

A businesslike refrigerator stands across from the worktable. When you open it, the animals stir restlessly, as if expecting you to feed them. But you ignore them, and they settle down again.

Inside on the shelf are two cone-shaped glass containers of the kind you vaguely remember from high school chemistry, called an Erlenmeyer flask. They have cotton stopping them up. [1X]

In addition, you find some fresh fruit lying on the refrigerator shelf: bananas, grapes, papayas, and

apples. If you find yourself suddenly hungry, and want to eat something, turn to 25H. Otherwise turn to 127D.

128F

Hmmm, back-up, you think. Then you ask, "Do you back up the material every day?"

"Yes. That's done automatically."

"Can we compare the back-ups from, say, two days ago, with what's in the files now? Maybe find out if he made any changes in the computer data?"

"We don't need to go to the back-ups to do that. I run an automatic monitoring program continuously. It shows what files were entered and what changes were made."

You feel like cheering. "Can we take a look?"

In a few minutes, you see on the monitor a report that Perry has pulled out. Much of it is gibberish—binary codes and such—but you can tell that the dead man was working in the ANOMALIES ANALYSIS program, in which all the individual newspaper stories, rumors, or other tidbits of information reported by agents around the world are compared, contrasted, analyzed, and whatever else a computer can do. The analysis file shows which of the items might be related and what the implications would be if they were related. This is one of the systems that Orion uses to pick up hints that things might be in the works long before anything actually happens. It's Orion's way of keeping a step ahead of Web, the monolithic criminal organization that the Orion Foundation is dedicated to destroying.

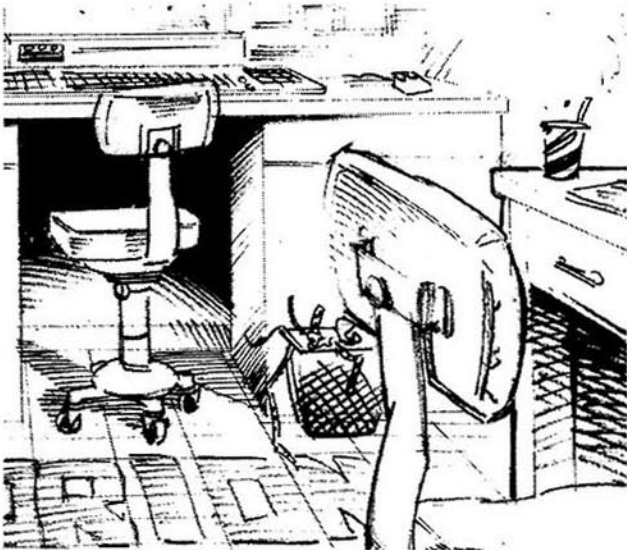
"Maybe he wanted to see if our computer found something that he was involved in."

"That's about as vague a supposition as I've heard in a long time," says Perry.

"Well, I can't get more specific until I know more."

You stare at the computer for a minute.

Turn to 84H.



129A

When you first joined Orion, Foster Needham was supposed to be the organization's up-and-coming young agent, but somehow he never managed to really up-and-come. Now he is a computer operator on his way down.

His drawer contains lots of personal-sized packs of tissues, all half-used. Beneath the tissues, you find a small notebook, like those that detectives—but not S.I. agents—often carry in their pockets. This one is empty, though some pages have been torn out of it.

At the back of the drawer is a torn half of a letter that says, "... in ten days, we'll be forced to ... in the hands of an attorney ..."—a dunning letter of some sort. Poor Foster.

There's nothing else, and you find yourself wondering what the man does to while away spare time on duty. Maybe just think about what might have been.

Return to **106D** to inspect another drawer, or **64A** to look at something else.

129B

You're not sure what the man is talking about, but it does seem as if he is outside whatever evil is going on in this place. You take a chance and open the door enough to see that the man is young, with longish curly hair. He wears a white lab coat. Might be useful to remember this guy.

In the meantime, however, go on to the next room on your map and turn to **93D**.

129C

The fight is rough, and it gets even rougher. One of the guards must have had boxing training, because just as you're about to get a grip on one, he gets you with a strong punch to the head. You feel your senses begin to reel and ...

[3X]

Turn to **142G**.

129D

You look around the room, but most of your senses are geared to hearing a sound at one of the doors. When it finally comes, you head for the other door. Thus, when the door opens, letting in the real guards, all they see is another guard leaving. They hear a voice saying, "He's not here," as the door closes.

The searching guards take for granted that it was a real guard telling them there's no need to search in the lounge, so the guards return to the hallway, without even having entered the room. A moment later, you return to the lounge, free to look around. **[1X]**

Turn to **148A**.

129E

Returning to headquarters from Brittany's apartment, you break in on a meeting between Aaron Burkhart and Perry Smith to ask for some work schedules of the computer operators. Instead of asking why, Perry quickly hands you the work record currently being used.

You've already seen with your own eyes that Berner, DeWitt, or Needham (or, grudgingly, Farrell) had the opportunity to switch the drugged bottle for the regular sugar substitute bottle after the body was found. In retrospect, it seems as if everybody and his brother was rummaging around in the operators' room this morning.

Backtracking a bit, you realize that any of the men could also have made the initial substitution beforehand, so that Brittany was drugged at the right time. But you suspect that they wouldn't have let it lie in the drawer very long before they wanted her to use one of the tiny tablets.

Looking at them one by one, you see that Bob Berner was notified about noon on Saturday, October 25th, that he would be starting full time. However, he hadn't yet been given a permanent schedule when he was on duty just before Brittany on Sunday evening.

You see that weekend schedules are kind of free-form, and that the operators pick their own working times, as long as someone is there at all times. Berner, DeWitt, and Needham were all on duty sometime between Britt's shift on late Saturday afternoon and when she came on at eleven last night.

You put the paper down in disgust. Any one of them could have done it. You had hoped that you'd at least get a lead by checking into the times.

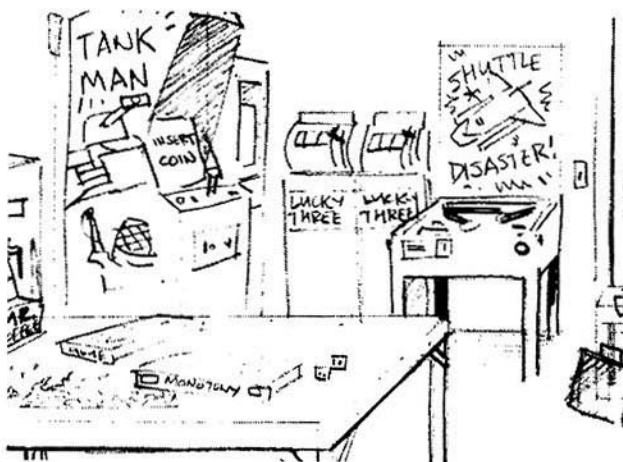
If you found something in Brittany's apartment that you want to discuss with her, turn to **153E**. If not, turn to **124B**.

129F

The young man is obviously not a guard: he's neither dressed like one, nor did he react like someone responsible for keeping strangers out. But until you know who he is, you don't want to get involved with him.

"Wrong room," you say, pulling back out of the open door and shutting it behind you. You wait a second for a shout or some other reaction from him, but there's nothing. You've got to get a move on to another hiding place, however. **[1X]**

Turn to **93D**.



130A

Leaping up the steps onto the rear of the car, you startle the conductor, who puts down Aleta's luggage and hurries back to you, while she walks on ahead.

"Do you have a ticket, sir?" he bustles, and you think he adds, "I thought she said she was alone."

"Yes," you reply coldly, holding out the small stamped folder you acquired from the laboratory's office. He inspects it closely and with some consternation, but apparently he can find nothing wrong with it, so he stands aside for you to enter the car.

Immediately, you realize that there is something very special about this train. The passenger car is made up of small conversation pits, each with its own large picture window. The whole car couldn't seat more than about twenty people. You wish now that you had taken a closer look at the price stamped on your ticket; you didn't know such trains existed. Even at this hour, wakeful passengers are watching the dark world pass the windows instead of going to their sleeping compartments.

You head for the nearest empty seating area that appears to be free, but the conductor stops you, saying "That area is Ms. Marcus's, sir."

"All by herself?"

"Well . . . I suppose not. Let me talk to her . . . I know she was expecting—Well, I guess it will be all right. She'll be going to the private car."

He stands back and lets you pass. "No luggage?" The doubts about your suitability re-enter his face.

"I travel light," you reply, entering the first empty seating area defined by an elegantly designed curved couch as the train pulls out of the tiny station and quickly gains speed.



A large suitcase, a small cosmetic case, and a wardrobe bag are stacked on the floor by the couch. You're certain that you saw them in Aleta Marcus's possession before she got on board. Glancing toward the other end of the car, you see the conductor disappearing through a door, and no sign of Aleta.

If you want to try to check the luggage for the bacteria cultures, turn to 121G. If you decide you'd better not, turn to 45C.

130B

You walk toward where you know the private car is. If you came into the baggage car from the private car, turn to 71B. If you boarded the train on the baggage car, turn to 155A.

130C

On the top shelf of the refrigerator is a red plastic picnic cooler. You pull it out and glance inside, where you see two flasks carefully mounted inside hand-carved plastic foam so that they can't fall. The flasks contain a grayish moldlike material and are capped very tightly. The stuff is all set for traveling. You wonder if maybe it's going somewhere tonight. [1X]

Return to 90A.

130D

The furious woman leaps for your neck and manages to get her hands around it. You try to twist in her hands so you can use yours to reach in her pocket for the key to the handcuffs, but she has such a strong grip on you that it just tightens when you try to turn.

With a jerk, you lower your head and butt the enraged woman, but she manages to give a shriek that brings the guards running in from outside.

Turn to 131D.

130E

In one smooth movement, you reach the glass door, pull it open, and fire twice, moving your gun hand only slightly between the two shots to cover both figures. But somehow, the fates are totally against you, and you miss both shots. One guard returns your fire, but the other one takes a moment to press a button on the floor, causing a horrible alarm to erupt throughout the building. Then he returns your fire.

Conduct combat with two guards, both with a Pistol skill of 35. If you win, turn to 150E. If you are seriously wounded and want to give up, hoping to live to fight another day, turn to 82G. If you receive a critical hit or take full damage to your head, chest, or abdomen, turn to 59F.

130F

As you flip the cover shut, you see the owner's name written inside. It is Beatrice Farquhar. You wonder who she is.

Return to 110A.

131A

Turn to page 125 and glance at the picture. Do not study it in detail and do not read the text.

You have to stand on tiptoes to see into the high kitchen window; it must be above the sink. Immediately, you see that two men dressed in guards' uniforms are sitting together at one end of the table, eating and drinking. Another man, dressed in a white lab coat, is sitting by himself at the other end of the table, reading as he eats. There's no way you're going to try to enter the building here. [1X]

Walk around the building to the next room on your diagram and return to the chart on the inside back cover.

131B

The moment you open the refrigerator, you find yourself very thirsty. You drink some fresh, cold orange juice right out of its mixing container, enjoying the golden flavor as it goes down your throat.

It looks as if someone has cleaned out the refrigerator recently. There are only leftovers in it, and just a couple containers with people's names on them. You see one that says "Aleta's. Do Not Touch!" [1X]

Return to 124A.

131C

You leap toward the door but fail to turn the handle before another guard comes dashing from the hallway on the opposite side of the entrance. He's holding a machine gun ready, and you don't feel prepared to take on one of those with your Mauser.

Turn to 81G.

131D

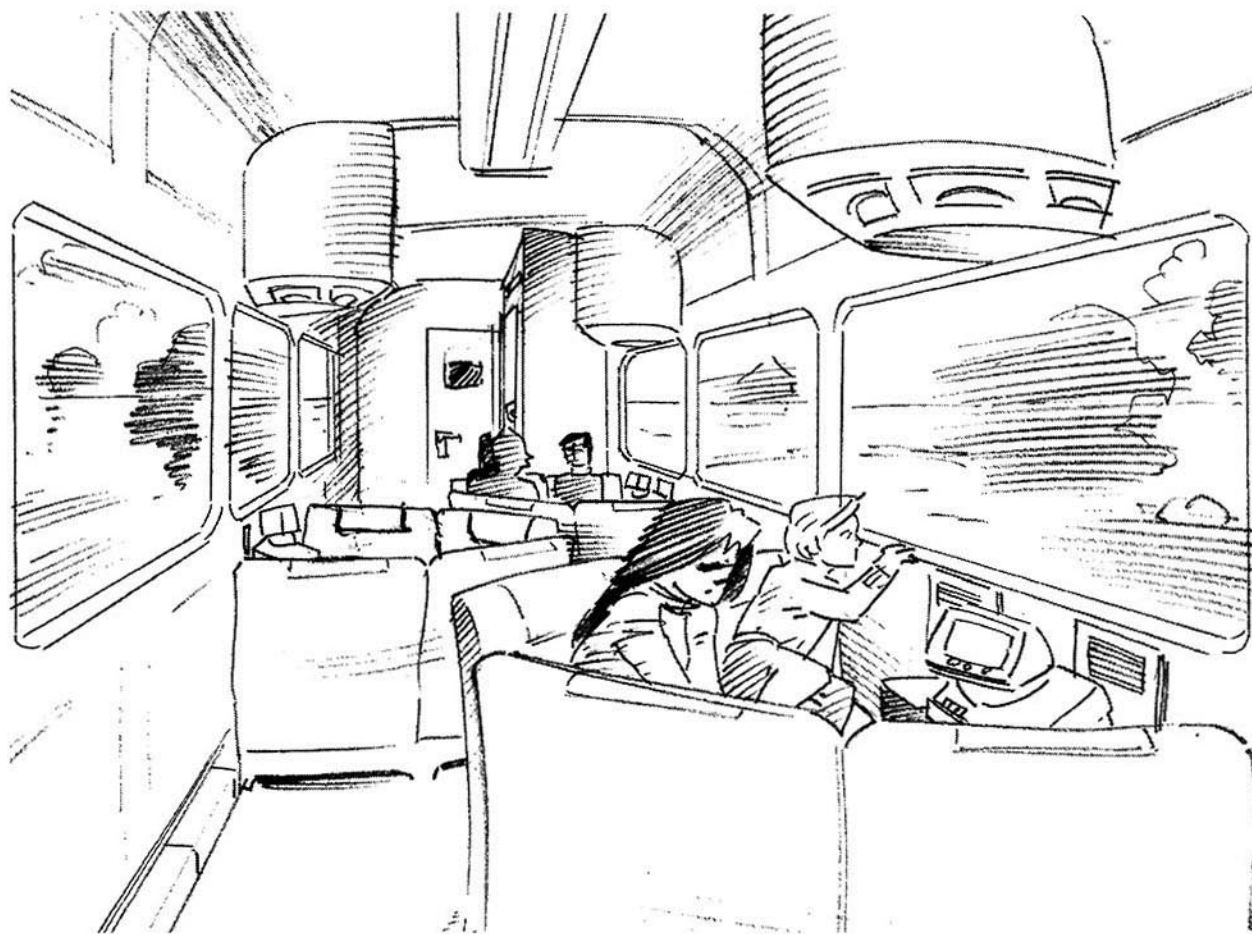
The Web agent directs you to the basement hallway and through a door that you figure is below the guarded lobby into a plain, unused-looking classroom.

"Are you planning to teach me a lesson?" you ask, cool laughter in your voice.

"Of course not. It's too late for you to learn a lesson. I'm going to dispense with you. You've been responsible for entirely too much hassle and disturbance around here." As the woman talks, she goes to the chalkboard and, still holding the gun on you, pulls a concealed lever mounted flush with the chalk rack on the bottom of the board. "You can join the others who tried that."

On the last word, the floor opens up beneath your feet, and you tumble toward a pit in the earth.

If you explored the classroom earlier, turn to 93A. If not, turn to 67D.



132A

You sit there, but nothing that you've heard or seen comes together. Finally, you return to headquarters, knowing that somehow Berner is the key to the answer, but not sure how to get it.

You follow the computer operator for several days, but see him do nothing more of interest. You made a bad choice, although you manage to convince Burkhart that he can trust Brittany and should not trust Berner.

You never do learn the reason behind the invasion into Orion's computer room.

132B

The excited chatter continues as guards explore the building and finally find more bundles of dynamite.

"Are you sure that's all?" asks Dr. Pachezny in worried tones.

"That's all!" exclaims Aleta Marcus. She walks in your direction but fails to see you as she sits on a tree stump.

The mournful scientist follows. "Well, I don't understand how it got there."

"There are lots of things you don't understand, Karl. Like the fact that you're not going with me when I leave here with the cultures."

"What? I don't under—"

"No, Karl. You never will. Our work here is over, and I've got to take the cultures on to the people who paid for them."

"Oh, Aleta, you even got my ticket! You said it was going to be a wonderful trip to Los Angeles—private car and everything."

"Stop whining, Karl. I said lots of things. And now I'm saying good-bye. I'm going to catch that 12:30 train by myself!"

She rises from the stump, pats Karl on the shoulder, and walks off around the building. The others, seeing her go, make their way back into the building. Karl sits alone, mourning. You hear him mumble. "I just don't understand."

Determined to try to stop Aleta Marcus from taking the cultures, you follow her to the garage. Just as you reach it, a red Ferrari roars around the building onto the road that descends the mountain. Aleta is leaving, alone.

As you walk quietly down the slope toward your rental Firebird, you hear Karl Pachezny mumble to himself, "I don't understand . . ."

Turn to 28G.

132C

You step quickly to the door on the right, push it open, and find yourself in a restroom containing two toilet stalls, with no other exit. You run back to the hallway, and choose between the other door (57G) and the stairs (76D).

132D

Mark DeWitt lives in a hotel suite, just as you do. In fact, you find yourself wondering if it might be in imitation of you. Brittany said you were his hero. He would imitate you exactly, but he didn't have much luck growing a black beard like yours. Also, you think, looking around at the lobby, his taste needs educating, or, admittedly, it might be his pocketbook that needs filling. This is an apartment hotel for those who can't afford to live in an actual hotel of reasonable quality.

The address list Burkhart gave you has DeWitt's apartment number, so you go right on up in the elevator without stopping at the desk. You walk through the empty hallway to the door labeled "622." Then, on the chance that DeWitt might have returned from headquarters, you knock.

When there's no answer, you use the master key that Burkhart also gave you, and step into a rather barren combination living room-kitchen.

If DeWitt is the first operator you have checked on, turn to 92F. If not, turn to 84B.

132E

A guard comes running toward you from the door at the far end of the garage. "What's the trouble?" he shouts. "What tripped the grid?"

He obviously thinks that you're a guard, too, which gives you a chance to get away.

"He ran out," you shout, turning back to the door you entered and running out. "I'll get him!"

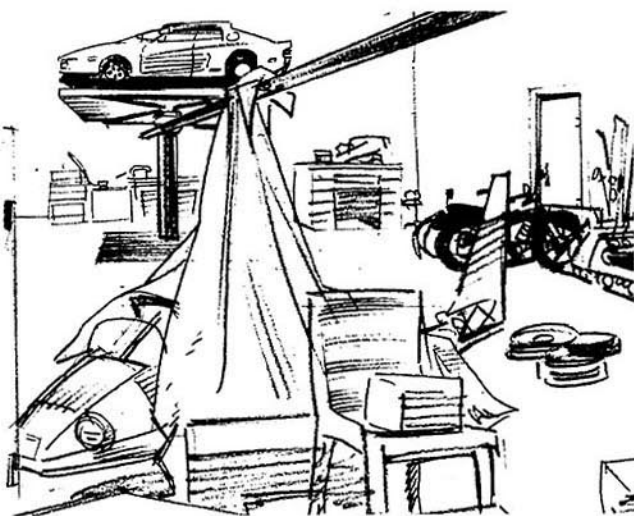
And before the guard can come out of the garage, you disappear down into the trees below the clearing.

Turn to 34C.

132F

You push open one side of the window and put a leg through. There's nothing underneath to stand on, so you're going to have to maneuver very carefully to avoid falling once your second leg is through the window.

Roll the two dice. If you roll your Dexterity score or less, turn to 43D. If you roll more turn to 95C.



133A

The computer in the corner is turned on; it looks as if Pachezny probably leaves it on at all times. At the moment, all you can see is what looks like the end of a report on the status of their experiments, ending with: "... the results are significant and the bacterial cloning procedures work as required." [1X]

If you want to explore the computer further, turn to 86D. If you're getting concerned about time and want to hurry through the remainder of this office, return to 48A.

133B

Unfortunately, the guard doesn't have to fight you, he just has to get his automatic in a position to shoot you. And he does, from just a few inches away so that there's no chance that Sebastian Cord will live to fight another day. The last thing you hear is a guard who says, "Now, Dr. Graham, give me that gun."

133C

You continue to turn over papers but see nothing of particular interest, except for learning that his name is Karl Pachezny, Ph.D.

As you look, the scientist babbles about things you don't understand—nucleotides, enzyme cutters, plastids, and so on. Finally, impatient, you thrust the gun in his face and demand, "Just tell me what the end result of all this is supposed to be!"

"B-bacteria that can be introduced into a manic-depressive's body, where they make an enzyme that goes to the brain and controls the psychotic ups and downs."

"I don't believe it!" you exclaim.

"It's true!" he replies indignantly. "The enzyme keeps them on an even keel." He doesn't like having his work doubted.

"I mean there's no reason for a heavily guarded, isolated laboratory to work on medicine for psychotics. What aren't you telling me?"

"That's all, really."

"Who's backing your work?" you demand.

"I d-don't know. She would never tell me," he mumbles.

"Who wouldn't?"

"Aleta Marcus. She—she set up this place and runs the guards and . . . things."

Talking some more, Pachezny seems to be relieved to be telling someone the things he knows, which isn't as much as you'd hoped. Aleta Marcus had come to him—a university scientist in bad odor with his university's ethics committee, he sheepishly admits—and asked him to take on this special work. She handled all the arrangements, even, he implies, to taking the lead in the affair they've been having all the time they were isolated here on the mountaintop. [3X]

Turn to 22A.

133D

Kicking and scratching, but unable to pull the trigger, Aleta fights hard as you take the little Beretta away from her. As she falls back, glaring at you holding her pistol, you say, "Spy, no. Person concerned about the use Web would make of recombinant genetics, yes."

Shock crosses her face at the name "Web," and without further thought, she dives at you in fury. Unwilling to take the chance that she could regain the papers or the gun, you fire, point-blank, into her pale peach skin. The beautiful Web agent falls back, as her body recoils from the blast. Then she is silent.

Turn to 28C.

133E

You listen for a moment at the door of the room you recall being a lounge or recreation room. Hearing no noise from inside, you open the door and slip through. A quick survey of the room shows lots of furniture and clutter, but probably no good place to hide. However, you're stuck now.

If you are wearing a guard's uniform, turn to 129D. If not, turn to 96H.

133F

Ducking and bobbing to ruin the guard's aim, you dash toward the door leading from the entrance room. You grab the handle to pull the door toward you . . . but your hand slides on the handle, and before you can grab it again and open the door, the armed guard is standing right behind you.

Turning slowly, you prepare to grab his weapon. But, no naive beginner, he stands far enough away so that you can't possibly grab his gun, yet close enough so that there's no chance that a bullet wouldn't hit you.

A cruel smile forms on the guard's face. You're readying your muscles to launch yourself under his weapon when you feel your arms grabbed from behind. You're well and truly trapped, and you can't even figure out where this new menace came from. A gun butt descends onto your head, and you feel yourself blacking out. . . . [2X]

Turn to 142G.

134A

You turn to the desk, where the lamp is making a circle of bright white on the papers.

Roll the two dice and add the numbers.

If you get:

2-9,
10-13,
14-20,

turn to:

22B
62E
128B

134B

Before you can go any farther, you feel a vibration on your wrist. Holding the Orioncomm before your eyes, you see flashing across the tiny screen the words:

ALETA MARCUS — ALIAS ALETA HAMPTON —
5'8", RED HAIR —

DRIVER IN MAJOR WEB ENTERPRISE,
BEIRUT 1986. —

BELIEVED MOVED TO SENIOR POSITION.

So now you're no longer in doubt. This is a Web enterprise and that redhead with the sexy walk and beautiful voice is in it right up to her pretty little, uh, rear end. You didn't expect anything else, but it still makes you a little sad. [1X]

Turn to the inside back cover and go on to the room you were about to check.

134C

As you move among the cages, the commotion the animals are making gets more raucous. It drowns out the sound of the outer door opening. Suddenly, two guards stand behind you, weapons pointed. One grabs you and pulls your arms behind your back, applying handcuffs.

"So, we caught us the reason for all the noise from the animals. What should we do with him?"

The other says simply, "Take him to the boss." [1X]
Turn to 81A.

134D

The guard hesitates just long enough to give you a good first shot. Since he is taken by surprise and not inherently a good shot, he goes down quickly.

No doors have opened at the sound of the gunfire, so maybe no one has heard it. Hoping against hope, you grab the guard's body and pull it toward a door that looks smaller and less substantial than the other doors, so maybe it's a closet.

You're in luck! It's a storage closet of some kind. You quickly drag the body in and close the door. There's no key to lock it with, but perhaps no one will discover the body there for many hours. [1X]

For now, hurry to the next room by returning to the chart on the inside back cover. However, if you wish to go to the basement, turn to 25E.

134E

You take your cutting tool and—holding your breath, as if that would make a difference—cut one of the wires

going from the battery to the blasting cap. Roll the two dice. If you roll 10 or more, turn to 96B. If you roll less, turn to 74B.

134F

The angry woman looks doubtful for just a flash, then exclaims, "He's lying. He was searching my bag. I bet he even took something, perhaps some of the jewelry I have in there."

By this time, everyone in the lounge car—why don't they go away and sleep?—is standing looking at you. There's silence for a moment as the conductor uses a small radio beeper to call someone.

"Now look here," you say firmly, trying to keep the rising anger out of your voice. "I was just trying to help the lady. If that's not all right, then you'll excuse me. It was my mistake trying to be helpful."

But no one is listening now. They're watching a big, burly man dressed in traditional overalls moving toward you like a juggernaut. You have no place to go, and you don't dare threaten anyone with your gun; there are too many people in the car. All you can do is keep pretending.

"Hank," says the conductor in a slightly squeaky voice betraying panic, "this man was caught trying to take something from this lady. We don't need him in here. Do something with him."

For a moment, you picture the burly Hank picking you up like a piece of trash and dumping you into a large wastebasket.

In fact, that's just what he tries to do. Still reluctant to use your gun in the crowd, you go along with the big man toward the far door of the car. But when he tries to pick you up and toss you off the train, you decide it's time to protest.

Conduct close combat with Hank, who has a Basic Melee skill of 52. If you win, turn to 86E. If you are losing, turn to 101F.

134G

Suddenly, you feel a real urgency about going to Berner's place. You're convinced you'll get some answers there.

Turn to 53F.



135A

Aleta's briefcase is leaning against a leg of the table. You crouch down beside it to open it.

If you came into the private car on your own after boarding in the baggage car, turn to 16A. However, if you came into the private car with Aleta, turn to 146F.

135B

The bullet that you know will be the last you need to kill you rips its way into your body, driving you to the nauseous green linoleum tile. You reach toward the fire alarm on the wall above you. But it's no use. With a dying sigh, you drop your arm again, knowing that Sebastian Cord will never rise again, except by the force of the dynamite that is about to blow Web's genetics laboratory to bits.

135C

Ignoring tinglings of memory as you look at the beautiful old brass bed, you carefully check the bedside tables. In one of them you find a pack of cards, a quite beautiful deck with Elizabethan designs that you remember using to play cribbage with Brittany one warm summer evening.

To study the cards more closely, roll the two dice and add the numbers rolled. You may roll only one time.

If you get:

2-7,
8-12,
13-20,

turn to:

16D
148C
81B

135D

You come to, lying on the ground next to railroad tracks. It is still night, but there are no lights anywhere.

As you rise, you realize that every muscle in your body aches, and that you're chilled through from lying out on a cold October night. The train, of course, is long gone, and so, too, are your chances of pursuing the flasks of special bacteria. You wonder if you'll ever know what Web was planning to do with them.

Turn to the pocket at the back of the book. Remove the item with the red seal and read it.

135E

When you tell Burkhart you want to look into security systems, he calls Herb Norton, a young man—well, he's younger than you—who immediately puts your back up. He resents the fact that you're even questioning him, as if something went wrong with his security system.

"I'm not saying you did anything wrong, Herb," you say, trying to control your impatience. "I'm asking you *how the man got in*!"

"Well, obviously, Farrell let him in."

"No, Herb. That isn't obvious. Now, tell me about

the system."

"Well, you know about the complete separation of personal computers and the mainframe. There are no modem lines going in, no cables, nothing. A person *must* physically go into the room to work on the computer."

"Yes, Herb. I got that. But *how did he get in*?"

"The only way those double doors open is if someone with an authorized palm print puts his right palm on the sensor beside the door. The computer—that's another computer; a little one that just contains identification material—reads the palm print on the sensor, checks it against the ones in its authorized files, and unlocks the door if everything is hunky-dory." Then he spits out the words: "And that is what it did! Brittany Farrell put her palm against the sensor and the computer opened the door. The computer records show that. Her palm opened the door at 2:20 a.m.!"

"Okay, thanks," you say, sending the obnoxious man on his way. So, you have to accept that Brittany's own hand opened the door.

Clearly, the time has come to talk to Brittany Farrell herself.

Turn to 126E.

135F

The woman, preparing to leave, says, "Send Lorendi's wife some flowers. Then do what you can about getting someone else in there."

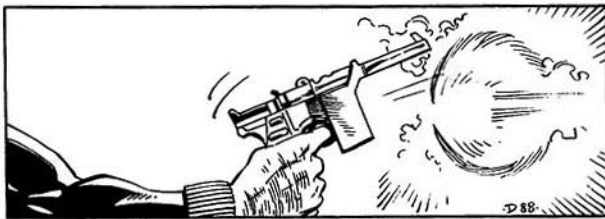
"Maybe I'll sneak in some night myself!" Leroy's jowls jiggle as he chuckles at the thought of his bulk sneaking anywhere.

"You do that and you could single-handedly bring down a major project." She smiles. "Thanks anyway. Now, I've got to be off."

You wait impatiently as the pair finish their farewells and the woman leaves.

Hurrying but trying to seem at leisure, you, too, go to the door. Suddenly, you feel your arm gripped by a strong hand.

Your immediate urge is to strike out. If you want to follow up on that urge, turn to 81D. If you want to keep pretending innocence, turn to 76F.



136A

The bedroom, presumably the administrator's or the high muckety-muck scientist's, is a surprise in the midst of the rather sterile, cement-block look of the rest of the building. Obviously, a woman has had a hand in the design of this place. Also obviously, both a woman and a man occupy the room—in less-than-perfect harmony: a stain on one wall and broken glass on the floor beneath it show where one of them threw a drink at the other.

The bed is king-sized, luxuriously unmade with satin sheets and a sybaritic satin comforter on it. The chair is just as comfortable-looking, and right next to it are all the comforts of your friendly neighborhood bar. Off the room is a nice, private bathroom, probably the only one in the place. [1X]

To check out the:	turn to:
bedside table	121E
bookshelf	14B
bar	83A
dressers	93F
bathroom	108E

If guards are aware that you are in the building, you must roll a luck roll before exploring any item listed above. If you get double numbers on the dice, turn to 128C. Otherwise, continue exploring.

When you are ready to go on to the next room, go out into the corridor and turn to 93D.

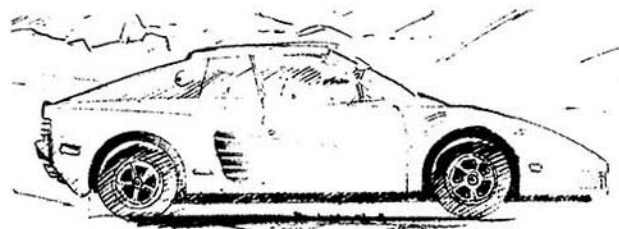
If you think you have learned enough to take action, turn to 86F.

136B

You inspect the clutter on and around the workbench. If it is after eleven o'clock, turn to 144E. If it is before eleven, turn to 13D.

136C

"I'm here to help clear things up," you say, entering the room.
If you are wearing a guard's uniform, turn to 68B. If not, turn to 12G.

**136D**

The instant you saw the muscles in her arm start to tense you knew something was about to happen. But she's quicker than you imagined, and the knife enters your shoulder beneath the collar bone.

The sudden pain stuns you for a mere second, but that's sufficient time for the woman to shout, "GUARDS!" and to press a button that sends a bell chiming through the halls. In just another second, the door is flung open, and you find yourself surrounded by guards, your own gun useless.

"Take him out in the guardroom and keep him there until I come," demands the woman.

The biggest guard cuffs you and leads you out of the bedroom. [2X]

Turn to 81A.

136E

Turn to page 105 and glance at the picture. Do not study it in detail and do not read the text.

You glance through the small glass panes set into the rolling door of the garage. There's a man in a sweatshirt, but wearing the uniform pants of the guards, apparently working on something near the worktable at the back of the garage. You're not going to be entering the building here and now. [1X]

Move to the next room on your diagram and return to the chart on the inside back cover.

136F

The red Ferrari, which you covet with all your heart, stands in the middle of the floor, pointed toward the big garage exit. The car's doors and trunk lid stand open, and there are suitcases on the floor nearby.

Knowing that if you make a mistake in your reasoning, it could mean the failure of your mission, you consider why this car is sitting here like this. If you think you know, turn to 72B. If not, turn to 147A.

136G

Most of the cupboards contain ordinary lab stuff, glassware, labels, manuals, stirring rods, and so on. But you find something that catches your attention: an autoclave for sterilizing. It's larger than you would have thought necessary in a laboratory, but maybe this lab is extra germey.

You admit, though, that you don't know what you're looking for in the cupboards. Even if something important had been left out, you wouldn't recognize it.

Then you see above a cabinet a sign that reads: "BE METICU, LOUSE!" Though you smile at it, you realize it is good advice to you. You look in that cabinet again but just discover more piles of Petri dishes, pipettes, and other glassware. [2X]

If it is after eleven o'clock, turn to 17C. If not, return to 90A.



138A

The personal computer is turned on, surprisingly enough. There's a file box of disks next to it, which you leaf through. If the label on one or two catches your attention, look at it. Afterward, return to 110A.

To look at the:	turn to:
Shareware Chess,	153D
Public Letters,	148F
Recombinant Plan,	108F
CAD,	104B
Animal Reports,	106B

138B

Your foot to the floor, the truck picks up speed as if shot by a giant catapult. Within seconds you can see by the headlights in the night ahead of you that you're catching up to the Ferrari. Then Aleta's car's lights make a sweeping ninety-degree turn, and you're going so fast that you can't slow down for the turn.

Roll the two dice. Deduct 10 points from your Driving/Automobile skill because of the truck's acceleration. If you roll more than the modified skill score, turn to 116A. If you roll the modified score or less, turn to 56B.

138C

The key is in the ignition, so you just have to belt yourself into the little truck's front seat and zoom out onto the road that twists into the trees below the laboratory. There's a full moon, but it mostly creates shadows that make the road appear to be inhabited by dark ghosts.

Within two minutes, you're going at high speed, but then, looming out of the darkness ahead of you, the road takes a sudden twist around a giant boulder. If you were on the motorcycle, you could just take it in a wide turn, but not in the truck. There's no time to slow down, so you must take it at your present speed and just hope.

Roll the two dice. If you make your Driving/Automobile score or less, turn to 30G. If you roll more, turn to 127B.

138D

In a rather heavy-looking textbook, on the effect of enzymes on neurological tissue, you find a grocery list. [1X]

If you want to check out some other books, return to 66G and roll again. If not, return to 48A.

138E

You find in an espionage novel, called *Mountain Chase*, a note written in a rather feminine hand: "Sound idea!" It is written by a passage describing the bombing of a building in such a way as to guarantee that anyone inside will die. [1X]

If you want to check out some other books, return to 66G and roll again. If not, return to 48A.

138F

The desk is large and serviceable, with drawers on each side, and plenty of room on the top. You stand in front and leaf through the papers. There are feeding schedules, reports of medical tests on various animals, chemical formulas that mean nothing to you. All are addressed to or signed by Dr. Karl Pachezny.

Underneath it all, you find a handwritten letter—at least the start of one—that says:

My wonderful Aleta, I still find it totally amazing that a project I was so reluctant to do has brought me you. When you came and offered me so much to take on this work, I was happy for the money, of course, and the chance to show my former "colleagues" how wrong they were about me!—but I never dreamed that it would also bring me the happiest times of my life, those times I can spend with you.

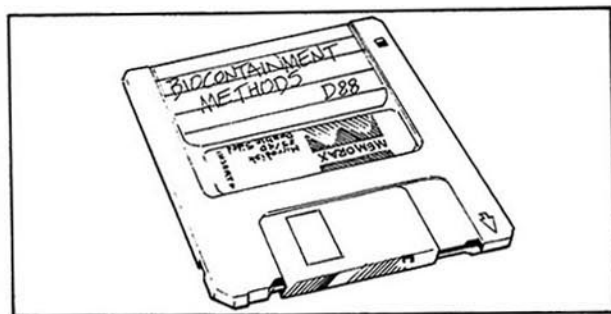
Those times, too, make me realize how foolish I am to have doubts about the arrangements you have made. I know that the competition must not be allowed to find out what we have accomplished. But I need you to remind me of that.

I know that you feel we must be so circumspect when the others are around, but when you are near, my senses perceive things they have never known before. If only there were a recombinant gene that could produce another you. Then I could keep you with me forever.

When we deliver the material to the man in Los Angeles and our work is over, I insist that we—

You find yourself wanting to retch at the unfinished letter, and toss it aside. [2X]

If you want to continue looking through the papers, turn to 123E. If you'd rather explore the drawers, turn to 79D.



139A

Knowing you're going to have to hurry because Aleta might wake and wonder where you are, you take a quick look at the luggage on the padded rack. You recognize no names on the tags, nor does any of it look like anything but regular luggage.

The dog tied to the desk has been just growling since you came in, but now, as you walk toward it, it begins to bark at you, a furry ball of fury.

Suddenly, the door at the end of the car nearest the passenger car is flung open and a burly trainman wearing traditional overalls comes dashing in.

"Hey, what're you doin' in here. Passengers ain't allowed in here!"

If you're still determined to explore this room, you're going to have to do it despite the burly trainman (51D). However, if you think it's probably the better part of wisdom to go back to Aleta in the private car, turn to 35C.

139B

As you contemplate the vastness of the evil that is at work in the Web organization, you suddenly realize that you are staring at the metal chalk holder at the bottom of the board. There's something rather peculiar about it.

Roll the two dice. If you roll your Intelligence score or less, turn to 12B. If you roll more, turn to 126B.

139C

You peer around at the room, knowing you must get out of here as quickly as possible.

There's a calendar for the month on the wall, with something written on today's date: "LEAVE!"

As you head for the door, you see a piece of paper crumpled up on the floor. You pick it up and see that it says, in flowing red felt-tip pen, "Alex. Please make sure that the Ferrari is ready Wednesday evening. I'll use the truck to go into Denver. Thanks. Aleta."

Suddenly, you are certain that things are coming to a head in this place tonight. But you've got to discover for sure what it is these people are doing and where they are going. [2X]

Return to 124A.

139D

As you take the corner on two wheels, you see that the road divides. The right-hand part is a full ninety-degree turn and enters a residential neighborhood. That's where Berner's car has gone. The left-hand part immediately becomes a ramp onto an expressway, and that's the way your car is going! Or is it? You could just as easily crash into the big cement divider!

Roll the two dice again. If you get more than your Driving/Automobile skill, turn to 99B. If you get the score or less, turn to 104F.

139E

You come to the office, certain you'll find things that will tell you just what is going on. After listening carefully at the door for a moment, you open it and go in.

But it's not empty. A man whose shiny balding head reflects the desk lamp is sitting behind the desk writing. He glances up as you open the door, says "Who the hell are . . ." and then falls silent at the sight of your gun, which is pointed right at him.

"Someone who needs some information," you reply, walking toward him. He cringes as if he can already see a bullet speeding toward him.

"Wh-what do you want?" The arrogance has gone out of his voice.

"I want to know what is going on at this place!"

"We're just a s-scientific laboratory." Then he tries getting huffy. "Besides, what business is it of yours? You have no right to come in here with a gun!"

Ignoring his display of assertiveness, you ask, "If this is just a scientific laboratory, why does it need guards?"

"Obviously, to keep nosy people like you out! But they're not doing their job very well."

You gesture threateningly with your Mauser, and his arrogance oozes out like air out of a leaky balloon. "Tell me about it."

"Th-this is a b-biological laboratory. We do important research that other people would like to know about."

"Like what?"

"L-like cellular studies . . . you know, genetics."

As you talk and listen, you begin to use your empty hand to turn over papers, open drawers, and quickly explore the room. You can still absorb all that the frightened man is trying to make you believe.

Roll one die. If you get an odd number, turn to 56D. If you get an even number, turn to 133C.

139F

As you move to the bedroom window, you realize that someone is in the room, with the shade up. How convenient.

Staying as far to one edge of the window as you can and still see in, you see a slender man with a balding head moving hurriedly around the room. There's a suitcase open on the bed which he is filling with his belongings from a dresser.

You'll not be entering the building here, but this man is clearly occupied, so it's a good time to enter somewhere. [1X]

Check the next room on your diagram and return to the chart on the inside back cover.

140A

You feel quite confident now that Britany has not been lying, that a *drugged* bottle of sugar substitute was in her drawer at work, and that it was replaced with one of her usual kind afterward! You almost let out a whoop of joy. Now you've really got some evidence!

You have an urge to hurry back to headquarters to discuss who had an opportunity to switch bottles. But you know you need to be thorough. For now, return to 118A to continue investigating. However, when you are through, turn to 129E.

140B

It's difficult to get Mark DeWitt out of his apartment because he's eager to stay and help you search—although what good searching an apartment of someone who wants you to search can do, you don't know. However, that's your task right now, so you send DeWitt to work and turn to exploring the small apartment.

Turn to 96A.

140C

You're heading toward the left-hand door when you hear a sound behind you. Someone must have come from the hallway.

"Hold it right there!" a voice says.

If you are wearing a guard's uniform, turn to 89D. If not, turn to 62B.

140D

But you do still have your special gimmick from Orion, the exploding card case. The guards didn't take it from you when they checked for weapons.

You pull the small gold case from your pocket. "This will get us out of here."

Sarah looks doubtful, but is willing to accept you at your word. "What do we do then?"

"What's the most important thing to do?" you ask.

"Get hold of the recombinant culture and destroy it. Quintessential is demanding it in the next few days, and it would be impossible for them to recreate the culture anytime soon. Besides, Karl was so busy chasing Aleta, he never paid much attention to what I was doing and he wouldn't really understand my notes about the procedure."

"Where do we go?"

"The laboratory."

"All right." You start moving some almost imperceptible notches on the outer edge of the case, until suddenly it pops open. The thing is primed. You press a few secret places on the magnetic case and attach it to the door.

You pull Sarah down behind the easy chair. She's just beginning to get restless (and wondering if you really need to hold her so tightly) when an explosion sounds at the door. You rise and see, through the smoke and falling debris, the remains of the prison door, open.

"Come on!" you say urgently, grabbing Sarah's hand. "We've got to get out of here. Lead me to the laboratory."

"Uh... here, follow me!" The scientist runs ahead of you and pulls you up the stairs.

You come up the stairs on the left side of the guardroom. You must run clockwise through the building's corridor. Check your map. If the laboratory is located before the second corner of the corridor around the guardroom (at approximately ten o'clock position), turn to 96C. If it is after the corner, turn to 109F.

140E

It's pretty chilly out, but you take off your dark shirt and remove your white undershirt. Then, from the cover of the ring of dark trees around the building, you toss a small stone at the front door. It strikes with a very slight ping, which the guards ignore. You try again, with a slightly larger stone, and the guards look up. You are ready with your white undershirt floating from a long stick, which you wave around from behind a tree. You hope that all the guards are seeing is a lightly floating streamer of white standing out starkly from the darkness around the building.

To see if you're lucky enough to have found two superstitious guards, roll the two dice three times. If you get a double number in those three rolls—a 33, for example, or a 77—you've been lucky; turn to 101E. If you fail your luck roll, turn to 60D.

140F

Hoping sincerely that this man doesn't know that Aleta Marcus boarded alone, you head toward the private car, saying, "Oh, sorry. I won't bother you anymore." And you step through the doors between the cars.

As the outer door closes behind you, you find yourself in an unexpectedly nice car, a comfortable living room on wheels.

"Who are you and what are you doing in my car?" demands Aleta Marcus, rising from where she's been sitting at the table, writing.

If you know who gave her the authority to use this car, turn to 48G. If you don't, turn to 112E.



141A

You talk to Burkhart about the Mountain-Midlands Express. He bypasses the computer operator on duty, and takes you into the computer room. You watch as this Orion administrator shows off his own skill with the machine. Within seconds, you're seeing on the monitor: "Mountain-Midlands Express: small, luxury railway operating in western U.S.; may be a Web cover and transport operation."

Okay! Now you've got at least a little evidence linking Denver's problems to Web!

If you need something analyzed, turn to 100C. If you're through checking operators' homes, you can try to get some rest (69C). Otherwise, return to 93C.

141B

You learn from the file labeled "Staff" that Dr. Pachezny chose Dr. Sarah Graham as the chief geneticist here because of her record with Harvard Medical School. She was willing to come out here to the boonies because she needed the extra money to buy off an ex-husband who was insisting on major alimony payments from her. She's been here about six months.

Her assistant, Artie Sadler, is not strictly a geneticist. He's a graduate student in microbiology who has to earn money to go back and finish his doctorate. He's been here only a few months and—the file notes—is to be told nothing confidential.

Underneath those papers are notes on the guards, of whom there are ten, eight always on rotating shifts and two away from the mountain.

Roll one die. If you get an odd number, turn to 107C. If you get an even number, turn to 152D.

141C

You and Sarah Graham walk through the night to your rental car, hidden in the bushes down below. You know you'll have to come back to help the Titan Team clean up, but right now, the fresh air of the mountain night and the knowledge that you prevented a grotesque Web enterprise from reaching its evil conclusion are sufficient to make you smile.

141D

You hold your breath, trying to make yourself as small as you can. But the guards do a more thorough job of searching than most guards do and you can't stay still long enough. A button strikes the wall, making a scraping sound, and you find yourself surrounded by guns.

You stand erect, shake down your clothes, and say, "Good day, gentlemen."

You maintain your cool as they cuff you and march you off. "Take him to the boss." [2X]

Turn to 81A.

141E

You return to the hotel where Brittany is being kept. You find her sitting on the couch, staring into space over the

turned-on TV.

Excitedly, you sit beside her. "Britt, think for me. A little while ago I saw you put sugar substitute into your coffee."

She looks at you as if you've gone slightly crazy in the meantime, but merely says, "Yes?"

"Was that the kind you always use?"

"Yes. I keep a little bottle of it in each purse, some at home, and at the office, of course."

"Well, look at this photo . . ." You show her the one from the envelope. "Why is this bottle a different shape?"

She studies the photo, turning it this way and that, trying to read the writing on the bottle, but it's turned over, so she can't. But gradually, a glow of excitement comes into her face.

"Somebody must have switched the bottles! There must have been a drug in the substitute bottle."

"And," you say, picking up the reasoning, "then they replaced the bottle with your regular one, but not until after the photographs were taken!"

A look of alarm comes into her face. "But . . . that means it must have been one of the other operators. Except for Aaron Burkhart and you, they were the only ones in the room after the body was found."

"What about the photographer?"

"Well, I would certainly think Aaron trusts him a whole lot. He's in on just about everything that comes through the Denver office, and I certainly haven't heard about there being any problems until now."

"So," you say, "if you're right, the only person who could have substituted the bottle was one of the other operators. And it was probably done while we were standing right there in the same room!" That thought makes you very angry. "I guess I'd better start looking at each of them."

"Good luck, Seb," Brittany says. She places her hand on your arm and you feel a slight tremble in it.

"Just relax, Britt. I won't let you down."

Turn to 71E.

141F

Suddenly, you feel all your boyhood dreams drawing you to the motorcycle. It's a big thing, just the kind you'd like to zoom down the road on, twisting and maneuvering in places that cars can't go.

That's enough! you say to yourself, shaking your head. This is no place to start wishing. [1X]

Turn to 104A.



142A

The shock continues when you reach Needham's apartment. It's the pits! Two rooms in a building that can only be called a tenement: peeling paint, worn linoleum tile, exposed light bulbs, and that dreadful smell of garbage and urine that permeates buildings where people stopped caring long ago.

You remember this man from when he lived elegantly and cared about everything in his environment. Now Foster's setting is working to destroy everything good about him.

A quick look shows you that the only places anything interesting might be would be the closet (112D) or the kitchen (76G).

142B

You glance into the garage/workshop through the small windowpanes in the large rolling door. A man with a balding head and a woman—it's Aleta!—are entering the garage carrying suitcases. They move toward a flame-colored Ferrari and begin loading it. [1X]

Maybe this is the time to enter the building, but it won't be through the garage. Move on to the next room in your diagram and return to the chart on the inside back cover.

142C

You grasp the wires coming from the battery and pull. Roll the two dice. If you get 80 or more, turn to 96B. If you get less, turn to 95B.

142D

Your own reluctance to regard naked Mark DeWitt as an enemy does you in. Between each shot, you keep trying to get him to listen, but all your attempts do is make you an easier target.

You come to with your entire body in pain. It seems that once you fell, Mark realized that you were not an enemy, and he quickly called an ambulance. However, Aaron Burkhardt comes down hard on the computer operator and puts him into a menial slot where a dampening eye can be kept on his ambition to be a top Special Intelligence agent.

Sebastian Cord, on the other hand, has a long convalescence ahead of him, and another agent will have to take on the task of trying to clear Brittany Farrell.

142E

You listen at the lounge door, then open it, ready to step in. But suddenly, you hear a woman's voice say, "Oh, baby, wouldn't it be a lot nicer on the couch?" and a man replies uncertainly, "Uh, . . . sure, Aleta."

Suppressing your amusement, you manage to close the door quietly and move on to the next room. [1X] Turn to 93D.

142F

The first door you try is locked, and you doubt if you should take much time to try picking any locks today; besides, it

isn't one of your skills. You never have had enough sensitivity in your fingertips . . . except for games of chance, that is.

The second door opens into a dark room that smells rather musty. Gradually, your eyes adjust to the light coming from the open door, and you realize that you're in some kind of classroom or conference room—all chalkboard and table and uncomfortable-looking chairs.

If you want to take a chance and turn on the light, turn to 38A. If you think you'd better not, knowing it would be visible under the door, turn to 41C.

142G

You struggle to remain alert, but one more blow sends your senses spinning into a bottomless pit, and you can only hope that you will wake up alive. Turn to 19C.

142H

Aleta Marcus is a good enough driver to keep control of the Ferrari as it leaps ahead from the impact of your truck. She swings it back onto the road in one smooth movement and accelerates away.

But the road is still wide, and you're still after her! Do you want to try to shoot out her tires (31C) or pass her and set up a roadblock (86C)?

142I

Making sure no one is about to enter the shop, you creep up to the door at the back. The door opens outward, and you are able to pull it slightly ajar to hear what is going on behind it.

Berner's voice is saying, ". . . changing the bottle. I gather it worked easily, and just as you said it would."

The woman responds with, "Of course. Now, do you know what Lorendi took care of before he died?"

"No. There's a close eye being kept on the computer, so I haven't been able to determine what changes were made. Things should ease up in a few days, and I'll be able to let you know."

"It'll have to wait until I'm through at the lab at Moorland. I'm returning there in a few minutes to be sure the work is done. But I sure wish we could be sure that all references to the project were out of Orion's computer. . . . Well, you did your job."

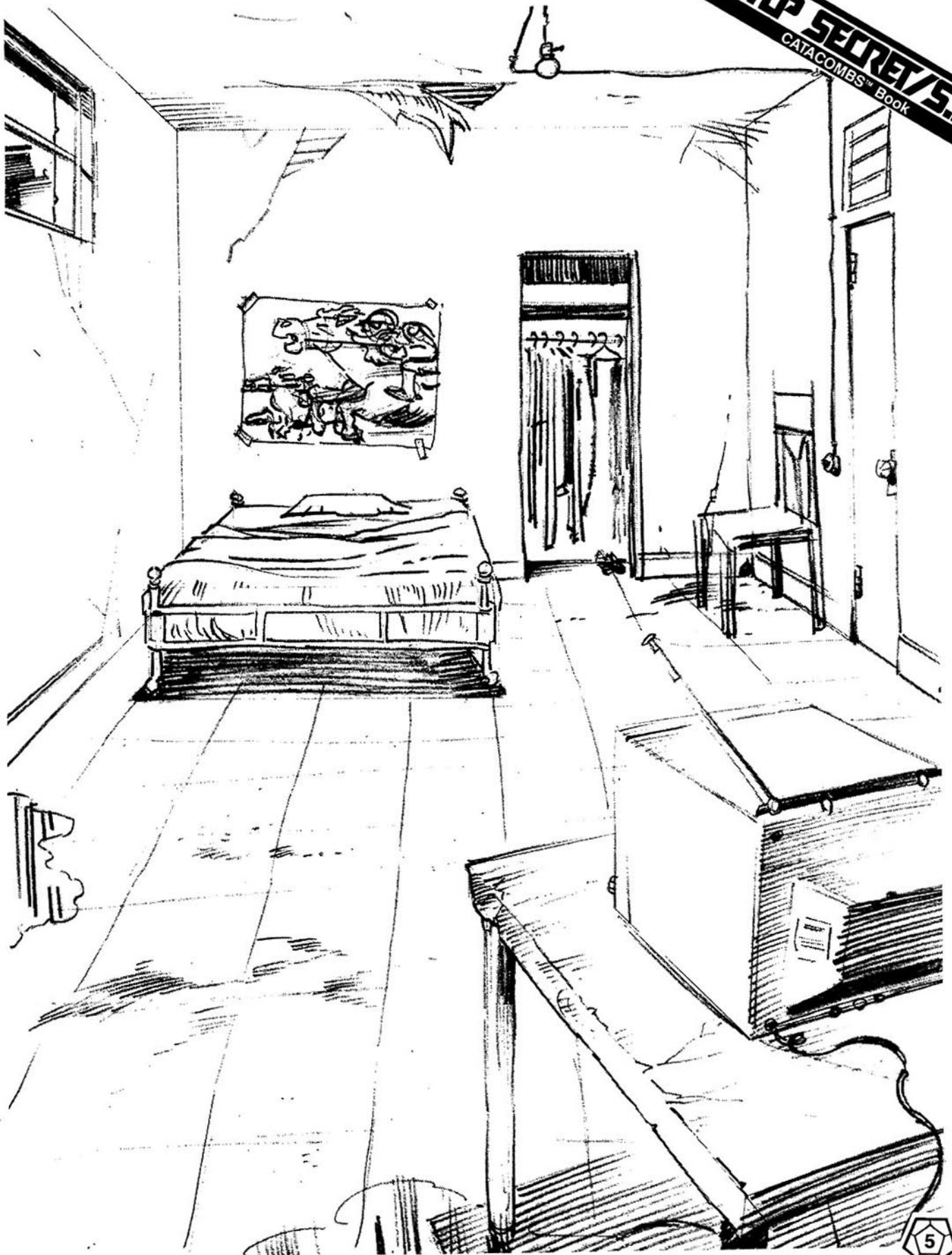
You hear some shuffling papers, and then Berner's voice says, "Thank you very much," in an awestruck tone, and you suspect that a major stack of cash has just changed hands.

Leroy's voice says, "Sure wish I could do my job on a mountain. I'm stuck here in this blasted shop."

"And don't think we're not grateful that you're here, Leroy. What would we do without you?"

Add 10 points for each of your Sixth Sense advantage points to your Intelligence score. Roll the two dice. If you roll more than the total, turn to 107G. If you roll the total or less, turn to 63A.





144A

As the guards start arguing about where the "ghost" went and whether they should go and look for it (the one who had to be pushed is quite opposed), you slip through the trees. But you fail to see a small rock in the grass, and you step on it and cannot keep yourself from falling to the ground, giving an inadvertent grunt. The frightened guard, alert for any reason not to pursue the ghost, shouts, "Let's see what that is!" and before you can get away, they arrive, unarmed because they hadn't expected to need guns against a ghost.

Conduct hand-to-hand combat with the two guards, rolling against your Basic Melee skill. The guards are more used to using their guns than hands, so one fights with a Basic Melee skill of 20, and the other of 30. If you succeed in putting them down, turn to 29F. If you fail, turn to 129C.

144B

Your shots are wildly off-target because you're occupied with trying to control the truck on the zigzag road. Roll the two dice against your Driving/Automobile skill, from which you deduct 20 points. If you roll the modified score or less, turn to 113A. If you roll more, turn to 116A.

144C

Standing at the closed door, you hear noise, plenty of it, but it all seems to be animal noise, not a human voice among the low-level grunts and chattering. Taking a chance, you open the door and slip in.

You get only a glimpse of a clean, white, cage-filled room before the animals, seeing you, set up such a racket of welcome that you have to cover your ears. Each and every one of them tells you in no uncertain terms what it will do to you if you don't come this very minute and open its cage, or perhaps feed it.

No, that's not true. Only about half of them are complaining. The rest are sitting in their cages, swamped in lethargy. Their eyes follow your moves, but they aren't going to react in any other way to your presence. Studying the various animals, you suddenly realize that for every monkey or chimp that is chattering at you and jumping up and down in its cage, another monkey or chimp, almost its equal in size and weight, is sitting quietly in its cage, eyes dull, motions studied. They must be matched pairs of experimental subjects.

You have just a moment to begin to wonder what is going on in this laboratory, when the door from the corridor starts to open again. You duck back behind it just in time to see a Smith & Wesson .357 Magnum poked through the opening. It's attached to the arm of one of the guards, drawn there by the unscheduled racket of the animals.

You grab the arm and bang it sideways against the door, knocking the weapon from the guard's hand. You drag him into the room and close the door with your foot, hoping to keep the fight private.

Conduct close combat, using your Knife skill to roll against. The guard has no weapon, just a Basic Melee skill of 40. However, after two rounds of combat, he manages to pick up a foot-long piece of wood that a chimp has tossed out of its cage. He uses it as a club to your head, so if he hits, only the damage points, not the location, will vary.

If you win, turn to 93E. If you take full damage to your head, turn to 145F.

144D

Just as you're about to downshift and pull off of the back of the Ferrari, the car's roof completely caves in. Aleta Marcus loses control of the car, and your front tire is caught in the crushing steel.

The car swerves blindly off the cliff at the side of the road, carrying you with it. It finally comes to a stop in a flaming heap, draped across the top of a jagged rock. You fly off the trapped bike, and your last moment of awareness reveals the image of a giant, lightning-split tree trunk about to impale you.

144E

You bend down by the workbench and discover an oblong packet that is jammed tightly under the back of the bench against the wall. You reach in and pull the packet out, and discover that it is a bundle of dynamite! Attached to a battery and small radio receiver.

This place is set to go off!

[1X]

Turn to 92C.

144F

You open the door a crack and reach the key toward where you remember the hook being . . . but you can't find it. After scrabbling around on the wall, you lean out of the room to look for the hook, just as a guard appears in the hallway nearby.

"Hey! What are you doing?" he shouts, drawing his gun. "That door's supposed to be locked!"

You draw your gun, too, and leap out into the hall, so the guard's shots won't endanger the woman.

Conduct combat. The guard has a Dexterity of 35. If you win, turn to 99C. If you die, by receiving more than 8 points of damage to your head, chest, or abdomen, turn to 59F. However, if you are wounded and want to give up, hoping to live to fight another day, turn to 82G.

145A

You carefully make your way to the room full of animals to investigate the refrigerator there. But you find nothing except animal food. As you're accepting that you goofed, you see the red Ferrari starting down the twisting road on the mountain. You're too late. The cultures are on their way . . . unless you can catch Aleta on the mountain.

Turn to 154A.

145B

When you hear no sound by listening at the door, you open it and walk in. You find yourself in a room that's half computer room and half library. There's a large work table in the center, obviously set up for book research. The part of the room that looks busiest, however, has a computer table with a personal computer on it with a number of black 5 1/4-inch disks lying on the table beside it.

Someone may have been using those disks recently; otherwise, they should have been put back in the storage box that sits on the back of the desk. Of course, the people here may just be careless, too. [1X]

If you want to take time to check out some of the disks, turn to 50D. If you think it's not safe with the guards on the hunt, however, you may want to consider getting out the window; turn to 103F.

145C

You're partway through the window, your hands totally involved in pulling you through, when the door to the room opens. A man starts to enter, gasps as he sees you, then turns and runs back the way he came.

Your luck has run out. You know an alarm is going to be sounded in just a minute. To see if you can get back out of the window in time, roll the two dice. If you get your Dexterity score or less, turn to 32D. If you get more, turn to 146C.

145D

But then you realize that you don't dare do anything about the papers until you're certain that you can eliminate the bacteria cultures, too. One without the other is not enough.

Reluctantly, you replace the papers and try to leave the case as you found it. You remove your clothing again and return to the bedroom of the private railway car, and flush the toilet as the ostensible reason that you've been away.

Aleta murmurs deliciously as you return to the bed, ready to spend the hours until Los Angeles in the pleasantest way possible.

Turn to 31D.

145E

You stop and face the reluctant Artie. "Think. Where are some rooms that are kept locked? Where might Sarah Graham be?"

The young lab tech cringes at the fierceness of your

look. "I'm . . . sorry I . . . told the guards, Cord."

"Yeah, well, forget that for now. Just think about where Sarah might be."

There's silence a moment while you wonder if a guard might come any minute. But then, Artie says, "Hey, there's a room in the basement that's kind of like a cell. Aleta told me it was used like a brig or something for when the guards don't do their job right. When I asked if they were military, she said no, they weren't, but that they had signed on with a military kind of organization. Anyway, maybe Sarah's in there."

"Okay. Let's try it."

Artie leads you down the stairs to the basement. You have to keep reminding him to be quiet; his enthusiasm at doing something that will cancel his chickenheartedness of telling the guards about you tends to be a bit noisy.

But at the bottom of the stairs, he points at a door, which—glorious luck—has a key hanging on the wall next to the frame. You take it down and turn it in the lock. Artie pushes past you, glances in, and says, "Hey, here she is!"

"Thanks, Artie," you say to the youth. "You go on about your work now as if nothing has happened. I'll take care of Sarah. If anyone asks you, tell them—"

"I'll tell them you crawled out the window and went down the mountain." Artie's enthusiasm leaves you wondering if you can trust him, but you really have no choice at this point.

"Why don't you just . . . uh, go take a nap, Artie? Then they won't ask you anything."

"All right," he agrees. "But if there's anything—"

"No, Artie. Thanks for your help." And he finally walks off down the hall and you open the door again.

Turn to 47E.

145F

The guard may be bleeding, but he's strong enough to throw considerable muscle behind his blows with the piece of wood. One of them strikes you in a vulnerable spot, and you slide into unconsciousness. [3X]

Turn to 142G.



146A

The man with the cooler is moving into a clear space. Certain that the Web-arranged crowd has dispersed, you slow your step so that he appears to be moving rapidly away from you. Then you go into your act: stopping, looking bewildered, staring ahead with eyes wide, then shouting, "Stop him. That man stole my cooler!" You point confidently ahead to the man you were following, who is just beginning to turn around. First you see a look of puzzlement cross his face. Then that look is replaced by one of mounting panic as he stares rapidly around him.

A policeman steps out of a nearby door, hears your shout, and goes to the bewildered man. You rush up and claim, "He just took that cooler out of my hand. That's mine!"

"It is not!" exclaims the man in the plaid shirt. But he's not as good an actor as you, and he's beginning to look worried.

"I can prove it's mine!" you argue. Then you take a big chance: "Look inside it. There are some laboratory flasks in it, with bacteria cultures in them."

The policeman, looking from your confident expression to the other man's growing panic, says, "Now, sir. This man"—he nods at you—"seems quite certain you've got his cooler. Perhaps you've just made a mistake. Let's just take a look."

The man in the plaid shirt starts to clutch the cooler. You can even see his muscles poise for flight. But so can the policeman, and he grabs the cooler with both hands. It comes free from the other man's grasp, and he relinquishes it and turns to run away.

"Let him go," you say swiftly, before the policeman's training can take over. "I'm sure it was just a mistake."

"Well, he certainly wouldn't have run away if it had been his cooler, but if you say so." The officer tips his hat and says, "Good afternoon, sir. Just try to take better care of your belongings."

"I will, officer," you reply. "And thank you."

With the precious cooler in your grasp, you walk out of the station, going a different direction than the man from whom you took it.

Turn to 35F.

146B

Finally, you hear that wonderful sound that must have been bred into your bones: the machine lets loose of all its coins and they clatter into the curved money tray at the bottom. Then, because your winnings are so high, the machine automatically sets off whistles and clanging bells. *You've got to get out of here!*

Turn to 93D.

146C

You try to wriggle backward out through the window, but your belt gets caught on something, keeping you from moving. A siren goes off, deafening you.

You continue to struggle and finally hear a ripping

sound. Breathing a sigh of relief, you wriggle back again and drop to the ground beneath the window, only to find yourself caught by two men with guns. Instantly, your hands are jerked behind your back and tied.

"Take him to the boss," says one guard, and you are led into the brightness of the entrance hall. [1X]

Turn to 81A.

146D

You open the envelopes and read the letters, only to discover that she has a mother in Richmond, Illinois, and a sister (who can't understand why Aleta doesn't get married and settle down) in El Cajon, California. However, in an envelope that was never mailed, you find a small pamphlet containing a table of dynamite expansion coefficients. Strange reading. [2X]

Closing up her dresser, you turn to the man's high-boy (66B).

146E

You drop to the ground, rolling slightly to your right, and come up next to a thug directing his gun at where your back was just a moment before. His hand goes lax from astonishment, and you grab his weapon from his hand. But he's no patsy, and he quickly recovers, spinning on the ball of his foot and going for your neck.

Conduct hand-to-hand combat, rolling first against your Basic Melee skill, because the guard is still somewhat surprised, and then against the guard's skill of 32.

If the guard falls unconscious, by taking 8 points of damage to his head, chest, or abdomen, turn to 50G. If the guard knocks you unconscious, turn to 142G. However, if the guard fails three times in a row to hit you, turn to 109E.

146F

When you entered the private car with Aleta, she just leaned her briefcase against the table, where it has been ever since. You try to open it, but find it locked. If you want to try to pick the lock, turn to 47G. If you don't, turn to 35E.

147A

You're sure that the Ferrari is Aleta Marcus's. But you're not so certain that if you follow her off the mountain you won't be abandoning the chance to get important leads to Web.

Finally, knowing that all you can do is make your best decision, you glance around one last time and leave the garage. [3X]

Turn to 93D.

147B

Just as you are about to step through the door, you realize that there is a security grid mounted in the floor just inside. If you had stepped on it, the guards at the front would have known immediately that you were there.

You won't get into the building this way. [1X]

You'll have to go on to the next room on your diagram. Return to the chart on the inside back cover.

147C

It's not easy to pick out the safest way between trees and around rocks. Three times on your way down, you come to major problems that could stop your journey: once for a small rivulet that makes your tires slip in the mud, once for a big black boulder that doesn't show up until you're almost upon it, and once when the ground has been washed by rainstorms into an unexpectedly deep crevice.

Roll the two dice *three times*. If you roll more than your Driving/Motorcycle skill of 56 on any of the rolls, turn to 57D. If you roll less than your skill level all three times, turn to 40C.

147D

You push open the door to the lobby, ready to pop backward if there's still a guard in the room. There is, and he happens to be looking right at your door as you peer in. He's got a gun and you don't. Within seconds, you are once again handcuffed.

Turn to 115A.

147E

You open one eye, but close it again quickly because of the light shining on it. Next time, you open it only slightly, and you see between your lashes that you are on the floor of a small, rather bare room. You start to raise your head to look around, but pain shoots through your brain, sending your senses reeling again.

"Uhmnnnnnn," you moan aloud, without meaning to.

The sound of your moan echoes through the cement-block room, urging you to rise. You lift your head again, but this time it doesn't object too heartily, so you manage to get to your knees and look around.

You have been unconscious for 15 minutes (cross 2X off your Time Card). If it is now after nine o'clock, turn to 115F. If it is earlier, turn to 98E.

147F

Moving aside to make room for her, you say, "Excuse me. Did I take your place?"

Aleta Marcus smiles and says, "Oh, no. I'm going back to another car."

"Oh, is there another passenger car?" you say, not having to feign curiosity.

The Web agent can't resist preening herself a little when she replies, "No, I have a private car on this train. The conductor will take my bags back in a minute."

Playing up to her, you marvel, "I had no idea there were such things as private railway cars anymore. I'm impressed. Is it as nice as the pictures you see in books about old-time private cars?"

She falls right into your hands. "Just as nice, and really, the only way to travel." She studies your face in silence for a moment, then gives an unconscious nod of her lustrous red-haired head. "Would you . . . like to come back and see it?"

"I certainly would," you reply, giving a smile that you know she'll understand has more to do with her than the possibility of seeing a railway car. "Allow me to help with your luggage." And you pick up the cases that you had been studying a few minutes before.

She smiles gratefully and walks ahead of you through the passenger car. At the other end, you step across the coupling into a baggage car. Like the passenger car, it is brighter, cleaner, and more luxurious than most train cars. Here the passengers' belongings are treated with tender loving care, and are even guarded by a very efficient-looking dog. Passengers can get at their extra baggage during the long trip across country.

When the guard dog starts to growl, a burly trainman in overalls appears. "Was you goin' somewhere?" he asks.

"I'm Aleta Marcus," says the woman, in affronted tones. "We're going back to the private car."

The trainman looks you up and down and asks, "And he's with you?"

"If it's any of your business, yes! Now get that dog out of the way."

The trainman yanks the dog aside, and you walk on by into the next car.

Turn to 54A.

148A

Wow! This is a place where you'd like to crash for a couple weeks. At least that's what you think after your first glance at all the videos, the one-armed bandits, and hobby stuff—though you're quite satisfied with the hobby you've got.

But then you think about what you're seeing—all the entertainment stuff, all the space and equipment for hobbies, all the arcade and pinball games. Somebody worked very hard to think of things that would be useful in keeping isolated people content. Well, you'd rather be at the bottom of the mountain among people.

This room is so Sebastian-in-Wonderlandish that you're tempted not to search it, but you suppose you'd better at least give it a once-over. [2X]

You may investigate the: by turning to:

hobby materials	74E
entertainment center	29H
slot & video machines	99E
games	79A

If guards are aware that you are in the building, you must roll a luck roll before exploring any item listed above. If you get double numbers on the dice, turn to 128C. Otherwise, continue exploring.

When you are ready to go on to the next room, go out into the corridor and turn to 93D.

If you think you have learned enough to take action, turn to 86F.

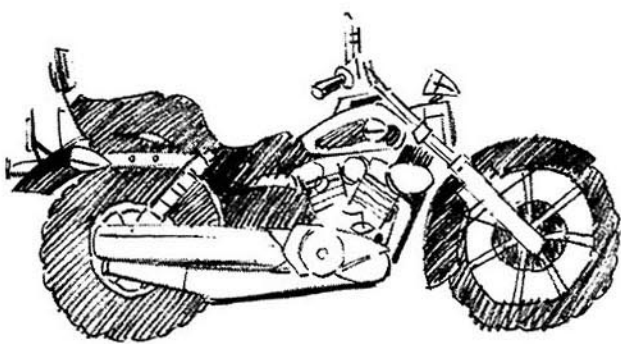
148B

But the Titan Team isn't needed. You're halfway to Moorland when the top of the mountain explodes. All traces of the Web installation are gone. Only you have survived to tell the tale.

148C

You shuffle quickly through the cards and find nothing different about them. But then, you always feel good with a pack of cards in your hand.

Turn to 124F.

**148D**

In one smooth movement, you reach the glass door, pull it open, and fire twice, turning your gun hand only slightly between the two shots to cover both men. The first guard is down and the second has only begun to look startled when the second shot reaches him, and he, too falls. You make sure that both are out of sight behind the desk. [1X]

Remembering what you saw in the windows when you mapped the building, you contemplate whether to head for the left door or the right-hand hallway. The door at the back is out because you'd have to get past the guards' desk to reach it.

If you are already wearing a guard's uniform, turn to 42D. If not, turn to 150B.

148E

For a moment, your bike feels as if it's going to slip out from under you, and your teeth rattle from the hard landing. But you manage to gain control again.

However, the Ferrari has moved way ahead of you and is almost to the bottom of the mountain. You're just going to have to follow her to Moorland and board the train with her. Maybe you can get the bacteria cultures away from her on the train.

Turn to 28G.

148F

You get into the word processing program and skim through the letters disk. It shows that all the equipment ordered for use here was ordered by a firm called Western Colorado Genetics Laboratory, with a post office box down in the valley. The letters are signed by someone named Robert C. Bartlett, of whom you have seen no sign here.

The original letters to various suppliers say that the work to be done at the laboratory was the replication of recombinant genetic traits for the improvement of several varieties of *Triticum aestivum*. You're lost already, but it doesn't matter, because you don't believe a word of it. [2X]

Return to 138A.

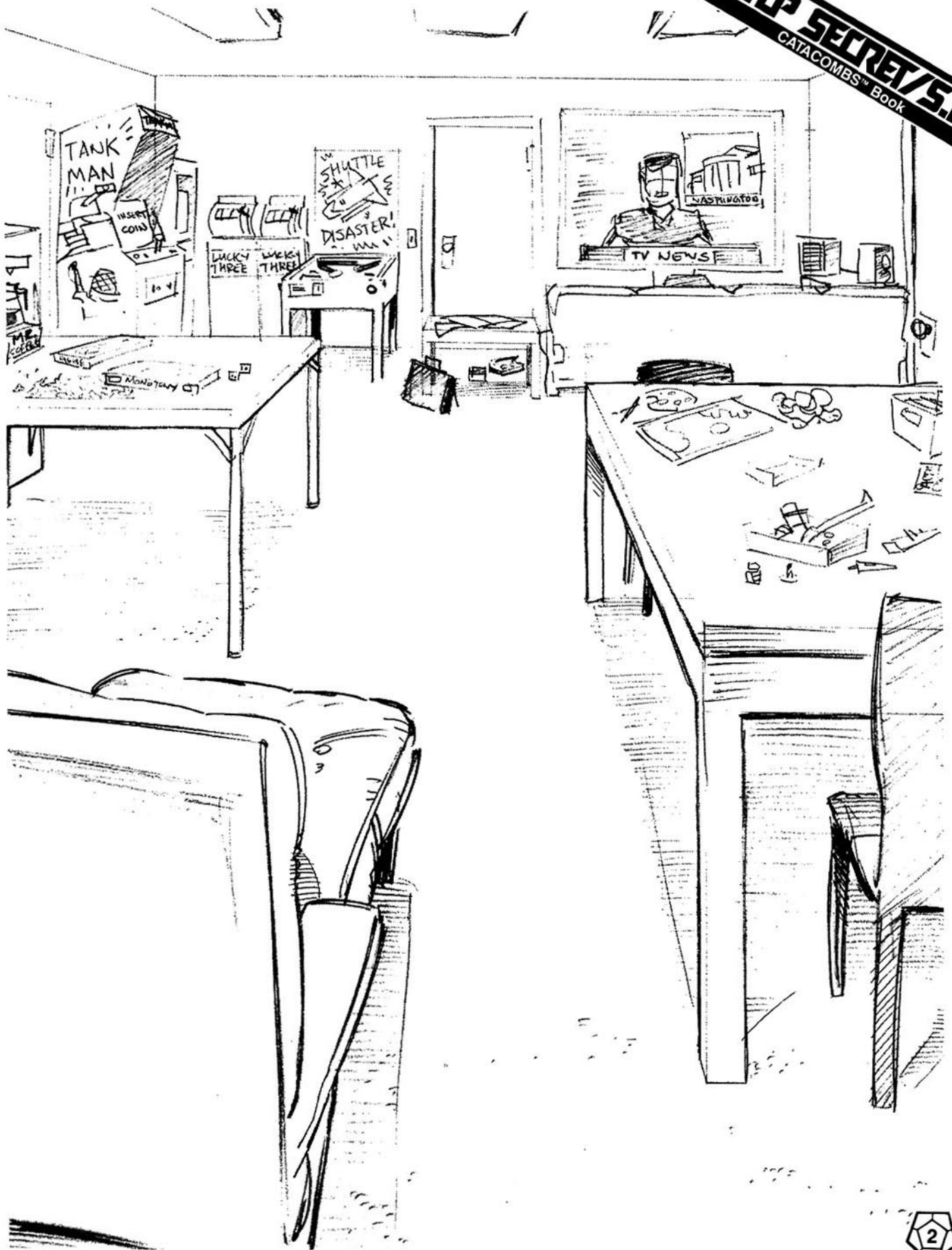
148G

But the man is ready for you and hangs on tightly to the cooler. As the crowd moves around you, the two of you stand almost still, but muscle fighting muscle in an invisible contest of strength as people—ever prone to ignore trouble—just walk on by.

You feel the veins standing out on your head and your arm muscles beginning to quiver before the man—his face perspiring and pale—releases his grasp on the cooler.

You whisper, "Tell your boss that Orion thanks the Web organization for its education in recombinant genetics." The man looks bewildered, and you know that he's just an underling, hired to do a simple job. You walk away, carrying the cooler.

Turn to 35F.



150A

You dash from the tree line to the nearest window and peer in.

The Web organization is never content to leave anything alone—they certainly don't want to be predictable. So they restructure their buildings, or at least reorganize the rooms, on a regular basis. Therefore, this mountaintop building will never be the same twice.

Every building arrangement, however, must have a lobby, so place that piece down as if it were at six o'clock on a clock face.

To determine how the laboratory is organized, roll the dice and add the two numbers, then refer to the list of sections below; they will tell you which room to place next. Remember that a zero equals 10; therefore, two zeros make 20. If you roll the same number twice, ignore it the second time and roll again.

Choose your first room by rolling the dice, and turn to the text listed below by the dice roll you obtained. After reading the text, put that room to the left of the lobby (at about seven o'clock), leaving space for a corridor between the rooms. Continue reading and placing rooms clockwise around the back half of the lobby, adjacent to one another, marking off each one so you don't duplicate rooms. The last room goes to the right of the lobby.

Note that there is a main hallway around the entire guarded lobby, so that all the rooms are easily accessible to the guards. However, there will also be hallways between rooms, even if doorways on adjacent walls line up.

When the rooms are all arranged to your satisfaction—without changing the order in which you laid them down—tape or paste the pieces down on paper. You will need to refer to this floor plan many times during play.

Place the guarded lobby down first, then roll the dice and add the numbers together.

If you get:	turn to:
2-4,	72E
5-6,	117A
7-8,	52F
9-10,	57E
11-12,	84C
13-14,	42B
15-16,	69A
17-19,	10D
20,	152B

When you are through setting up your floor plan, turn to 114A.

150B

You pause a moment, then rejoice in the fact that you hear no reaction to the gunplay. You quickly check the guards to see which one has bled less on his uniform, and you strip him of his pants and shirt as quickly as you can. Donning them over your own clothes, you suddenly

feel a greater comfort of being in this place clandestinely. [2X]

Turn to 42D.

150C

But you can't let your soul be destroyed!

Standing perfectly still to keep from getting more of the horrible blueness on you, you concentrate on the view you had just before the door shut of the mechanism that makes it move.

You know that you're about fifteen feet under the floor. You can picture just over your head a mammoth brace the full width of the floor, with a diagonal rod mounted in the center and the other end in a heavy vertical runner. As the rod moved upward in the runner, the floor closed. There is no other opening in the pit, so you must destroy the mechanism somehow.

Forcing away the thought of the slime that's eating your flesh, you concentrate on the mechanism and how you can break it.

If you still have your Orion card case, turn to 57C. If not, turn to 83D.

150D

You manage to avoid Pachezny's clumsy fall and leap into Aleta's path as she runs toward the Ferrari's open door.

You fire, deliberately missing in order to frighten her into stopping. But Aleta Marcus doesn't frighten easily. She reaches into the car and pulls out her own gun and fires back.

You're now in armed combat with a Web agent with a Pistol skill of 54. You know as you fight that there will be no compromises here. If you win, turn to 78E. If you lose, by taking full damage to your head, chest, or abdomen, turn to 50C.

150E

Both guards are down, and you head toward the left-hand door, hoping to get out of sight before someone reacts to the siren.

Roll two dice. If you roll your Movement score or less, turn to 36D. If you roll more, turn to 131C.

150F

Ducking and bobbing to ruin the guard's aim, you dash toward the door leading from the entrance hall. You grab the handle and are through the doorway in one swift motion, just as the guard's shot hits the door frame.

You've got to hide somewhere quick! You are in a narrow corridor, facing one door (57G). There's another door to your right (132C) and a cement-block staircase going down on your left (76D). Which way will you go?

151A

You make your way down to your car, where you sit for a few minutes, contemplating what your options are. But you know, even as you think of off-the-wall choices, that you really have only one: to go back into the building and try again.

You sit there for one hour (mark this on your time card) to rest before returning to the mountaintop.

Deciding to confront the place head on, you go toward the main entrance (14A).

151B

A shade is drawn over the window, but you can see under the bottom just enough to convince you that the room is a bedroom.

Return to 150A to place another room or move on.

151C

The large lab tables are topped by a material that you can't identify. It's almost like marble and clearly can be sterilized easily. Lots of bottles stand in racks, bottles labeled with the names of various kinds of stains and reagents. A couple of them say NH_4Cl and Na_2HPO_4 . You feel very dumb.

The size of the microscope makes you gasp. It must be powerful enough to show bacteria in full detail. All you ever got to see through a microscope was how funny a hair off your own head looked. You find yourself intrigued by this place.

You admit, though, that you don't know what you're looking for on the tables. Even if something important had been left out where you could see it, you wouldn't recognize it. [2X]

Return to 90A.

151D

The second clipping is quite different. It concerns a university researcher who went into his laboratory one day and hung himself. The people who knew him could only think that somehow he was unable to accept the implications of some of his research. Written across the clipping with the same bold pen are the words: "Remember—all you need to do is follow orders!"

You find yourself glad that you're not the scientist supposedly in charge here. Clearly, he is being forced in some way to do what he is doing. [2X]

Now you turn to the drawers of the desk (79D).

151E

Coming to the door of what you are sure is the office, you pause to listen for any noise from within. You hear none, so you quietly open the door, hoping to swing quickly inside and hunt for a hiding place.

But the room is occupied after all. A man whose shiny balding head reflects the light of the desk lamp is sitting behind the desk writing something. He glances up as you open the door, says "Who the hell are . . ." and then falls silent at the sight of your gun pointed right at him.

"The g-guards will be here in j-just a minute," he stammers.

"Then you can tell them to leave," you reply in a reasonable voice. "In the meantime," you go on, moving around the desk to his side, keeping the gun pointed firmly at the man, "you can tell me about this place."

"There's nothing here to steal. This is just a scientific laboratory." Then he tries getting huffy. "Besides, what business is it of yours? You have no right to come in here with a gun!"

Ignoring his display of assertiveness, you ask, "If this is just a scientific laboratory, why does it need guards?"

As you talk and listen, you begin to use your empty hand to turn over papers, open drawers, and quickly explore the room. You can still absorb all that the frightened man is trying to make you believe.

"Th-this is a b-biological laboratory. We do important research that other people would like to know about."

"Like what?"

"L-like cellular studies . . . you know, genetics."

There's nothing particular on his desk to attract your attention. Then you open the top right-hand drawer. Leafing through the papers there, you find a train ticket. One quick glance shows you that it's for the Mountain-Midlands Express, leaving Moorland, the town at the bottom of the mountain, at twelve-thirty tonight.

The scientist moves as if to grab the ticket from you. There's a frightened look on his face now as you make a menacing gesture with the Mauser, but you're not sure it's the gun that has him scared.

Just then, there's a knock on the door. "Dr. Pachezny? Have you seen a stranger around?"

You dig the barrel of the gun into the man's head behind his earlobe. "Just tell them, no."

Pachezny swallows hard and croaks, "No, I haven't. Let-let me know if you catch him."

"Yes, sir," replies the guard, and you hear his steps recede down the hall. [2X]

Turn to 42C.

152A

You stay safely back until you realize that Aleta Marcus is actually managing to decelerate safely. The tail end of the beautiful car is dragging pitifully on the blacktop.

Keeping your gun in your hand, you slow the truck at the same pace as the Web woman's car, keeping the same distance behind. Somehow, you're certain that when she stops, you're going to have a new kind of trouble.

Turn to 78C.

152B

Just as you lean toward the window to peer in, you hear a faint rustle right behind you. Without taking time to deliberate, you drop to the ground (154B) or spin on your heel, ready to fight (40D).

152C

"I got him!" shouts the guard to anyone who might be in the vicinity.

Conduct combat. The guard has a Pistol skill of 35. If you win, turn to 134D. If you lose by taking full damage to your head, chest, or abdomen, turn to 13A. However, if no one is dead after three exchanges of gunfire, turn to 102F.

152D

When you finish looking at the paper listing the guards currently on duty, you close the file. [1X]

Return to 11C if you want to look at a second file. If this was the second, you can check out the drawers on the right (28D) or other objects in the office (48A).

152E

Before you even get into Foster Needham's apartment, you're dismayed by what you find. He lives in what can only be called a tenement. As you walk up to the third floor, you're almost overcome by the smell of garbage and urine, indicating that people here stopped caring long ago. From what you remember of sartorially elegant—even dapper—Foster Needham, you can't believe he stopped caring.

When you reach the door with his apartment number tacked on it, you knock but get no answer. Knocking again, you discover that the door is unlocked, even open slightly. You listen, and hearing nothing, walk in.

Turn to 68E.

152F

"I know," you say with clearly synthetic sympathy, "you have so much to do to get the recombinant stuff ready to take away tonight."

That stops her.

"How do you know that?" Her face has turned pale.

"I know lots of things—about bacteria that does more than the geneticists think, about train trips, about Web's plans . . . oh, lots of things."

Your mention of Web turns her paler yet. She says

to the guards, "Leave him here. You go . . . go outside and patrol the grounds to make sure no one else is traipsing around up here. If you'd done your jobs properly in the first place, we wouldn't have this interloper here. Now go out and do what you're supposed to, but leave me the key to his handcuffs."

The guards look doubtful, but they know who the boss is, so they go. She pockets the key.

"Now," she says firmly, walking back toward you, "what are you doing here?"

"Stopping you from fulfilling your agreement with Web. They won't like that, will they?"

"What's this 'web' you keep mentioning? I've . . . I've never heard of a web except in relation to spiders."

"And you're the female spider in this particular web, aren't you, Aleta? But do you know that the female spider dies after producing her eggs? Well, you've produced what you were supposed to, Aleta. And I'm sure you're under orders to . . . let's say, eliminate, everyone here at the lab. Then just how long do you think Web will let you live after that?"

"You're crazy!" she spits. "I've worked too hard for a place at the top!"

"Then why did they send you here, out in the middle of nowhere, for a year? Things have been moving on out in the world. New operations people have made their names in Web. They'll make sure there isn't room for a nobody who's been out of things for a year."

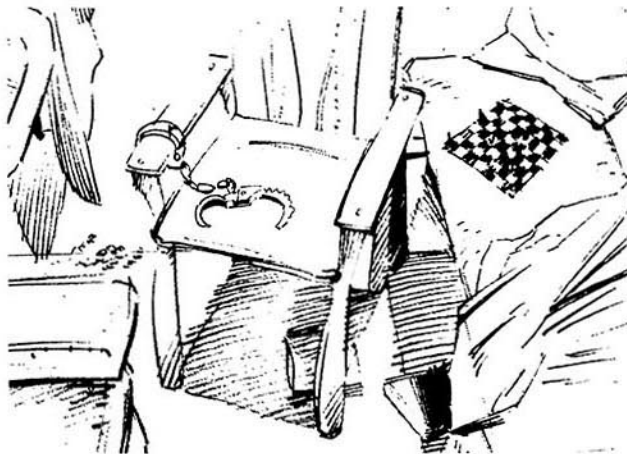
"You're wrong! You're wrong!" she screams, horror on her face.

"Am I?" you say coolly.

Then she leaps, her anger at you for saying such things strong enough to overcome her caution. She wants to take you out personally, with her own hands.

But now you've got her where you want her—angry enough not to think about what she is doing, and forgetting that she has the key to your handcuffs in her pocket.

Roll the two dice. If you get the average of your Strength and Dexterity scores or less, turn to 122C. If you get more, turn to 130D.



153A

You listen carefully at the door you think leads to the bedroom, and quickly discover that care wasn't needed; whoever is in there is busy slamming drawers, so you can hear with no trouble whatsoever. However, it doesn't help you in your search of the place. [1X]

Choose the next room on your diagram, and turn to 93D.

153B

Again you are amazed at the sight of an animal room in this isolated mountain-top place. But you realize that this is certainly no place to enter the building. Anytime you've ever been in a building with lots of caged animals, they've let loose with all the noise of Hades whenever a person came into the room. It would take just two seconds for someone to hear it and come running. [1X]

Move to the next room on your diagram and return to the chart on the inside back cover.

153C

When Perry Smith, the chief computer wiz, enters, you're amazed at the difference between what you see and what your own prejudices say a computer genius should look like. Smith is a huge linebacker type who should be playing tiddlywinks with manhole covers, not fooling around with fragile disks.

You ask him to tell you about the setup. He repeats some of what you know, but spends some time pointing out which are the drives, how the disks are inserted into the drives, when material is backed up for archival purposes, and so on.

Roll the two dice. If you get more than your Intelligence score, turn to 84H. If you roll the score or less, turn to 128F.

153D

It's a straightforward chess game at an introductory level. You find the idea wonderful because nobody will be sitting there getting antsy while you try to figure out what to do—you're idea of nirvana for someone who has never managed to really learn to play chess. However, not now. [1X]

Return to 138A.

153E

You go to Brittany's "prison," where you find her chaffing at the restrictions placed on her movements. She hasn't even bothered to get ready for bed yet.

"I'm trying to do this as fast as possible, love," you say, an arm around her shoulder. Her gleaming hair brushes your arm.

"I know, Seb," she replies, leaning against you. "I'm just feeling deprived, and you're the first one to walk in here that I could howl at."

The two of you sit down on the couch, while you let Brittany work off some steam. Then you say, "Sit back, Britt. We've got to discuss something."

You pull the deck of Elizabethan cards from your pocket and ask, "Do you recognize these?"

She takes the deck in her hands and quickly shuffles through them, looking at the ornate backs. "Yes, of course. They're mine." Then she glares at you. "Sebastian Cord, were you rummaging around in my bedside table?"

"Why are you so sure that's where they were?"

"Because I just put them there yesterday afternoon, not long before I came on duty."

"Where had they been before that?"

"I had them in the office. Ed Charnoff"—her voice breaks for a moment—"had me bring them in so he could teach me some funny card tricks his kid had shown him." Then she adds in a small voice, "Poor Ed."

"How long ago was that?"

"Oh, some weeks. I had them in the desk drawer and just kept forgetting to take them home."

"What made you take them Sunday?"

"When my shift was finishing, Bob Berner handed them to me from my drawer. Said they were too nice to use for solitaire, so I'd better take them home."

Berner.

"You didn't happen to look at the cards, did you?"

"Look at them? No. I just stuck them in the bedside drawer when I got home. Why?"

You show her the slip of paper you found between the cards of the deck. "Have you ever seen that?"

She stares at it for a moment. Then says, "It looks kind of like my handwriting, but, no, it isn't mine."

Thinking aloud, you say, "Well, there are several possibilities: one, it's just a coincidence that the paper has the time of the computer room break-in on it and it has nothing to do with what happened. Two, somebody had a note of the time and it got into the deck of cards purely by accident. Three, it was placed there deliberately to implicate you further."

Brittany seems to shrink back into the cushions of the couch.

What you don't say aloud is that Bob Berner is the best possibility for choices two and three.

If you haven't explored Bob Berner's place yet, say good-bye and "keep your chin up" to Brittany, and turn to 134G. If you have, turn to 69C.

154A

You step into the garage before the roar of the Ferrari even stops resounding between the cement-block walls. There appear to be only two vehicles in which you would stand a chance of stopping Aleta in her Ferrari—the small Toyota truck and the Kawasaki motorcycle.

You have just a split second to decide which vehicle you'll use to catch up with her. If you use the Toyota truck, maybe you can be aggressive and ram the lady's delicate Ferrari. But if you take the motorcycle, maybe you can use it for shortcuts that will let you get in front of her.

As you're about to make a decision, however, you hear a painful sobbing sound at the open garage door, and in comes Dr. Karl Pachezny, or what is left of him emotionally. Great sobs are being wrenched out of him as he walks toward you, clearly not even aware that you're there. Big dirt marks and a torn shoulder seam have destroyed his suit coat.

He finally comes up beside you. Taking a big shuddering breath, he blurts out in horrified, disbelieving tones, "She pushed me out. She said I had served my purpose, that she had what she wanted, that she could find a thousand better lovers anywhere between here and Los Angeles!"

"Karl," you say sternly, speaking over his self-absorbed talk, "Karl, I'm going to go after her and get the bacteria cultures back."

If you know about a dangerous "gift" that Aleta has left behind in the building, turn to 122E. If not, turn to 28A.

154B

To determine what happens when you drop to the ground, roll the two dice. If you roll your Reflex score or less, turn to 146E. If you roll more, turn to 25A.

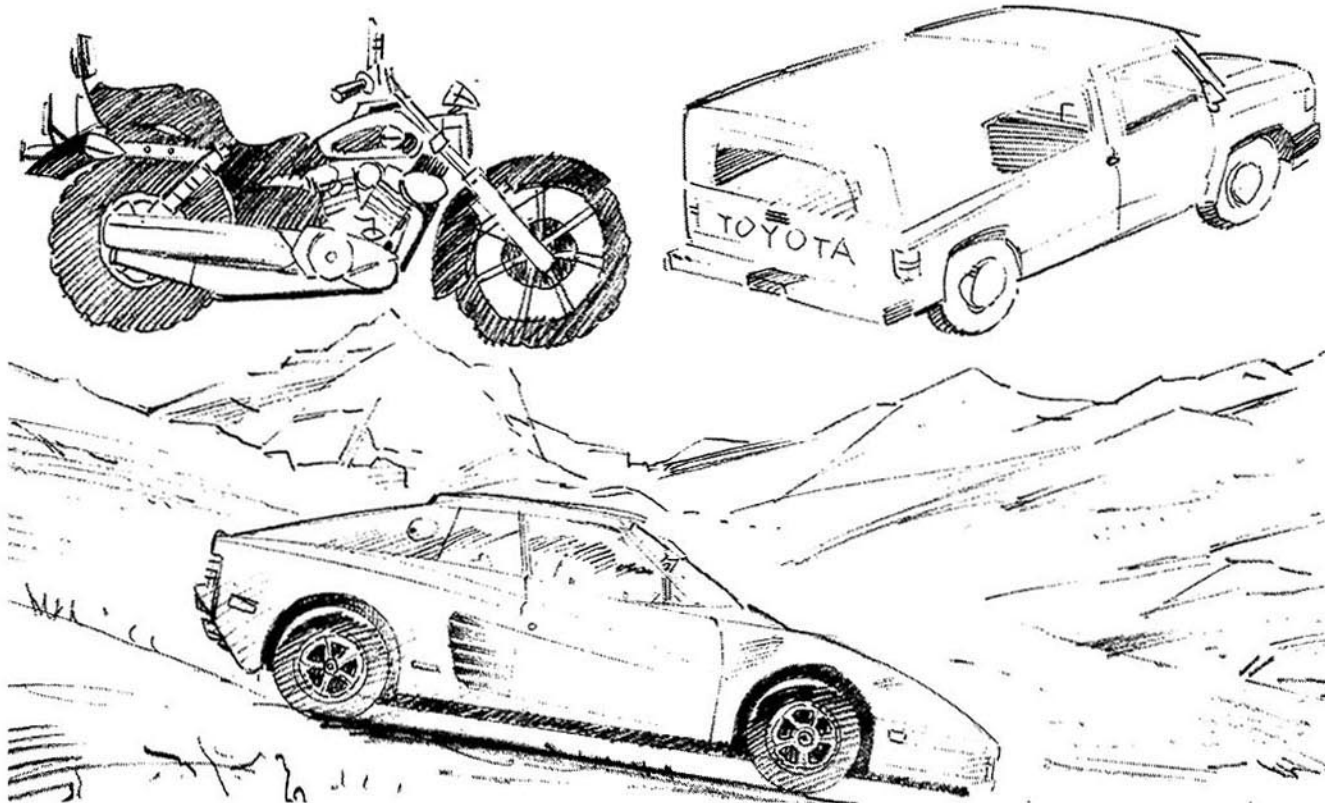
154C

The window is open slightly; probably the person washing dishes last was trying to get rid of the steam. You manage to get your fingers in behind the frame of the vertical, roll-out window, and pull. Hoisting your torso into the opening, you pull yourself forward, over the sink. You just hope your luck holds.

Roll the two dice. If you roll a double number (22, 33, and so on), turn to 145C. Otherwise, turn to 35A.

154D

You know that Needham is dead, and you have no real evidence that he was involved in the break-in anyway. You change your mind and return to 10C.



155A

The time has come to tackle the Web agent and her oh-so-private car. You step through the doors between cars, and the outer door closes behind you. You find yourself in an unexpectedly comfortable living room on wheels.

"Who are you and what are you doing in my private car?" demands Aleta Marcus, rising from where she's sitting at the table writing.

If you know who gave her the authority to use this car, turn to 48G. If you don't, turn to 112E.

155B

The truck's own capabilities, or the mountain, or your own subconscious reluctance—you don't know what—keep you from accelerating all the way, and you see the Ferrari getting farther and farther ahead of you. You find yourself wishing you had taken the motorcycle.

Then the Ferrari's lights make a sweeping ninety-degree turn, and you're warned that there's a major turn ahead. When you reach it, you don't even need to decelerate in order to get safely around it. It's a good thing you weren't going flat out!

Turn to 94A.

155C

You're enjoying the wonderful feel of letting the elements take care of your decisions, when suddenly you feel something poke you in the back and Aleta's low voice says harshly, "What are you? Some kind of government spy? I'm sorry, Sebastian. We could have—"

Her rancor is interrupted as you make a swift turn and try to grab the gun from the woman who appears to be so busy talking that she's not paying attention to her weapon.

Roll the two dice. If you get more than your Dexterity score, turn to 117C. If you get the score or less, turn to 133D.

155D

You carefully pull the window toward you, ignoring the small squeal the crank makes as it is forced back. Then you climb up into the frame and step carefully down onto the tiled floor. You're in safely. [1X]

Turn to 110A.

155E

Turn to page 49 and glance at the picture. Do not study it in detail and do not read the text.

You peer into the small office, your eye caught once again by the wonderful red-leather couch. If this place belongs to Web, they are certainly treating their people well, these days. But then your eyes focus on something else: the long, slender, beautifully shaped legs of a woman wearing a white lab coat. She's standing in front of the desk, leaning threateningly toward the balding man seated behind it.

Recognizing that you can't go through this window, you're about to leave when you realize you can

hear her voice. "... kind of science do these idiot people want when they insist on having the *E. coli* before it's been thoroughly tested? And I have grave doubts about your ability as a scientist if you don't agree with me."

The man tries to placate the furious woman, but she says snidely, "Oh, come on, Karl. What kind of scientist are you if you're willing to have results released before we know if they're reproducible! There's no way the FDA's going to approve the stuff under these circumstances!"

"Settle down and grow up, Sarah! It's not our decision. Quintessential has been paying for our work here and they have every right to do what they want with the results *when* they want."

"Well, I'm not going to let you destroy my credibility as a scientist. Just see if you can find the culture when you're ready to go tonight!"

You hear her stomp toward the door, his heavier steps running after her. "Oh, no you don't, Dr. Graham."

You take a chance and rise up to look through the window. The woman has the door partly open, but he grabs both her arms and pulls them behind her, calling something into the hallway. In a minute, you see Dr. Graham being led away by a guard. The balding man named Karl closes the door and returns to his desk. You can see that he is shaking—with fear or anger, you don't know which.

You've still got to find a way into the building, and now you've got another mission: to help Sarah Graham. [2X]

Study your diagram and return to the chart on the inside back cover.

155F

You start to look through the wastebasket in the operators' room, but when you realize that you're staring avidly at used tissues, you know it's time to get out of here. Things aren't nearly as interesting as people.

The most obvious place to begin is with the operators themselves. They're the only ones with access to the computer room.

Return to 64A.

CHARACTER DOSSIER

See Rules for determining characteristics

COMBAT

ATTRIBUTES:

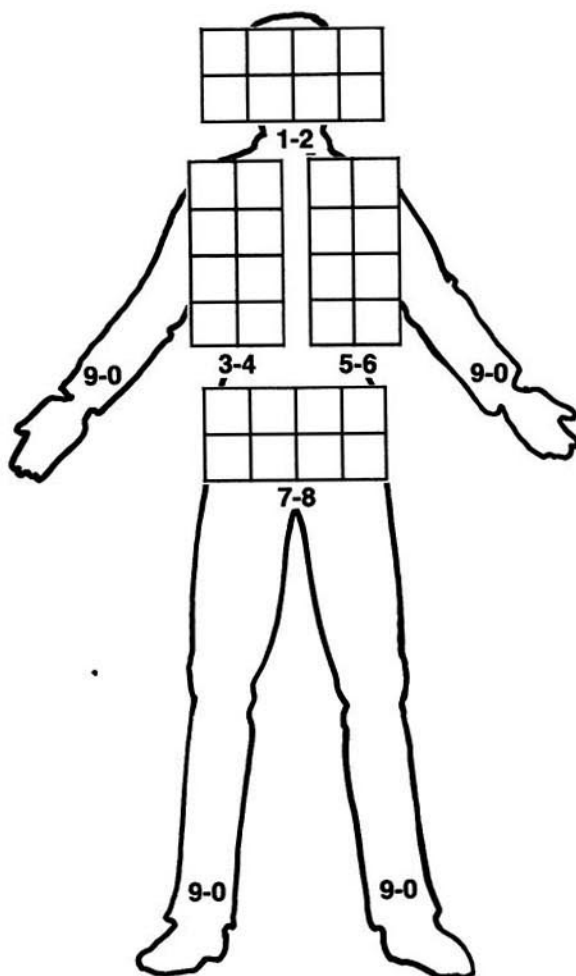
		SEBASTIAN CORD	YOUR OWN CHARACTER
STRENGTH	=	_____	_____
REFLEX	=	_____	_____
INTELLIGENCE	=	_____	_____
WILLPOWER	=	_____	_____
CONSTITUTION	=	_____	_____
MOVEMENT	=	_____	_____
DEXTERITY	=	_____	_____

SKILLS:

BASIC MELEE	=	_____	_____
PISTOL	=	_____	_____
KNIFE	=	_____	_____
DRIVING/Auto	=	_____	_____
DRIVING/ Motorcycle	=	_____	_____
CLIMBING	=	_____	_____
SOCIAL CHAMELEON	=	_____	_____

ADVANTAGES (distribute 6 points; each must have at least 1):

SIXTH SENSE	=	_____	_____
SOCIAL GRACES	=	_____	_____
ARTISTIC ABILITY	=	_____	_____
ATTRACTIVE APPEARANCE	=	_____	_____

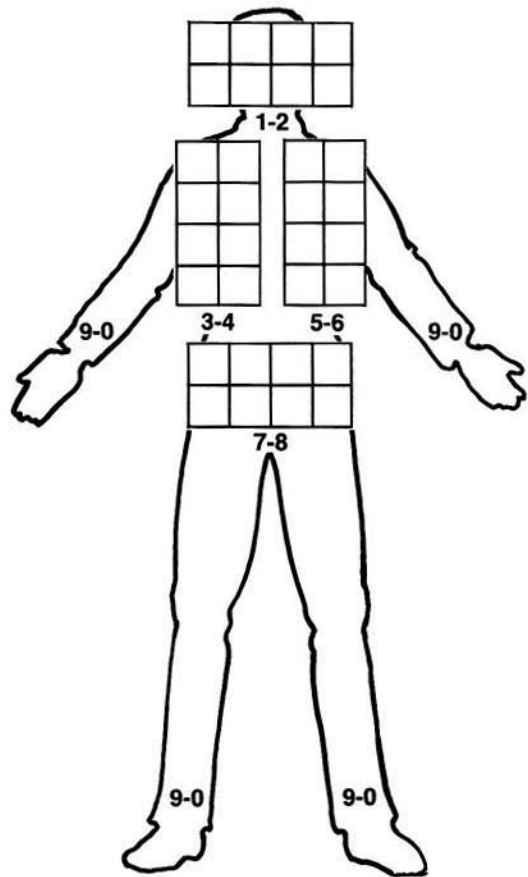
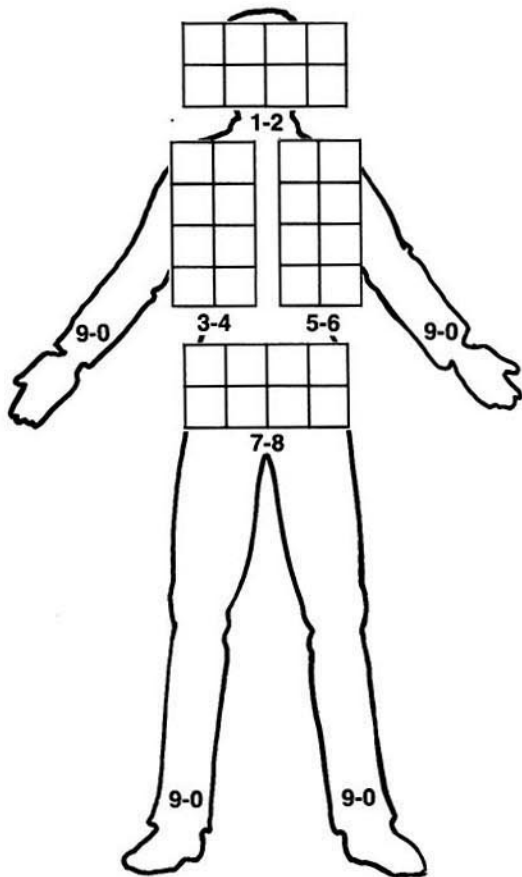
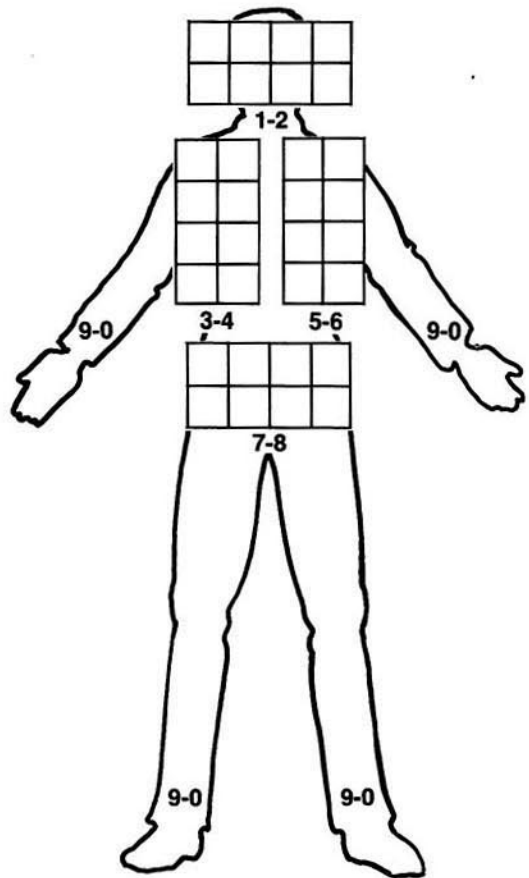
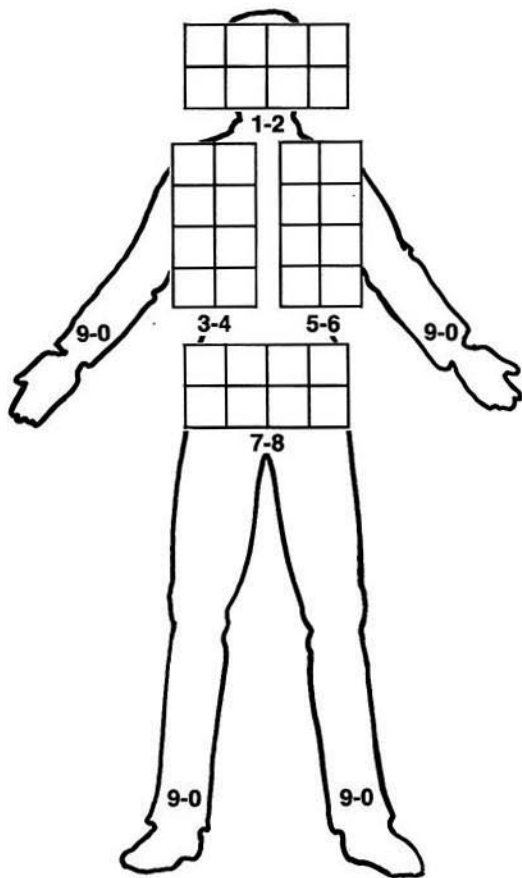


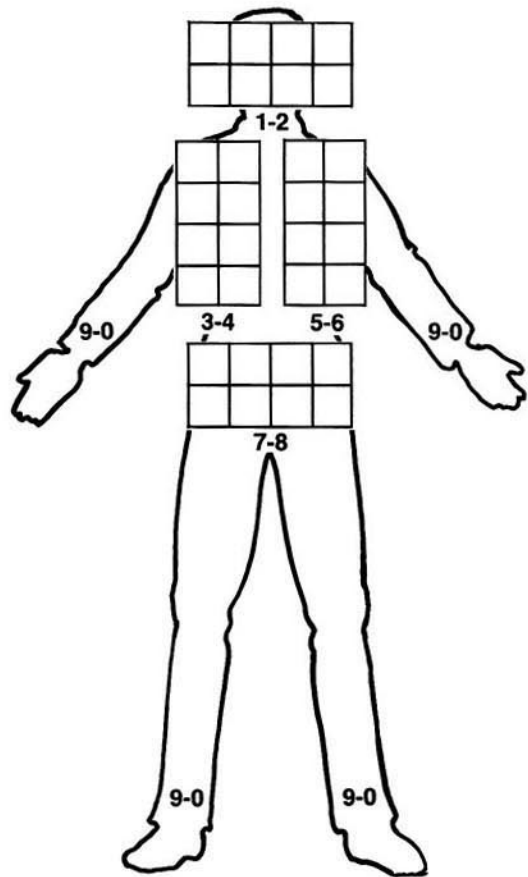
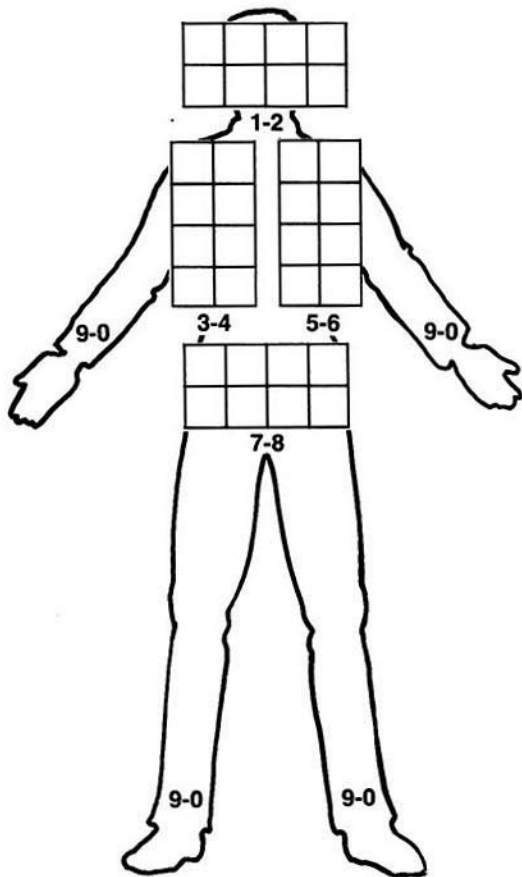
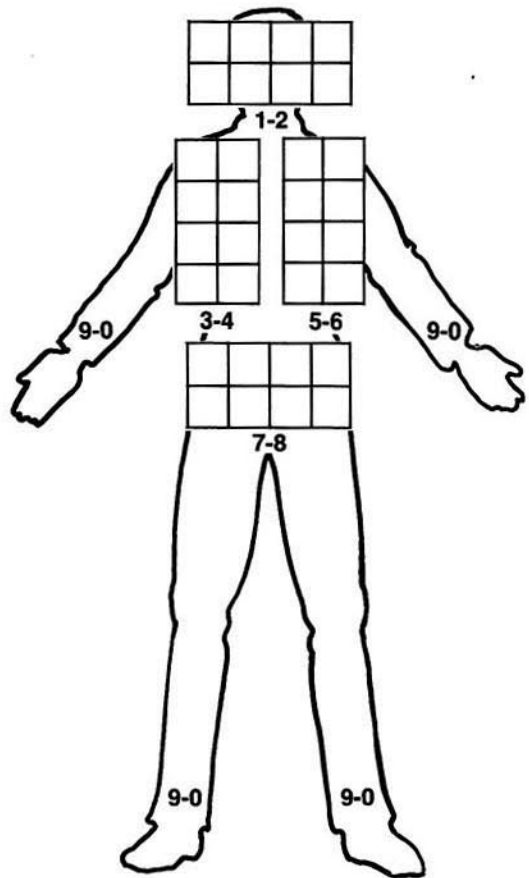
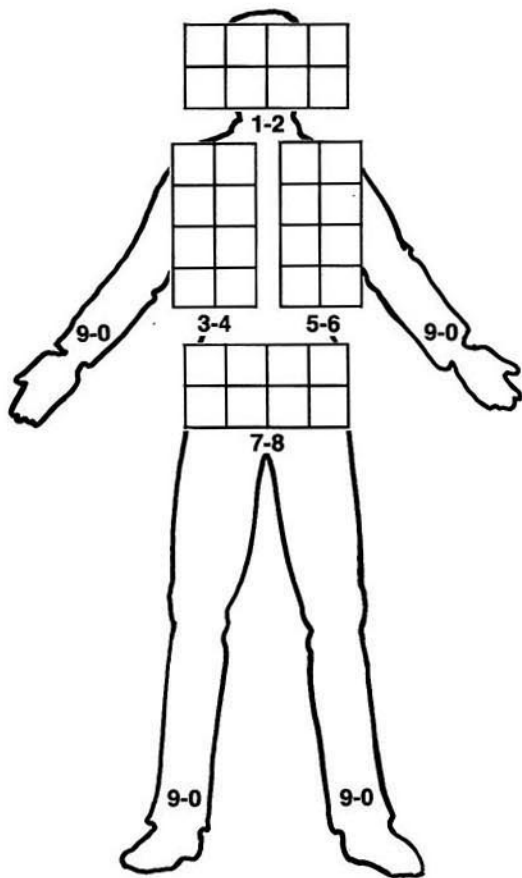
TO HIT: Roll the *attribute* or *skill* score indicated in the text or *less*, using the die on the left-hand corner for the tens digit, flipping pages again, and using the die on the right-hand page as the ones digit. For example, 6 on left, plus 2 on right, make 62.

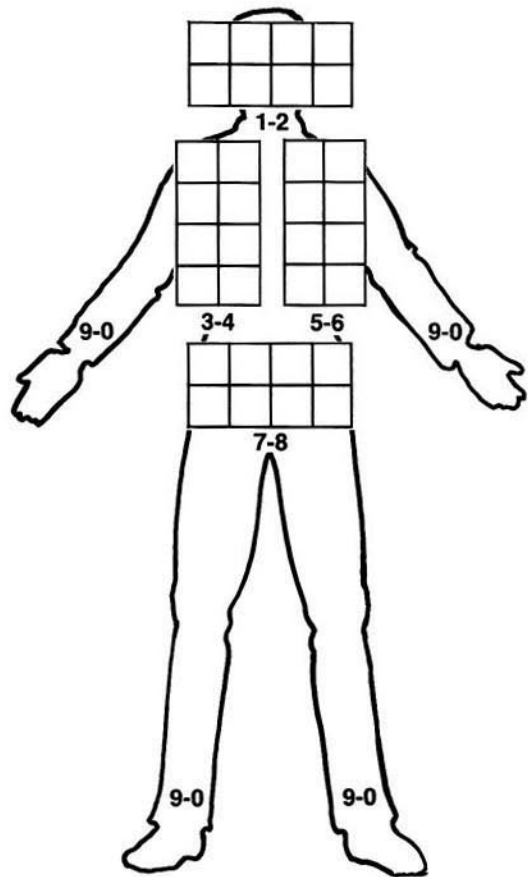
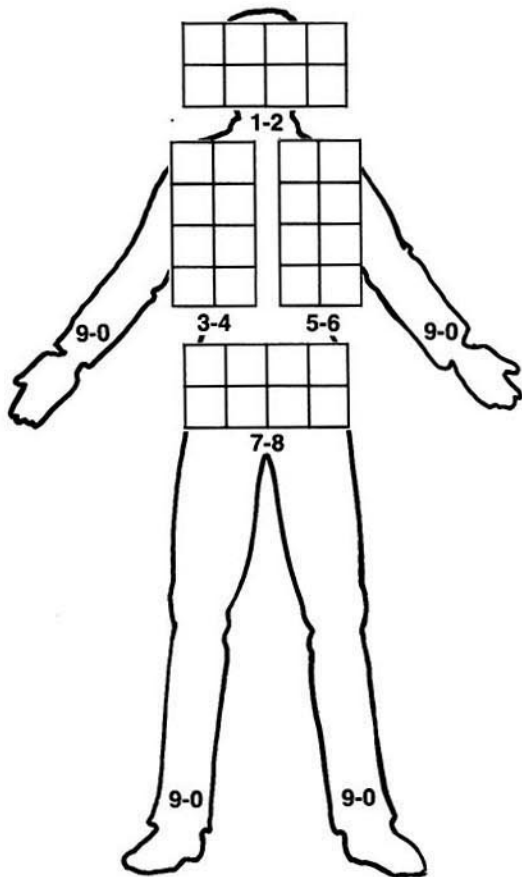
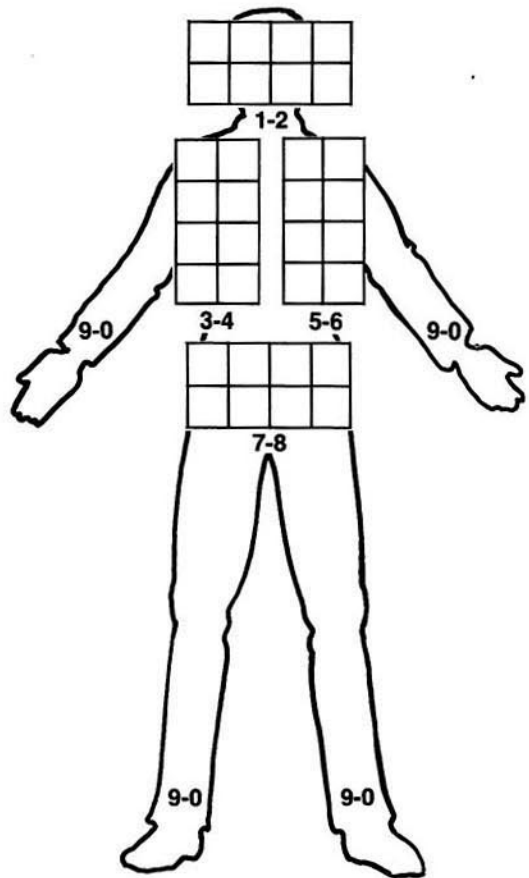
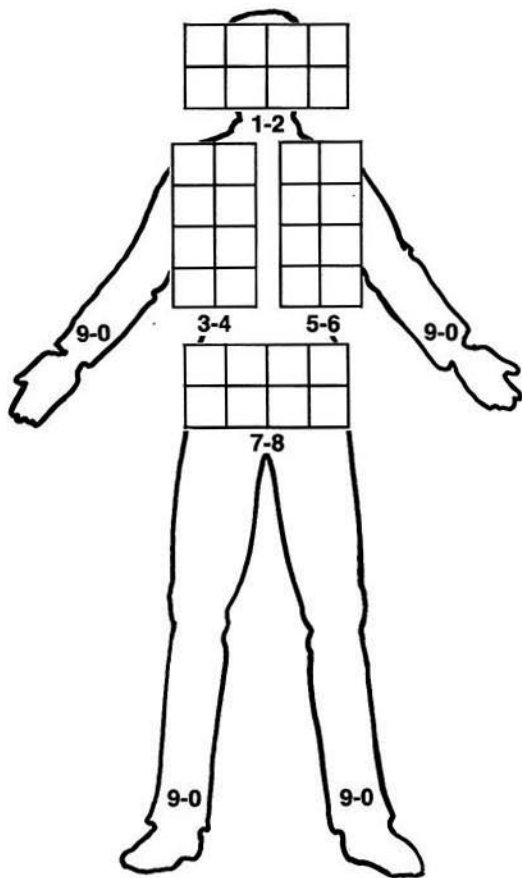
DAMAGE: The same left-hand (tens) digit already rolled. Put an X through that number of boxes on the diagram above in the location determined below.

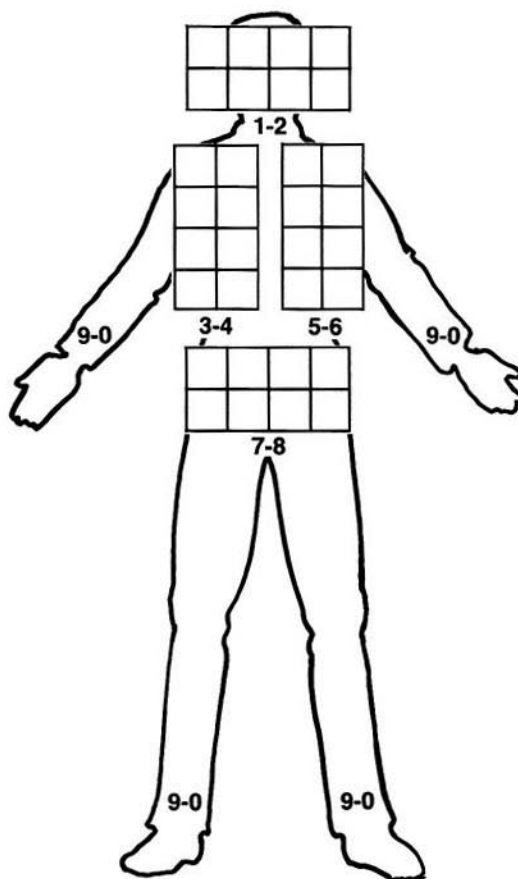
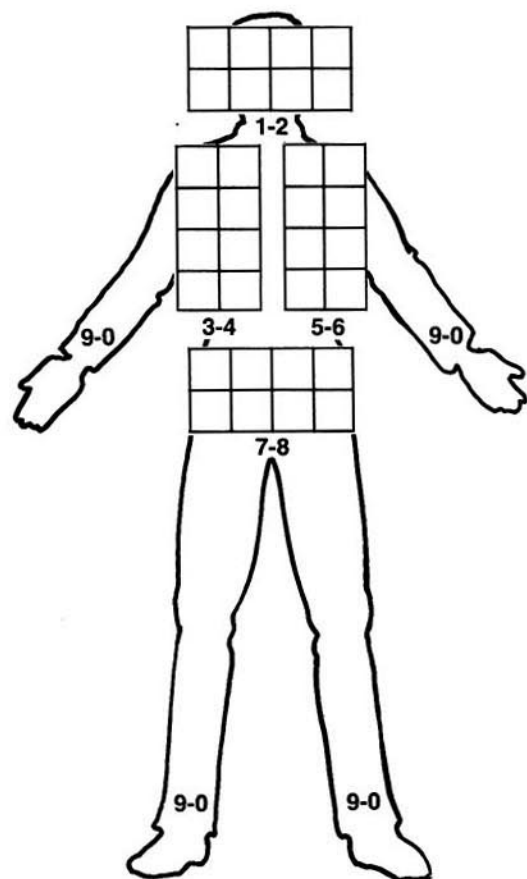
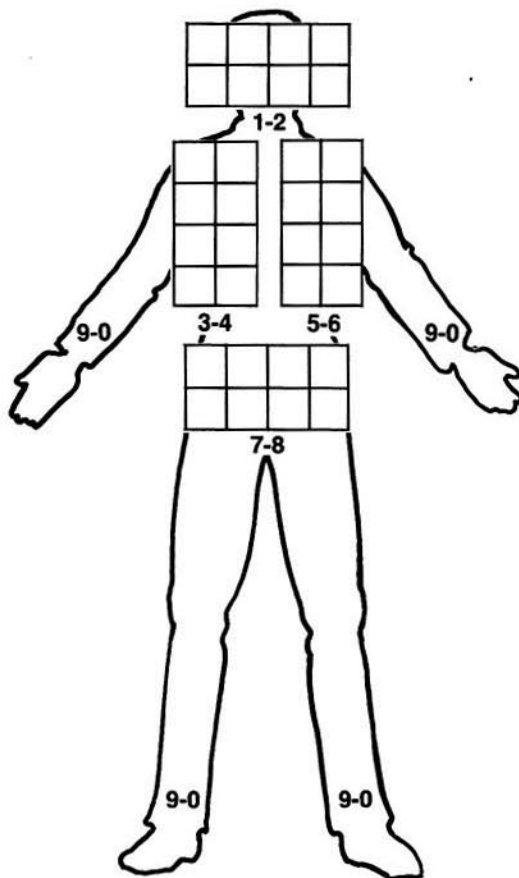
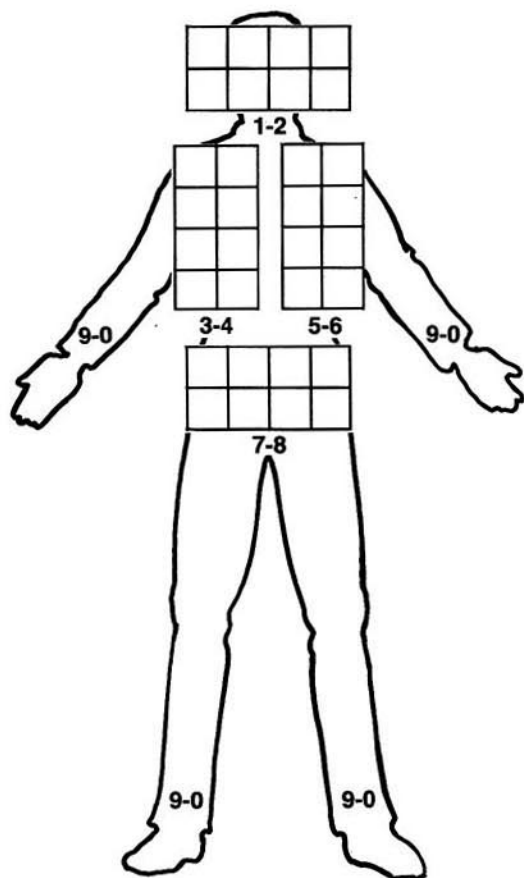
LOCATION: The same right-hand (ones) digit already rolled, located on the diagram above. Note that 9s and 0s do not contribute to damage.

CRITICAL HIT: The same number appears on both dice, automatically killing instantly when the location is head, chest, or abdomen.





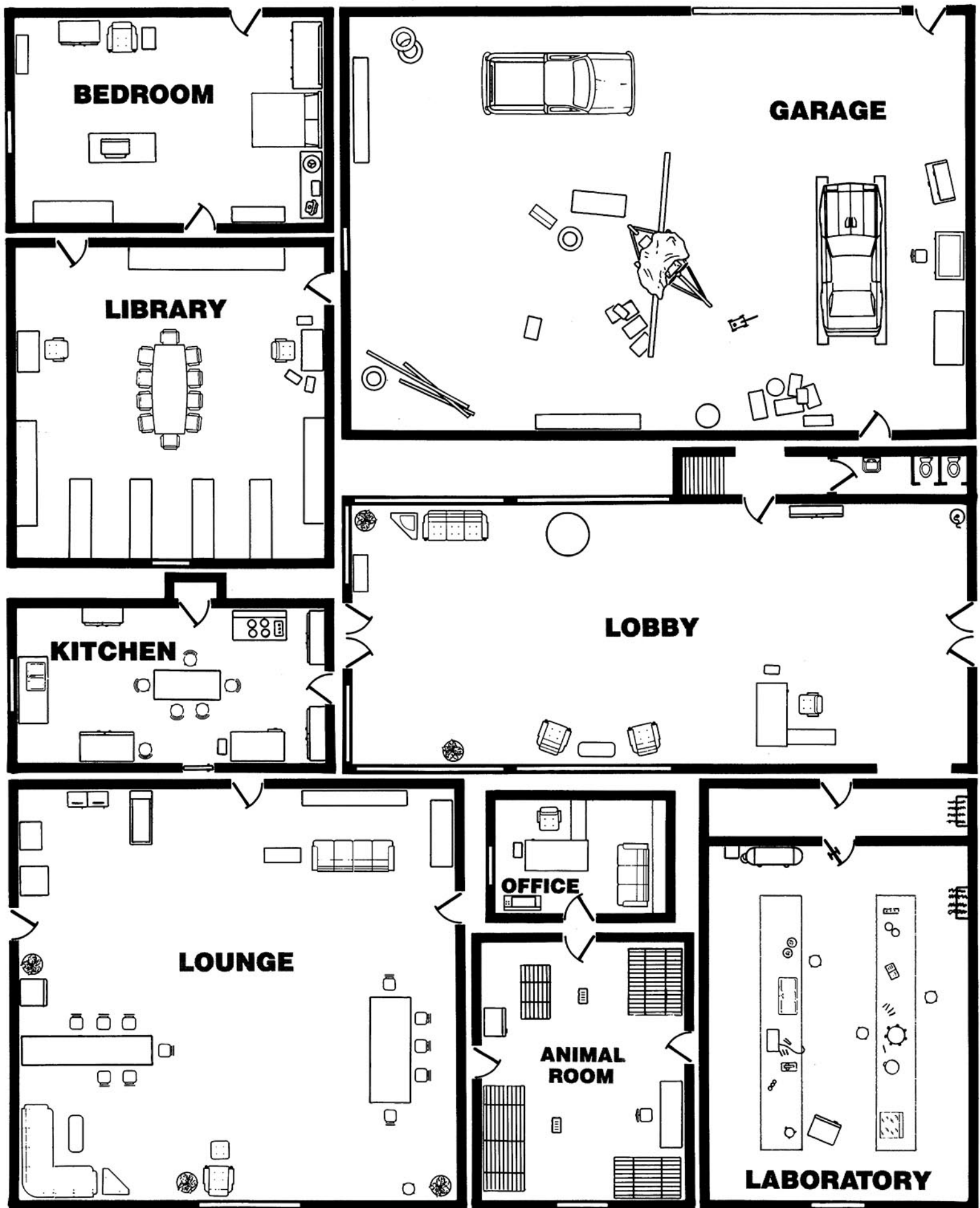




MOUNTAINTOP TIME CARD

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* When you reach midnight (12:00 p.m.)
turn to **86F**.

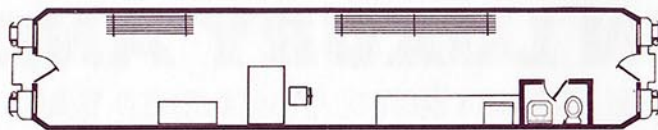


- AR#20732 17-10-89, Littlehampton, UK - Headmaster Nigel Chalmondeley, reporting to the main building of Littlehampton private school for boys, found that every door in the interior of the building had been bricked up overnight. At first attributed to a schoolboy prank, the work was soon seen to be of professional quality. There are no bricklayers among the boys' families.
- AR#20733 17-10-89, Queen Maud Land, Antarctica - The pilot of a private aircraft, flying over the snowcapped southern continent, reported on his arrival back in Christchurch, New Zealand, that he had seen a hole open up in the snowcap and what appeared to him to be a flying saucer emerge from deep under the ice. He tried to chase it but the "saucer" flew too fast for him to keep up with it. After being teased for "seeing things," the pilot, aircraft enthusiast Werner Michaels, has refused to discuss the matter further.
- AR#20734 18-10-89, Moorland, Colorado - The small river that runs through this mountain town turned vivid blue today for no reason that can be discovered. The color—described by one man as that of his wife's best party dress—changed the color of the water for approximately one hour. When the river sank back into the earth, the color was carried with it, leaving nothing for investigators to study.
- AR#20735 19-10-89, Kraboul, South Africa - The small tribe residing on the outskirts of this township that was reported last year (see AR#17984) as having turned into a group of "zombies," has been found by South African public health officials to have apparently returned to "normal." The trances, which kept members of the tribe from doing anything for themselves, have worn off. There were no children born in the tribe for the past six months, although there are now two pregnant women who expect to deliver in January.
- AR#20736 19-10-89, Waterloo, Belgium - Residents of this small suburb of Brussels are puzzled about the peculiar rain of frogs that apparently fell on its marketplace. They report that the sky closed up suddenly and frogs began to fall. As they landed on the ground, the amphibians hopped away rapidly, too fast for anyone to catch. Within five minutes the sky was clear again, and the frogs were all gone.
- AR#20737 20-10-89, Hana Bay, Hawaii - The Hana Sea Institute, a private research facility run by Dr. Lloyd Henstrom, was demolished by fire following an explosion. The area around the institute has been rife with rumors of strange events for many months, including one that Dr. Henstrom has trained a giant octopus as an attack animal. Arson is suspected. The institute was started in 1982 to investigate deep-sea life in the Hawaiian archipelago.
- AR#20738 21-10-89, Swan Hill, Australia - An amateur astronomer in this little town on the northern edge of the state of Victoria reports that three nights running he has seen distant flashes of light apparently originating in the crowded portion of the asteroid belt between Mars and Jupiter. He speculates that an alien race has decided to mine the vast mineral deposits that are to be found in the asteroids.
- AR#20739 21-10-89, Chrudim, Czechoslovakia - A statue of the Madonna that stands in the church of St. George in this small town east of Prague is glowing in the dark. The statue, at least 150 years old, has never glowed before. But for weeks the curate at the church has been going into the sanctuary at night and watching the Madonna's glow become brighter and brighter. Government officials, who disapprove of religion, insist that the curate is an alcoholic who sees the glow only after drinking too much vodka. They demand that the statue be taken from the church and turned over to the national science institute for study.
- AR#20740 22-10-89, Moscow, USSR - Soviet chess champion Georgi Alexeyevich Rastov withdrew from the finals of the International Chess Tournament with no reason given. He has held the lead in the tournament since the first game and was expected by expert observers here to win. Rastov has been known to mumble sharp criticisms of the timers and other judges in the tournament, which has been played annually since 1895.
- AR#20741 23-10-89, Aberdeen, Scotland - A genetics laboratory working under P4 conditions (the most stringent level of sterilization) was today shut down because of a reported outbreak of severe diarrhea among workers there. The lab will probably be burned to the ground under fire department supervision in order to control the virulent bacteria that has contaminated the facility.

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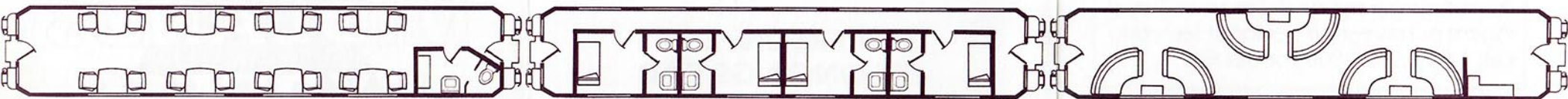
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February 16

Dear Jack,

Your valentine card was great! Thanks. I hope you received mine in time. Sometimes it's a little difficult to get mail away from this place. Whoops, guess I shouldn't have said that. I can just hear you now: "Beatrice, I told you there's something strange about working in such isolation!"

But the work is so exciting, Jack! We've been playing around with slime molds lately and have managed to insert genes that make carnivorelike digestive enzymes. It is cloning perfectly! Of course it doesn't have any real purpose, but it was an interesting accomplishment. I also altered it with a blue tracking marker. But I won't ever know if it reproduces the blue tag properly. Alita got very angry when she saw what we were doing, called it a waste of time. I told her it would be helpful in our main work, but she just grabbed the samples and said she would dispose of them. I assume she did -- haven't seen them since.

Anyway, some of the techniques we used -- especially John's way of cutting DNA sections -- will be useful in the mood-stabilizer enzymes we're working

230 MEXICAN NATIVES DIE IN FACTORY BLAZE

NEW YORK (EB) — The entire male segment of a remote Mexican Indian tribe died recently in an unexplained factory fire west of Hidalgo del Parral in Mexico.

According to Dr. Tom Dorsett, who had been researching in that region, and who earlier this week submitted papers to the *New England Journal of Medical Inquiry*, the *Cima Fabricacion* factory hired the men a few weeks before the blaze occurred, and none but the natives died in the fire.

Mexican authorities, at the request of the Medical Association of Mexico, had earlier ordered the factory's officials to comply with Dorsett's request for employee blood samples. He made the request after finding what he called "disturbing results" in earlier tests. He was returning to the mountain location to obtain the samples when he learned of the deaths and the factory's destruction.

Dorsett had been researching stress among Mexican Indians who have moved from isolated settings to the workplace. He was drawn to the factory last month, when he discovered that the usually strong-willed natives showed "unheard of" compliance with their employers' orders.

Wondering if their attitude had some physical origin, Dorsett requested permission of the factory management to carry out the blood tests. Officials of the factory, which is owned by an international combine headquartered in Panama, had refused his request, and refuse to discuss the fire's cause.

"I also tried to talk to the workers' families," Dorsett said in a telephone interview today, "but they had all scattered back into the mountains after the fire."

This is only a public glimpse of Web's silent subversion—one of many scenes taking place on the globe. Sebastian Cord has failed to exterminate THE FINAL BUG!



MOUNTAINTOP LABORATORY CHART

	Office	Animal Room	Laboratory	Garage	Library	Kitchen	Bedroom	Lounge
7:00	73B 151E 139E	153B 144C 126F	103E 18E 128D	136E 122A 53C	44D 74D 110A	58A 32F 124A	103B 47D 136A	53A 133E 148A
7:30	13G 41E 52A	46D 89A 94C	127E 18E 24C	136E 122A 53C	44D 108D 87D	58A 32F 124A	103B 47D 136A	54C 58F 59D
8:00	90B 45E 48A	51C 89A 121F	23D 18E 116D	68D 84D 104A	44D 74D 110A	113C 18B 46A	62A 98C 78F	54C 58F 59D
8:30	155E 41E 72A	153B 144C 34E	45G 116C 99G	68D 84D 104A	44D 74D 110A	58A 32F 124A	45B 82E 76B	13E 58F 88B
9:00	73B 151E 139E	153B 144C 34E	45G 116C 99G	68D 84D 104A	44D 74D 110A	131A 18B 46A	45B 82E 76B	13E 58F 58F
9:30	90B 45E 48A	153B 144C 34E	45G 116C 99G	136E 122A 53C	44D 74D 110A	38E 18B 59A	103B 47D 136A	13E 58F 88B
10:00	90B 45E 48A	153B 144C 126F	127A 75B 109A	136E 122A 53C	115D 108D 87D	58A 32F 124A	106F 47D 136A	13E 58F 88B
10:30	90B 45E 48A	46D 89A 94C	127A 75B 109A	87C 122D 122D	82A 108D 87D	115E 32F 124A	106F 47D 136A	53A 133E 148A
11:00	90B 45E 48A	51C 89A 121F	53E 116C 99G	61G 84D 104A	81C 145B 50B	113C 18B 46A	139F 127C 153A	53A 133E 148A
11:30	116E 41E 25F	153B 144C 34E	110C 116C 99G	142B 79G 83G	83C 145B 50B	113C 18B 46A	106F 47D 96E	101A 102D 50F
12:00								

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THE FINAL BUG

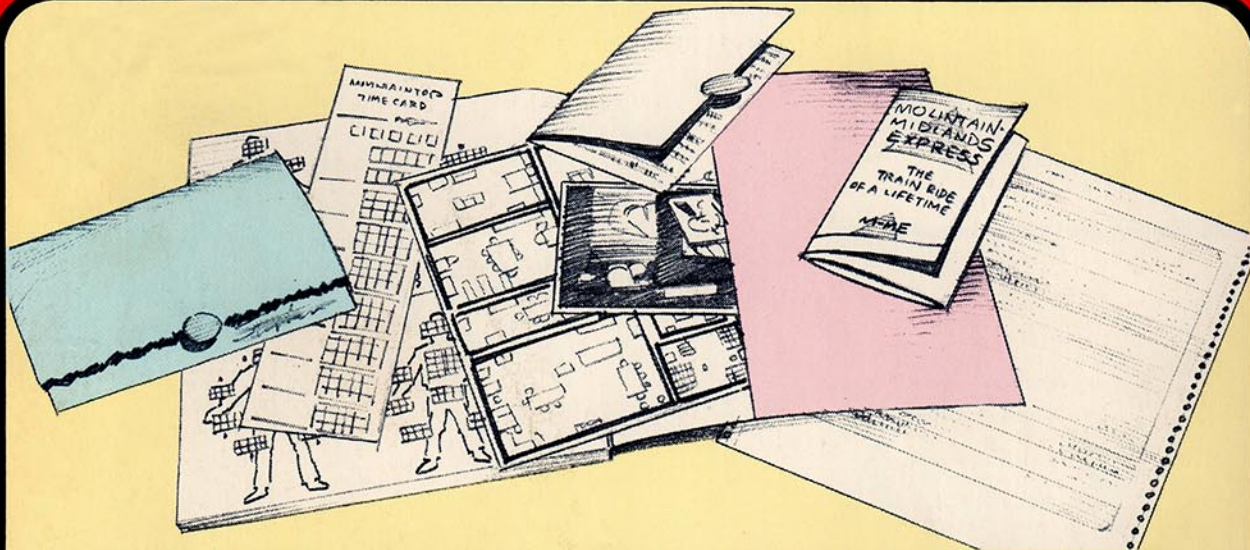
JEAN BLASHFIELD

When a stranger dies in a chamber that can't be entered, in a way that can't happen, and for no apparent reason, authorities call in YOU, Sebastian Cord, the Orion Foundation's top Special Intelligence agent, to help solve the case.

But that single mysterious death helps Cord uncover a far more sinister scheme—one that could destroy humanity by turning people into mindless slaves!

In this CATACOMBS™ style adventure book, you enter a world of espionage filled with gadgets, guns, and genetic glitches. To complete your assignment, you must explore the rooms of a secluded laboratory, interpret clues found in the special pocket at the back of the book, avoid or fight off guards, and locate and destroy the creation known as*

THE FINAL BUG!



* By using keen Special Intelligence skills, you'll uncover the evidence to help exterminate **THE FINAL BUG**. The unique CLUE POCKET in the back cover of this book holds hands-on clues—a photograph, a computer printout, a letter, a brochure, a news clipping, and more! They'll bring you closer to the solution than you may want to get.

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