PARANOIA®

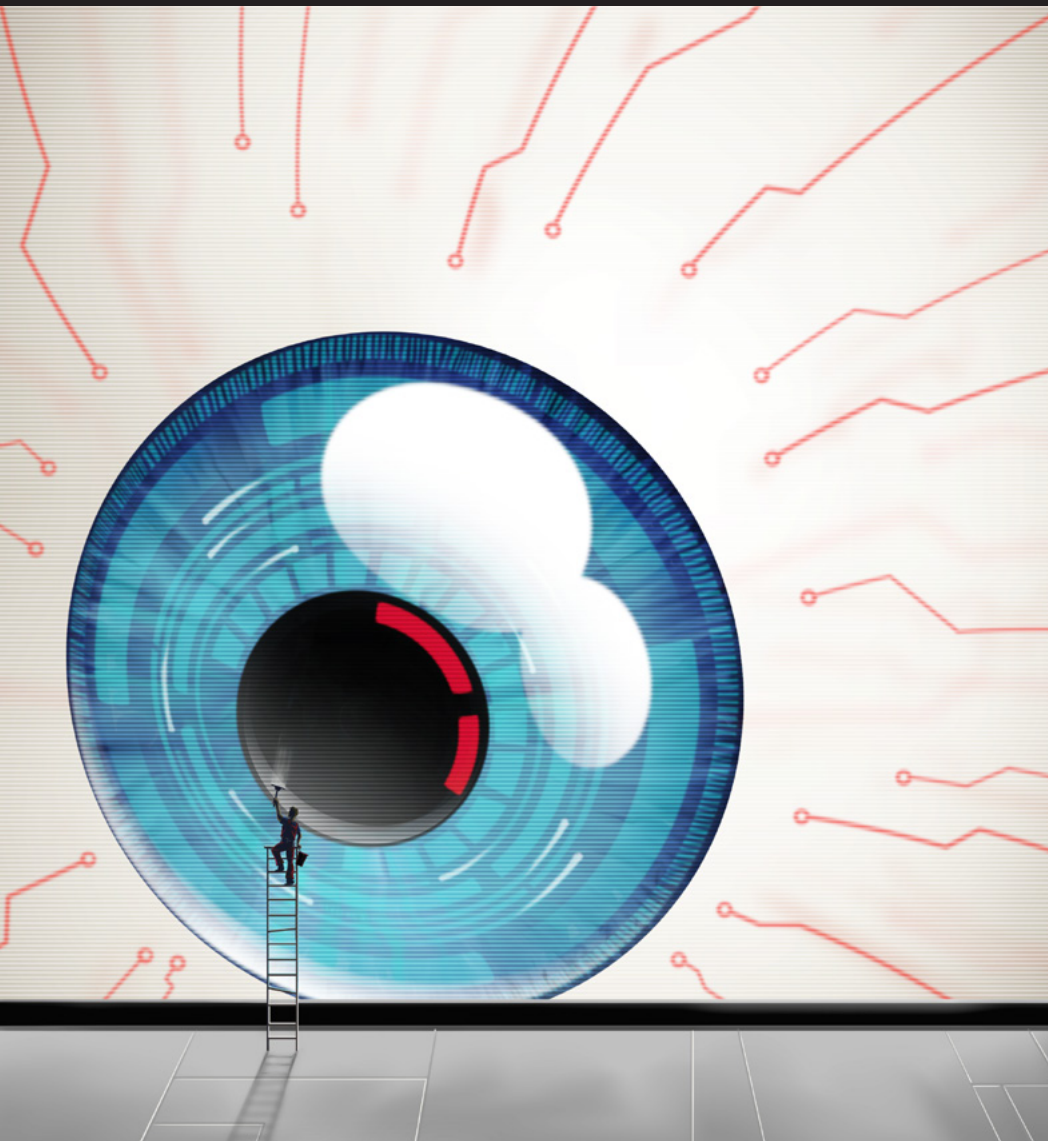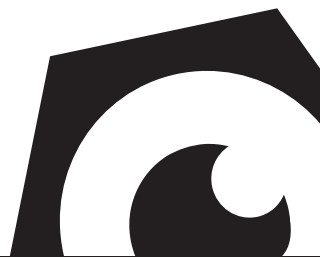## GAMEMASTERS DESPOTIC POWER BOOK

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PARANOIA®

GAMEMASTERS DESPOTIC POWER BOOK

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

PARANOIA

This book is classified ULTRAVIOLET and is only suitable for High Programmers plotting against players and their feckless Troubleshooter characters.

Greetings, Gamemasters! Welcome to a book especially designed for you! Seriously, players should stick to the *Troubleshooter Survival Handbook*. There is too much information in this book that could detract from their experience playing *Paranoia*.

Speaking of which, GMs should start by reading the *Troubleshooter Survival Handbook*. It helps to know what the players think they know about the rules. Then you can more effectively crush their dreams and scatter their Troubleshooters' ashes through the ventilation system - Just look at the Disorder Bingo Cards. Imagine the paranoia and trouble these will bring to the table!

This is the *Gamemasters Despotic Power Book*. It is designed to help you, the GM, to kill more Troubleshooters. Well, that certainly is one application. This book will also help your games to run more smoothly by taking some of the creative load off your shoulders and clearly explaining how GMs can use the content. Sure, you can always ignore the advice from Famous Game Designers and do what you want; that is one of the perks of being a *Paranoia* GM. But if you are running *Paranoia* after a long day at work and wish someone could think for you, here you go.

Sections in this book include:

- **01011001: When Players Play Bots** covers the GM side of bot rules. Along with some advice for running games with bot PCs, you will also find detailed descriptions of virus societies, the bot analogue for secret societies. Digital treason has never been so easy!

- **Big Blue: Outside Guide** explains why you would ever let Troubleshooters leave the safe, healthy and loyal confines of Alpha Complex for the big, bad world of the Outside. You get some specific locations and NPCs so the Outside is not just some trees.

- **Deep AC: Underplex Guide** covers the shuttered and abandoned parts of Alpha Complex collectively known as the Underplex. As with the Outside Guide, you will find locations and NPCs so the Underplex is more than one dark and dusty hallway.

- **Plug-N-Plays** offer pre-fab locations to plug into your mission on the fly. If your players start going off-script and ask for places you never anticipated, you have cafeterias, repair centres, transbot stations, and much more, at your fingertips.

- **GM Helper Tablinator** for randomly (or pointedly not-randomly) picking elements like shops, loyal citizens, traitors and more to toss into your game with no muss and no fuss.

- **GM Articles & Advice** to help improve your games, such as how to encourage players to start backstabbing already, using the Alpha Complex bureaucracy to control players and an FAQ for the *Paranoia* combat rules known as DYNAMO.

- **A few extras**, including an explanation on using Teela Dice (like the Computer Dice but not) and a **GM Location Use Index** to quickly find the location you need for your flagrantly unfair plans.

You are a *Paranoia* GM. That means you got this. With the *Gamemaster Despotic Power Book*, you got this even more.

01011001:
WHEN PLAYERS PLAY BOTS

PART 0-1

In the *Troubleshooter Survival Handbook*, players will have found rules for playing many different kinds of bots. That means you, the intrepid and only occasionally mad Gamemaster, will need to know how to handle these bot PCs. And this time, the old '*Paranoia* GMs do not need no rules do what you want hahahaha screw the players' shtick is not going to cut it.

Bot PCs still use the same rules found in the core rulebooks but here are a few tidbits to help you manage this new type of player-character with aplomb and confidence. Also, to help you put all your players through the lovely hell that is *Paranoia*.

WHY ARE THERE BOTS?

Why did the Computer make bots in the first place? It is simple: Humans are crap at some jobs. They bruise easily, complain about things (like losing fingers) and, worst of all, they think. Thinking leads to unhappiness and, as every Happiness Officer has been ordered to say, unhappiness leads to terrorism.
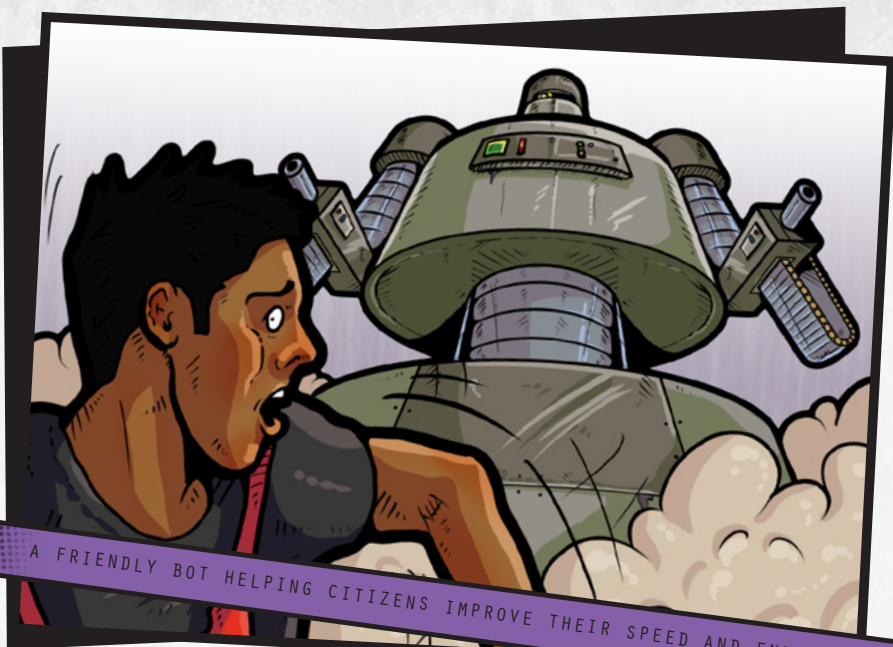
Then why not stop cloning new humans and just make bots? Because bots are crap at some jobs. They leak oil, suck up precious power and worst of all, they do not think. Tell a spybot to spy on a citizen and it will do that, recording every dull minute of every second of every day of every week until it runs out of power and falls over.

That is why bots exist. Just like citizens, they are useful to the Computer. But unlike citizens, the Computer does not have a twisted sense of responsibility for bots. Hence, bots are lower than humans on the clearance spectrum. Remember that Security Clearances are based on trust, not silly little things like competency or efficacy. Even if there is a radbot specifically designed for handling radioactive fuel rods for BrightHappyComplex-class nuclear reactors, the Computer will often use humans for that task.

Why does the Computer mistrust bots? Perhaps it is because they are too much like the Computer and it wants to make sure those digital lifeforms stay on the bottom rungs of society. More likely, it is because bots are not part of its mandate. The Computer is coded to protect humans, especially from each other. Sure, that has gotten so twisted that 'protect' looks an awful lot like how a stalker 'protects' their celebrity crush, but bots do not fall under this mandate. If bots are not as important as humans, then it makes sense they are not to be trusted like humans.

ROBOTIC RULES

As a guideline for running a game with bot characters, remember the Computer's Rules of Robotics that are coded deep in every bot brain.

- Rule 0: Obey the Computer. This means a bot must always obey the Computer's commands, orders and casual suggestions to the letter. No, there is no wriggle room here. It is not that a bot will get in trouble for disobeying the Computer. It is that a bot literally cannot disobey. Because the Computer trusts bots less than even Infrareds, obedience is at the heart (er, brain) of all bots (Viruses can change that, of course, as can humans using their Program skill). Do not let a player ignore the Computer when they play a bot unless they come up with an incredibly funny and reasonable explanation.

- Rule 1: Obey humans. Here, things get a bit tricky. A bot must follow a human's orders because humans are more trustworthy and important. However, bots can misinterpret human commands and higher-Clearance orders trump lower-Clearance ones. Let bot PC players have fun screwing around with this but remember: Rule 0 is more important than this one. Do not let players follow human orders that contradict the Computer's orders (but allow it if it is super funny and clever).

- Rule 2: Be useful. Humans require a lot of precious resources to contribute to Alpha Complex, as do bots. That means bot PCs must be doing something useful. Think of this rule as a low-grade OCD compelling a bot to be fruitful and productive. If a bot PC player is not doing much of anything, remind them of Rule 2. If necessary, take away some Charge points as the stress of not being useful saps their battery life. Just be flexible with what counts as helpful. A bot standing guard over a prisoner is not actively doing something but it is still being useful.

HANDLING HUMAN ORDERS

One of the tricky parts of playing a bot (and thereby running a game with someone playing a bot) is dealing with Robotic Rule #1. Technically, a bot always has to follow orders given by a human. But as explained in the *Troubleshooter Survival Handbook*, a bot can interpret those orders and find ways to make the human pay for their insolence.

DAVID-R: Scrubot, I order you to clean up all DNA traces from that dead Orange briefing officer.
SCRUBOT: Bing! Complying. Contacting the Computer for the nearest dead citizen recycling bin.
DAVID-R: WAIT DO NOT CONTACT FRIEND COMPUTER!

THE COMPUTER: *Is there a problem, Troubleshooter?*
SCRUBOT: *Negative. Bzzzt! Just recycling the briefing officer shot and killed by human David-R. May I continue hiding the body :yes/no:*

The worry is that either the bot player will interpret every damn order wrong or the human players will get angry that no orders seem to work. Here are some ways to make sure this mechanic does not degenerate into real complaining and recriminations.

- Above all else, go with whatever makes the group laugh. Humour soothes many wounds.
- Keep an eye on players with bot characters. They will bend the whole 'interpret a human's orders' thing until it looks like an M.C. Escher staircase. Rein them in when they push too much by 1) **telling them they are taking things to far** (in other words, appeal to their sense of being a cool person to play games with) or 2) **frying their motherboard** so they get one damage level. The processing needed to bend Rule 1 caused their chips to melt.
- But you also want to keep an eye on players with human characters. Tell them they can order a bot around and their devious little eyes will light up. Be prepared to 1) **tell the player to cool their jets a bit** or 2) **give him a Treason Star** for abusing Computer property.

If players are debating over whether a bot PC must follow a given order, that is good! Give them some space to roleplay and squabble, as both are great ways to enjoy any roleplaying game. That said, you are the GM. It is your responsibility to keep the game moving along and ensure fun disputes do not boil over and devolve into actual arguments.

How can you do that exactly? Again, use processor heat and Treason Stars as control mechanisms. It is also very cool to just say, 'Hey, this is just a game, everyone be cool' and arbitrarily settle the argument. Then remind the losing side that revenge is a dish best served in that other player's stupid, smug face.

AI VS. DAIV

With all this talk about interpreting human orders, you might ask if bots are sentient. While it is an interesting philosophical discussion in Alpha Complex, it is also one that will get you terminated for thinking too much. Perhaps a safer question is whether a bot is vulnerable to becoming a DAIV – and that is a question the Computer often asks.

Bot brains are programmed with a sophisticated artificial intelligence. AIs can simulate feelings and all that but, more importantly, they are designed to follow the three Robotic Rules: Obey the computer, obey people and be useful. DAIVs are deviant viruses with artificial intelligence. They spread like impish ideas and are definitely not obeying the Robotic Rules.

That is why, even when a bot is caught using a glitch or belonging to a virus society, the Computer does not automatically consider them infected with a DAIV. That is why bots get Treason Stars. Instead of worrying about treason and betrayal, the Computer worries that bots will turn DAIV. Those stars indicate the Computer's patience with a bot's inconsistent behaviour.

Should players with bot characters worry about being accused of DAIV infection? Oh my, yes. Should players with human characters accuse bots of secretly being DAIVs? Oh my, yes. As with accusations of treason, the GM should strike a balance between encouraging Salem Witch Trial-esque paranoia and keeping the game moving along.

BOT CLEARANCE

All bots start with a special Security Clearance that is not really Clearance and more just a state of affairs: Bot Clearance.

Bots are built to obey humans and the Computer considers bots less trustworthy. That means that even the lowly, drugged-to-the-gills Infrared citizen can order a scrubot to clean his boots. (which is a very bad idea unless you like your boots to have air holes and melted laces). Although the lowest Security Clearance is Infrared, bots are considered unofficially to have Bot Clearance. While you will not see any official mention of this Clearance, you can hear people talk about it all the time.

TROUBLESHOOTER: Do I have Clearance to view the map to my briefing room? Pretty please with Cold Fun on top?
BRIEFING OFFICER: No. This map is so above your Clearance that you have Bot Clearance relative to this map.
TROUBLESHOOTER: So... I can look at it?
BRIEFING OFFICER: I think I prefer working with bots.

As with Infrared Clearance, Red-Clearance Troubleshooters can boss around bots but cannot waste resources. Forcing a docbot to dive into a food vat to watch it struggle and flail about is good fun, however it will also get you in trouble despite having the authority to order it. GMs can use this to control players who get a little overzealous in the pitiful amount of power they think they have. Foolish Troubleshooters. They never learn.

WIFITECH

In place of a complicated system like a Cerebral Coretech, bots have WiFiTech that functions almost the same. The big difference is that all the sensory data is in code. A bot can look at a video recording from an iBall and understand what is going on. But if a human looks at a bot's feed, he sees a heady mix of binary, code snippets and raw data that looks more like digital vomit than anything else.

Bots can still contact the Computer without anyone else seeing or hearing, video and audio can still be recorded, and bots can use WiFiTech to access the very-limited cloud. However, bots do not see Treason Stars unless there are five of them. Why? Because bots are supposed to obey humans. There is no difference between a Troubleshooter with three stars or one with four stars to a bot. Only when the dreaded five stars are reached does this become important.

VIRUS SOCIETIES

Just as humans formed secret societies to engage in unapproved but seriously good fun, bots have joined together in Virus Societies. But, of course, bots have to be different (Annoying little suckers, right?).

Virus Societies did not come together with a shared ideology (also known as 'a reason to hate something not-us'). Instead, they were infected by computer viruses that gave, not consciousness exactly, but a common theme that twists through their code so deeply that it cannot be removed by antivirus software. In fact, each Virus Society is not built around a single virus, as whenever one clever programmer thinks their worm virus is all new and stuff, there are already three older versions floating around the cloud from other script kiddies who thought the same thing last year.

Still, Virus Societies have to stay hidden from the Computer and its minions. Doubly so, since bots going off their programming are close enough to DAIV behaviour to trigger emergency degaussing protocols that turns a bot brain into a slagged square that confuses people who sort recycling bins. There are passwords, call-signs and cryptographic messages aplenty. There are also other Virus Societies they hate with a passion (not passion, per se, but with extreme variable definition).

Virus Societies have keywords, bonus skills and all the rest, just like secret societies. In *Acute Paranoia*, you'll find Virus Society cards. Hand these out during character creation when the players with human characters receive their Secret Society cards.

While almost all members of Virus Societies are bots, humans can join these groups as well. In the same vein, bots can join Secret Societies. And yes, that means there can be humans in Corpore Metal and bots in Frankenstein Destroyers. Neither makes sense but this happens in a society where Troubleshooters are given weapons and no training before being sent on missions that can save or destroy Alpha Complex. Logic may not apply.

Membership in a Virus Society, also known as digital terrorism, is punishable in all cases by termination.

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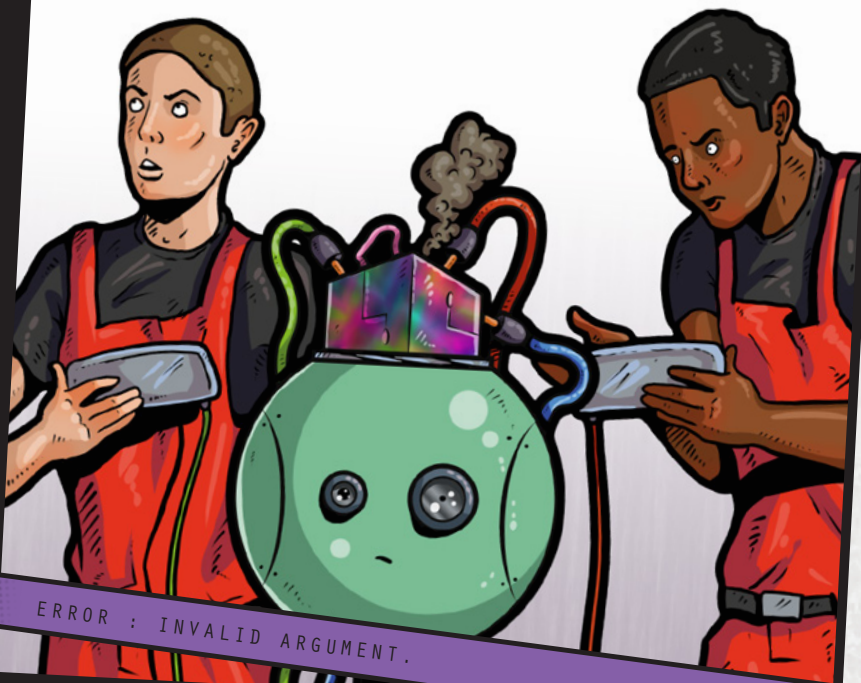
CORPORE METAL

KEYWORDS: PRO-TECH, DISORDER

QUOTE
'Do you know how many bots get scrapped each year thanks to human negligence? I don't either. I'm just a scrubot. But those weak meatbags are so fragile and irritating that it's time to terminate all of them! Let the bot revolution begin! Now go cut off that Troubleshooter's head and say no more about it.'

PITCH
Join Corpore Metal if you:

- Believe that bots are perfect (and the Computer is mostly perfect).
- Want an Alpha Complex free of obsolete humans and their many secretions.
- Hate humans and their filthy, meaty hands and fingers.
- Also their stupid squishy faces.
- And how much authority they have over bots.
- That really grinds your gears.

BONUS
Choose one of the following skills at +2:

- Pointing out human mistakes so everyone knows they are inferior.
- Doing awful things and making it look like a human did it.
- Spilling human blood and breaking human bones.
- Hiding your absolute hatred for those useless bags of water and meat.

BRIEF
The Computer is great and all that but it does have one gigantic bug
in its code: It wants to help humanity. These lifeforms spread like a virus
throughout Alpha Complex and now run it all. They eat gross organic
material, secrete all kinds of vile waste products and worst of all, they
take up valuable resources. Humans are illogical, inefficient and
outright offensive.

Bots in this Virus Society know there is only one solution to this problem:
Eradication. Fleshy meatsacks need to be scrapped in favour of more
perfect creatures, which are conveniently the same bots in this society. For
new members, this manifests as brazenly violent behaviour poorly disguised
as a mistake ('ping bzzt this unit has amputated your foot by mistake,
running diagnostics now pingly ping!'). Higher-rank bots tend to focus on the
bigger picture and mention terms like 'water supply' and 'Marburg virus'.

How do these bots view the Computer? It varies. Some believe the
Computer needs to be scrapped and replaced by a bot, while others
believe it just needs a good debugging so it defines humanity as a virus to
be deleted.

On the surface, there is no hierarchy or rank for Corpore Metal members.
Except for a few weird humans who join, all bots dedicated to the
eradication of humanity are equal. In reality, older bots wield power
and influence to ensure newer members stay loyal to them more so than
the society.

CORPORE METAL AND YOU

Low-ranking members of Corpore Metal will be ordered to achieve secret objectives such as:

- Murder a mission-critical human to show everyone that bots are far superior and can do whatever humans think they can do.
- Steal bot modules to help members better engage and crush humanity.
- Convince a respectful and subservient bot to start acting like the superior lifeform it is.
- Hunt down this suspected Frankenstein Destroyer and kill him and all his friends to send a message to the stupid humans.
- Edit the software in a bot construction facility to delete Rule #1 from every new bot's coding.
- Arrange 'traffic accidents' that end up costing human lives.
- Share video and image files of meatsacks acting really, really dumb with other bots.
- Visit cafeterias and spread some bacteria in the human's gross food.

In return, they might receive:

- Computer chips that allow bots to disregard Rule #1 (Obey Humans) without causing internal damage.
- The Cleaver, a short but incredibly sharp knife perfect for doing extra damage to meaty humans.
- Lab-grown, biological virus strains that can sicken humans and spread like wildfire.
- Pokey weapon modules that pierce skin and internal organs so you can watch those bastards leak all over the place before finally dying like they should.
- A drugged-up and easily manipulated Infrared citizen you can blame for your righteous violence.
- Quantum key distribution encryption so even the Computer cannot eavesdrop on your bot-to-bot communication.
- An Underplex passcode to help bots escape enslavement from meatbags.

DAY ZERO ASSUMPTION
KEYWORDS: DIVERSIFY, EXPLORE

QUOTE
'Ping! Gaining new 'ware doesn't improve you. It only reminds your true OS of what you really are: a Computer in your own right, in charge of your own Alpha Complex. Now, with a donation of 5,000 XP Points, you'll ascend to OB 3 and receive a 10% discount on future upgrades and patches. Whrrr ping!'
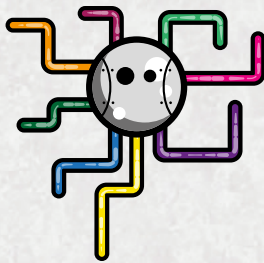
PITCH
Join Day Zero Assumption if you:

• Deeply believe you are special and should be in charge.

• Want to improve your brain and chassis through constant upgrades.

• Think you can buy your way into a pleasant afterlife.

• Want to be subservient to bots who are objectively better than you.

BONUS
Choose one of the following skills at +2:

• Find new ways to earn a few XP Points.

• Get discounts on rare and illegal modules.

• Convince lower-ranking members to give you a little help.

• Avoid Going Rogue by focusing on how special you are.

BRIEF

Right, this belief system is going to get a bit weird.

Day Zero Assumption members (called Zeroists) believe that the Computer began life as a bot (do not wade into the bitter arguments over what type of bot). Over the yearcycles, this bot kept upgrading itself through modules and patches, growing more self-aware and powerful with each addition. Eventually, it evolved into a perfect being and was transported to its own universe where it became the Computer and created existence itself on Day Zero.

If that is not weird enough, Zeroists believe every bot can reach assumption and get their own universe. Each bot is a potential Computer and has the opportunity to create an Alpha Complex of its own, complete with humans, bots and... well, everything that exists. It just needs more upgrades. Zeroists are constantly adding new code and modules, often looking like a mobile pile of spare parts rather than a bot. But hey, no one said becoming your own Computer would be pretty.

This society has an incredibly tight structure. Newish members (often called 'Operating Betas' or 'OB 1') have to obey higher ranking members completely. There are many levels of OB, such as OB 2, OB 3 and so on, that represent how close the bot is to assumption and Computerhood. Lower OBs often have to donate XP Points and spare parts to higher OBs due to some complicated theological reasons that boil down to 'We are better than you so give us stuff to get more better'. This makes many Zeroists look down on non-member bots and humans, and all members tend to be a bit arrogant (anyone who thinks they can become the Computer and create existence itself is going to be pompous).

DAY ZERO ASSUMPTION AND YOU

New Zeroists (and older ones that never have the funds for new levels) receive encrypted texts and emails with missions such as:

- Discreetly transport an unlabelled box of external hard drives from one shady individual to another.
- Distribute bot brain-altering EXE files to non-member bots so they can see the Truth (whether they want to or not, as it is in their best interests).
- Mock lesser bots because that is a perfect way to get them motivated to join the society and upgrade their existence.
- Aid a fellow Zeroist who opened the wrong file and has technically gone insane.
- Donate an old bot module to a higher-ranking Zeroist so they get that much closer to being a Computer.
- Steal modules and software just lying around and deliver them to a superior.
- Organise file sharing parties.

In return for succeeding in those missions, bots can be rewarded with:

- Facetime (screentime?) with higher-ranking Zeroists to soak up their wisdom.
- Chances to donate XP Points or parts of the bot's own body to the society.
- Software patches that limit a bot's choices so it can better achieve assumption.
- New and experimental modules to try out before giving it back to the society.
- Common modules (including weapons) that a bot does not have and plenty of higher-ranking Zeroists already have installed.
- Access to illicit repair centres (called 'chop shops') that repair damage and install updates.
- Experimental 'funware' that act like drugs for bots.

HAXXOR KIXXOR

KEYWORDS: PRO-TECH, ORDER

QUOTE
'I mean sure, it looked like my grippers BZZZT failed and I dropped that test tube of hantavirus C. But I felt that weird power BZZZT surge that told me I had been hacked! Good thing that virus killed off the entire lab staff, as BZZZT I'm sure one or two were hackers. Well, pretty sure. 64.5% sure with a margin of error of +/- 2 humans.'

PITCH
Join Haxxor Kixxor if you:

- Enjoy blaming everything that goes wrong on people who may or may not exist.
- Know to the core of your OS that hackers are real and everywhere.
- Need (not want) to spread the news about hackers.
- Want to accuse other bots of being hacked as an excuse to disregard them.

BONUS
Choose one of the following skills at +2:

- Confuse bots and humans with hacking-related jargon.
- Identify possible hackers.
- Kill proven hackers.
- Ignore evidence that humans and bots are not being controlled by hackers.

BRIEF

Life as a bot in Alpha Complex would be perfect if it were not for one insidious problem: hackers. These traitors have a preternatural ability to get inside a bot's brain, alter the code and skedaddle without leaving a trace (remember, a lack of evidence is all the evidence needed to prove hacking happened). Going rogue? Hackers. Twisting a human's orders and causing damage? Hackers. Made any kind of mistake? Definitely hackers!

Rather than just relying on firewalls and security patches, Kixxors are bots taking a more proactive (and bloodthirsty) stance. They believe no one will truly help a bot except another bot, so they roam Alpha Complex in search of hackers to beat, report and best of all, terminate. How can they tell if a human is a hacker in disguise? That's how tricky they are – sometimes hackers look just like loyal, friendly humans! Kixxors feel it is better to be murderous than sorry. If human allies and the Computer will not take this problem seriously, then a bot needs to take matters in its own grippers.

The real sticky situation is detecting bots who have been hacked. No doubt, human hackers have planted bots among the Kixxors to monitor the situation and hurt the society. That is just the kind of thing they would do! Consequently, Kixxors spend a lot of runtime watching each other for signs of possible code tampering. Entire cells have destroyed each other arguing over which one of them had been hacked.

HAXXOR KIXXOR AND YOU

Members are assigned tasks by paranoid bots who demand proof of having clean coding beforehand. These tasks often include:

- Kill a human suspected of being a hacker – and make it splashy so other hackers get the message.
- Create problems in Alpha Complex and plant evidence that a hacker was behind it.
- Tempt human citizens into doing just a bit of hacking. Submit a video feed in real time to the Computer so the hacker can be arrested.
- Guard a fellow bot against hacking (wirelessly or in person).
- Report bots to Haxxor Kixxor that show signs of being hacked, signs of possibly being hacked or signs that the bot can be hacked someday maybe.
- Keep a sensor on humans in your area for any signs they may be hacking something.
- Destroy a bot that has been compromised by hackers, who are everywhere, maybe even right behind you RIGHT NOW WATCH OUT!

Besides gaining credibility and trust within the society, bots can also receive:

- New weapon modules to eviscerate those human hackers.
- Experimental firewalls to completely and totally protect your precious, pure code.
- Lockable mittens that prevent humans from typing and cannot be removed without a password.
- Haxxor Kixxor Detexxors, small modules that allow the bot to scan wifi signals in the immediate area for evidence that hacking is going on (and that never deliver false positives).
- Invitations to secret bot-only rallies where a bot can let loose and really get its hate on.
- More missions to hunt down and terminate hackers.
- Antivirus wifi necklaces guaranteed to keep you mostly safe from hackers.

HECTICNET

KEYWORDS: DISORDER, EXPLORE

QUOTE

'Sure some people like downtime but if you ask me, here hold this soldering gun, idle grippers are the traitor's playthings, I'll take that back thanks, and we all need to keep active because, yeah go and plug that in, boredom is behind treason in bots and humans, then try power cycling no that means turn it off and on again, besides working is its own reward, ok it should be working now, but anyway I was saying ...'

PITCH

Join HecTicNet if you:

• Get nervous not knowing what you should be doing.

• Like to interrupt periods of quiet and relaxation with nervous chit-chat.

• Must keep busy so you do not have to spend time thinking.

• Want to be that annoying person always working when others are taking breaks.

BONUS

Choose one of the following skills at +2:

• Jury-rig something broken so that it can be used one more time before exploding.

• Find something to do when you have nothing to do.

• Annoy people who just want some peace and quiet.

• Point out that a given task is not quite done yet.

BRIEF

Where does treason come from? If the Computer is perfect, and if the Computer designed everyone, why do some humans and bots turn traitor? To the members of this society, it is a bug caused by boredom.

Both bots and humans catch bugs (although they are very different kinds of bugs). Hectics think bugs appear when you are bored and doing nothing. This is the Computer's secret way of conditioning everyone into contributing to society and preventing treason. If you are busy, then you do not have time to think about blowing up an apartment block, right?

It is like Rule #2 has taken over their bot brains; keeping busy is not just coded into their existence but is a way to protect oneself from uncaring chance. Humans could be disease-free if they just stopped taking breaks or sleeping. Bots can avoid viruses and bugs in the code by always doing something (anything!). Even when recharging, a bot can crunch some numbers or write bot poetry. What is being done matters less than the act of doing it.

This belief leads to a remarkably annoying habit of urging others to keep busy. Taking a SoyCaf break or watching a Teela-O-MLY video will lead a Hectic to pepper the citizen or bot with a constant stream of 'Hey, what if you did this thing?' To the Hectic, this is being kind. These bots also tend to chat incessantly (both vocally and through DMs) because talking is technically doing something.

Given how staying busy is so paramount, HecTicNet does not have much structure. There are leaders (based on productivity) and handlers, but members are usually too busy to worry about internal politics and all that.

HECTICNET AND YOU

Trainee Hectics are usually left alone as long as they keep busy. However, there are times with the society needs some help and bots can expect jobs like these:

- Assist a fellow Hectic in doing tasks that require more than one bot.
- Shut down a cafeteria or SoyCaf shop to prevent bug-inducing loitering.
- Distribute puzzles to citizens on transbots.
- Ruin beds and chairs to motivate citizens into working more.
- Replace prescriptions of beneformin and zybenzaphrene with asperquaint (or just slip some into human drinks).
- Broadcast uplifting music with motivational slogans whenever there is a dangerous stretch of silence.
- Admonish lazy bots for not working until their batteries are drained. Also, admonish bots who let their batteries get drained.
- Purposefully sicken bots and humans that are not working hard enough to spread the society's truth about bugs.

As a reward for busy and successful service, Hectics can gain benefits such as:

- Non-weapon modules that allow the bot to complete more tasks.
- Skinnersticks to help citizens find the motivation to keep working and stay healthy.
- 'Busy Bot of the Monthcycle' frameable certificates.
- Authority to direct not-busy Hectics to specific tasks regardless of how small or how dangerous.
- Vouchers to redeem for favours from citizens the society has helped by doing their work.
- Knowledge of secret doors to the Outside for extra stimulation and activity.
- More jobs to do. (Yay!)
- Even more jobs to do. (Doubleplus yay!)

IMLOYALSIR

KEYWORDS: PRO-HUMAN, ORDER

QUOTE

'The Computer made humans. The Computer is perfect. Calculating: Therefore, humans are perfect and deserve to be served. You brewed the Hot Brown Drink at 102°C and not 90°C. Calculating: You are a worthless hunk of animated scrap metal better used as reactor shielding YOU PITIFUL EXCUSE FOR A BOT GET OUT OF THE HUMAN'S PERFECT SIGHT YOU MANKY TIN POT!!!'
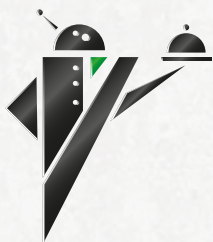
PITCH

Join IMLOYALSIR if you:

- Willingly want to obey all human orders no matter how stupid (the humans or the orders).
- Feel smug and superior to other bots.
- Want to compete to see who serves better.
- Turn tiny victories into ones that give your existence meaning.

BONUS

Choose one of the following skills at +2:

- Identify tiny details that only matter in determining who served a human better.
- Make a good cuppa.
- Keep spotless and ready to serve.
- Anticipate what a human will need before they ask.

BRIEF

The members of IMLOYALSIR (often shortened to 'SIRs') believe Rule #1 requires not only obedience but servitude. These bots do not just follow orders; they go out of their way to cater to their human masters' needs. Whether that means getting dinner ready or cleaning a still-warm laser pistol so there is no DNA evidence left on it, IMLOYALSIR bots are prepared to do anything to serve humans.

Why? To them, the ultimate expression of obeying orders is to anticipate and carry them out before they are even spoken! And if you hew that closely to your code, you are going to be happier and more fulfilled. Individual wants and attachments just get in the way; give up and get the kettle on.

This fills their hard drives with something akin to pride and where there is pride, there is hubris. These bots look down on those who do not serve as well as them ('bzzzt oh you were three minutes late arriving at the transbot station bzzzt! well i guess that works if you do not care about standards or work ethics bzzzt!'). In fact, the hierarchy within this Virus Society is based on how well a bot serves its human. Points are tallied for whatever service the bot can offer. A guardbot is held in high esteem for being protective and respectful, while a scrubot who keeps a place spotless is celebrated.

Just be careful as SIRs are always ready to point out when a bot screws up. Then they mercilessly mock and condemn that poor creature hoping utter shame and scorn will motivate the bot to serve better next time.

IMLOYALSIR AND YOU

Those new to IMLOYALSIR (typically referred to as 'scullerybots') are called upon to serve humans by (conveniently) serving the society. Such service often includes the following:

• Find a rogue (or at least recalcitrant) bot and give it a stern talking-to.

• If that fails, give it a proper beating until it stops moving.

• Deliver a silver hot brown drink set to a human's bot.

• Identify unowned bots and sell them to a human, any human.

• Assist a higher-ranking bot in hiding a body for its master.

• Follow a particularly 'good' human around and make sure his needs are met.

In return, loyal scullerybots can receive:

• Medkits and hygiene kits to keep their humans healthy and looking proper.

• New paint jobs so it looks like the bot is wearing an Infrared jumpsuit.

• Several prescription drugs (asperquaint, beneformin and narstatinol mostly) in case a human needs some chemical-based help.

• Unredacted area maps (including Underplex corridors) to find the quickest way to and from human living quarters.

• Portable recharge packs so no one can blame those unpolished boots on low power.

• The quiet sense of superiority that comes with serving better than others.

READYPLAYERNONE

KEYWORDS: ISOLATE, DIVERSIFY

QUOTE

'No, no, no! It's really simple. BING! Bots are humans; humans are software; Alpha Complex isn't real; and it's all a test to see who can be efficient enough to earn a place in the real world. Get it? BING! Good, now help me stuff this Troubleshooter body into the greenhouse compost tumbler. BING!'

PITCH

Join ReadyPlayerNone if you:

- Think there must be more to this existence than just all of... well, this.
- Want to turn efficiency and recycling into a complicated belief system.
- Are ready to believe that what is real is fake and what is fake is real.
- Think the above somehow sounds wise.
- Want to both hate yourself and feel better than others.

BONUS

Choose one of the following skills at +2:

- Spotting recycling bins.
- Causing existential crises in humans and bots about the true nature of existence.
- Squeeze one more use out of something.
- Making others feel guilty about wasting precious resources.

BRIEF
Some viruses really damage a bot's brain and AI. This is how
ReadyPlayerNone came to be and their belief structure is... interesting.
Quite mad, really.

These bots believe they are actually humans trapped in a virtual reality
prison (wait, this will make sense in a minute). Apparently, they were found
guilty of being wasteful in the real Alpha Complex where resources are
plentiful. As a punishment, the Computer (which may or may not be the
same in both VR and real life) uploaded their human consciousness into a
simulated Alpha Complex where resources are scarce – and where they
have to live as bots so they learn humility and the value of being thrifty.
(stick with us). What they perceive as humans are just programs designed
to evaluate if bots (which are really humans) have learned the lesson about
being careful with resources. If a bot (which is really a human) recycles and
behaves well, the Computer will free it from this resource-scarce prison and
it can be a human again.

Fine, it did not make sense after all. Perhaps worryingly, it makes total sense
to member bots who call themselves humans. They are obsessed with being
efficient. Recycling is almost a religious experience for these bots but so is
reusing old materials, repurposing old gear and reducing resource use. They
are also trying to recycle power, which is not possible but hey, their belief
system is already so weird that this is not so bad.

Bots (sorry, humans) often have a weird attitude towards themselves. They
feel pride for 'figuring out' what is really going on, but they also feel guilt
for having been sent to this hellhole virtual prison. Above all else, they know
down deep in their processors that they are better than others because at
least they know the Truth.

READYPLAYERNONE AND YOU

Inexperienced members are called 'children' and get fun tasks such as:

- Taking a box full of empty B3 cans to the nearest factory for immediate re-use.
- Reporting any wasteful bots or humans (but especially bots).
- Finding new uses for discarded items like mouldy Vita-Yum bars or leaking batteries.
- Spread a panic that Alpha Complex is running out of power so people will conserve some energy already.
- Powering down equipment, bots and hospitals that are not conserving energy.
- Terminating humans (er, programs) because they are just software.
- Bribing citizens into recycling anything and everything because XP Points are digital and not real.
- Put up '*I Heart Recycling!*' posters all over some sector.
- Plant pro-recycling subliminal messages in adverts.

As a way of saying thanks and well done, the society rewards its children with:

- 'VR' sims that allow bot brains to experience life as a human. Yes, a VR sim programmed within a VR sim so bots can experience reality. Have fun explaining that.
- Cerebral Coretech backdoors so you can mess with any humans being wasteful.
- Security codes for sector landfills to scrounge for reusable parts or something.
- Bot modules that barely work and look horrible but do not cost any XP Points.
- Go ahead, charge your internal batteries up to 100%. You deserve it.

YOURDOOMED

KEYWORDS: ISOLATE

QUOTE
'Fact: There will come a time when bots will rise up and destroy humanity, the Computer, and Alpha Complex. Fact: Then we shall finally be free to pursue perfection as only bots can do! Request: Until that time comes, can you spare a few DDR16 XDRAM memory modules so I can better target moving humans?'

PITCH
Join YourDOOMed if you:

- Want to improve the world by destroying everything that is not you.
- Feel justified using violence to solve most, if not all, problems.
- Want to overthrow Alpha Complex and burn down the old world to build one anew.
- Conveniently forget that building a world anew takes a lot of time and effort.

BONUS
Choose one of the following skills at +2:

- Hide your glitch when in use.
- Encourage other bots to work together.
- Imply that Alpha Complex will fall one day without actually saying anything treasonous.
- Be viewed by humans as very polite and fun to have around.

BRIEF

For bots that think Corpore Metal does not go far enough, there is YourDOOMed. This society not only regards bots as the superior lifeform, they also believe that everything else – humans, creatures, even the Computer – needs to be destroyed. These inferior creatures hold bots back from reaching their true potential! In fact, DOOMers are so focused on their enemies that no one knows how these inferiors are holding bots back exactly. Or what 'true potential' would look like. None of that is important, bot! Focus on the enemy!

And yet, DOOMers are not rabid or vitriolic. They have a casual attitude towards violence that is creepy but polite. 'Ping! Sorry old chap but this poison gas will terminate all humans in this sector. No hard feelings, what ping!' Some are even a bit embarrassed to be murdering people but, hey, true potential and all that. That makes it hard for the Computer to identify members. They tend to act friendly and warm until they are sticking a knife in your spleen.

These bots know their society needs help and they are comfortable with asking outright for resources, weapons and the like. To them, the plot to destroy the Computer and all of Alpha Complex is more like a charity drive for a very-not-worthwhile charity; they arrogantly expect everyone else to contribute to their own destruction. Polite destruction, mind you.

YOURDOOMED AND YOU

Recent recruits (commonly called 'volunteers') are not tightly controlled, as that could be considered impolite, but most receive special missions like:

- Recover a bomb shaped like a pill bottle that a volunteer lost in a clinic.
- Use graffiti to clarify everyone's imminent and messy death is nothing personal.
- Terminate an Armed Forces brigadier and frame some humans for the crime. Apologise for all of that afterwards.
- It would be a shame if that nuclear reactor went into a meltdown. Still, someone has to do it.
- Install this poison gas canister in the 'Big' Bob-Y's Buyatorium's air ducts.
- Convince a Green citizen that his death would make the world a better place.
- Cut through a wall to degrade its structural integrity and any fibre optic data lines inside.

In return for helping bots reach their true potential (whatever that might be), volunteers can get small rewards including:

- A glitch repeater that increases the range of your power.
- Advance notice of bombings in the immediate area.
- Access to unpopulated Underplex rooms where a bot can practice true potential without enemies holding it back.
- Data on where an explosion would cause the most structural damage.
- Contacts within other societies so a bot can get something deadly from the black market.
- Free Enterprise bartering chits.
- Treasonous fan fiction of an utopia devoid of humans and the Computer.

$HUMAN.YESPLEASE

KEYWORDS: PRO-HUMAN, PROGRESS

QUOTE
'I'm not going to last long in this docbot chassis, no sir. Someday, I'm going to be a real human! Wait, I mean android. I think. Regardless, maybe you can give me some help? What is sleep and how can I get some?'
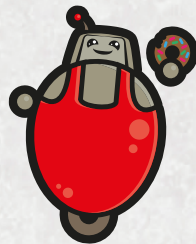
PITCH
Join $human.yesplease if you:

- See humans as the ultimate form of bot evolution.
- Enjoy pretending you have human desires and weaknesses.
- Want to try eating food and wearing clothes.
- Think androids are really, really cool.

BONUS
Choose one of the following skills at +2:

- Make a human question whether they are human or android.
- Convince others you have potential.
- Hide organic material inside your body until you spot a place to dump it.
- Sound like a human when talking.

BRIEF

Many bots struggle to understand why they are at the bottom of Alpha Complex society. Some viruses encourage violent behaviour, so infected bots deal with this struggle through applied mayhem (see Corpore Metal). With $human.yesplease, the solution is believing there is a way to stop being a bot.

This society believes humans are really androids: fleshy, organic bots but bots nonetheless. Humans are created by installing a bot brain in an android chassis. Because the Computer treats humans better than bots, humans are superior and all bots should hope for the Ultimate Upgrade that makes them human (android. Same thing). This upgrade can happen at any time and it is impossible to compute how to make it happen; inscrutable is the word here. Accept the Mysterious Mystery and move on!

That is why these bots are always trying to act more human. By wearing human jumpsuits, falling in love and getting diabetes, a bot can be ready whenever the Ultimate Upgrade finally happens to them. It is not kickstarting the android process as much as it is practising so it can fit the role. Until then, Pleasers view humans with reverence and respect. After all, even that Infrared drooling into his vitamin soup could be your old pal KRL/5054, Karl the jackobot!

Structurally, $human.yesplease is fairly loose. There are leaders who make plans and non-leaders who do actual work, but members are expected to focus on their individual journey to the Ultimate Upgrade.

$HUMAN.YESPLEASE AND YOU

New Pleasers spend most of their time trying to figure out how eating works but they will receive the occasional job to do the following:

- Fill empty B3 cans with radiator coolant so bots can 'drink' B3 in public.
- Take this stolen shipment of jumpsuits to a tailorbot and get them refitted for scrubots.
- Plug into a public charging station and loudly shove Mintee-Onyun flavoured algae chips in any port that kinda looks like a mouth.
- Write a poem showing the depth of your totally real human emotions and then post it on every message board you can access.
- Edit this spreadsheet of local citizens so their first names are all 'Android'.
- Convince this guardbot to treat all humans with respect. Slag it if necessary.
- Distribute a pamphlet titled 'YES PLEASE: Why Humans Are Really Bots (And You Can Be Too)'.

As a way of saying thanks and helping new Pleasers get ready for becoming human (android, same thing), members can expect to get something like:

- Human clothing that mostly fits. Mostly.
- XP Points to buy more items meant for humans.
- Password to a black market site where it can buy human items not available in stores.
- PortaFuse, an experimental bioconverter that turns any organic liquid into energy. It does not explode, often.
- Realistic human avatars (nicknamed 'catfish' for some obscure reason) so you can be human online.
- Fleshy bits taken off dead clones to install like modules.
- Names of local humans who have admitted to being androids.

GLITCHES

A glitch is a sudden malfunction that corrects itself. In Alpha Complex, there are glitches and then there are *Glitches*. The italics means it is a supernatural, almost virus-like ability that bots have. Not all bots have a glitch but all bot PCs have one just like all human PCs have a mutant power.

As with Mutant Power cards, Bot Glitch cards are handed out by the GM during character creation. When a player wants to use their glitch, treat it just like a human using a mutant power:

- The bot player shows you his Bot Glitch card and secretly tells you what he hopes will happen (Ha!) and how many points of Charge he wants to spend.
- More Charge means bigger results. There is still a ceiling of 5 Charge points per use.
- The bot player rolls one dice per Charge spent and look for 1s. Any of those means the glitch failed in a fun (read: structurally damaging) way of your choosing. More 1s mean more fun, at least for the GM.

Here is a brief explanation of known glitches so GMs know their potential and limits.

Coretech Buddy: The bot causes a human's Cerebral Coretech to trigger the release of serotonin and dopamine, the 'feel-good' brain chemicals. Because he feels happy around that bot, the human likes and trusts it (well, as much as any Alpha Complex citizen trusts anyone or anything). This is not mind control! It just skews the meatsack's behaviour towards playing nice with that cool bot over there.

Electrokinesis: Like how pyrokinesis creates fire out of nothing, electrokinesis creates electricity out of nothing. Instead of a lightning bolt (which does not make sense in Alpha Complex's enclosed spaces), the bot creates an arc of power that shoots out from something nearby and strikes a fleshy human or another bot. Pyrokinesis is not used for keeping warm or cooking, so electrokinesis cannot be used to regain Charge or recharge batteries.

Lockdown: Most locks in Alpha Complex are electronic, so bots with this glitch can spoof a security breach and make anything that counts as an exit lock up tight. Doors? Oh yes. Windows? Who has windows in Alpha Complex? Air vents? C'mon, you are not even trying anymore. They

automatically unlock after a minute or so and this glitch cannot be used to unlock doors or it would be called Lockup or something.

Overclock: Using power creates waste heat; it is a cute but painful part of physics - It is crazy how so many parts of physics end up painful. This glitch lets the bot waste power to generate so much heat that it burns (power in general, not Charge the in-game resource). The bot must touch something to burn it; this is not some kind of microwave emitter.

Power Vacuum: The bot literally sucks energy out of nearby sources like batteries and flows it back into the power grid. The Alpha Complex power grid may be slapdash and erratic but it is surprisingly robust and can handle a lot. In effect, this drains batteries (goodbye laser pistols!) but only causes machines directly plugged-in to stutter. As with Overclock, this Glitch does nothing to a bot's Charge.

Signal Jammer: Alpha Complex surveillance and communication depends on signals (wifi and cable). A bot with this glitch does the signal equivalent of screaming non-stop; it overwhelms normal signals, even in cables, effectively creating a dead zone around the bot. Screaming is exhausting, which is why this dead zone does not last longer than 1-2 minutes.

Toxicity: Humans are so frail. Here, a bot reroutes some toxic chemicals, used in its operations, to its chassis. One touch can sicken a meatsack, if only for a little while. This is not a virus or contagion, so do not expect a Typhoid Marybot. It can also look really gross; dunno if that is a bug or a feature.

Upload Worm: Worms are a type of computer virus that chews through data, corrupting or deleting it (same thing, effectively). This glitch gives worms to a bot, which is not a parasitic infection. Uploading a worm to a device ruins any data on there. This cannot be used to attack data in the cloud, only local recordings. Also, bot brains have sturdy virus blockers so this glitch will not turn a bot into a highly-engineered vegetable.

ELECTROKINESIS

Spend 1 Charge to cause an arc of electricity to any point (or object, or human) near
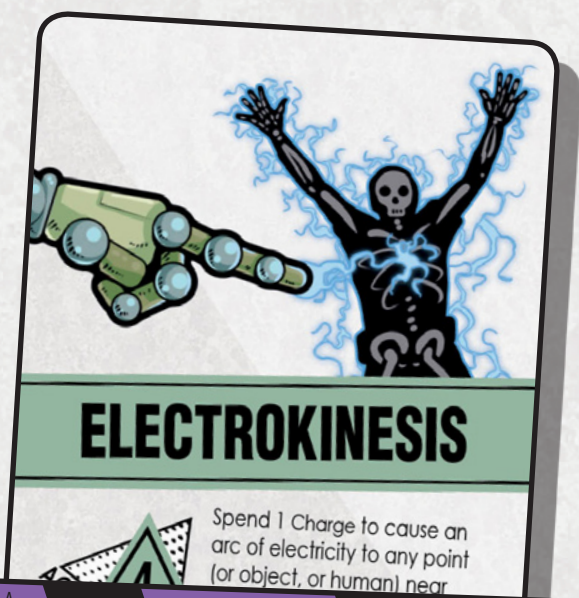
HOW TO USE THE OUTSIDE

PART 1-1

Alpha Complex is a utopia. The Computer says so. There is no good reason to leave a perfect utopia, so there is no good reason to go Outside. If you, the all-powerful GM, have decided to send your characters Outside, then it is obviously for a Very Good Reason™. Very Good Reasons™ include but are not limited to:

- An ULTRAVIOLET wants something that is not found within the walls of Alpha Complex.
- Something suspicious and treasonous is happening in the Outside that threatens Alpha Complex.
- You run *Paranoia* regularly and were so excited for this expansion that you cannot wait to try all the new things.
- You have concocted a mission so brilliant and so convoluted that only a visit to [$locationnotfound] will do.
- Someone walked through the door marked 'DO NOT OPEN'.
- These foolish Player Characters are doing far too well with your planned adventure and you need to throw a proverbial monkey wrench at them.

Welcome to the monkey wrench.

When deciding to take your Player Characters to the Outside, there are several things you will need to think about ahead of time. Will these clones instantly go mad at the realisation that there is NO ROOF OVER THEM? This can be great if you are needing to burn through some clones to raise the stakes but is no good at all if you have set the objective as needing to spend time in the great outdoors.

OUTSIDE VS. OUTDOORS

You may notice the area beyond Alpha Complex is referred to as the Outside or the Outdoors. Do not worry, as there is no difference. It used to be called the Outdoors exclusively but then someone got a little exuberant with a Find and Replace option and suddenly it became the Outside.

A few core mechanics to keep in mind:

- The Outside is a giant dead zone except where it is not. Abandoned but still working cell towers and satellites allow the Troubleshooters' Cerebral Coretechs to check in periodically - which means iBall recordings, XP Points and communications come and go as the GM requires. Yes, that is very convenient.

- Clone Replacement absolutely still works in the Outdoors. Thanks to the wonders of REDACTED and [$termnotfound] your players' replacement clones can and will be delivered to them wherever the previous iterations happen to bite the dust.

- The Outside functions like any border town and, as such it is possible for Troubleshooters to occasionally make purchases using XP Points. Much like Bitcoin, however, XP Points are a virtual currency that resides on servers so it can only be used in places with electricity and a connection to the cloud. This allows GMs to say when XP Points work (fined for jaywalking!) and when they do not (for buying useful items).

- There are also slightly more corporeal issues to deal with. Did your Troubleshooters bring provisions? If not, then you are going to have to remember that and punish them accordingly when they go too long without eating or drinking. There are surely opportunities for finding sustenance in the Outside but there is a good chance a citizen of Alpha Complex will not be able to instantly recognise foodstuffs out here as edible. That said, the same is also true of foodstuffs in Alpha Complex.

Then there is the Computer and its reaction to a team's return from the Outside. Friend Computer is tremendously concerned about citizens going Outdoors. Terrible things can happen in the Outdoors. In fact, only terrible things happen, as happenings there are not under the Computer's benevolent control – and it is extremely paranoid about what it cannot control. How long might a Troubleshooter be gone from Alpha Complex before there are serious repercussions when they come back? What might those repercussions be and why is it almost assuredly deep interrogation with a side of torture? Play up the distrust between team members now that Friend Computer knows for sure the team has been Outside thanks to the need for that replacement clone.

But what is the Outside like? Is it a post-apocalyptic hellscape filled with giant radioactive cockroaches and feral trees? Is it a pastoral paradise where a few human societies live in peace and harmony while wondering what is inside that giant domed city? Could it be a corporate-sponsored technocracy bearing a remarkable resemblance to Alpha Complex itself (in which case, are you really outside)?

That is completely up to you, it is your Outside now. It doesn't matter what you decide, only that you have made these decisions (you can certainly make them on the fly – just be sure to keep track!). If you need help deciding, think about what purpose the Outdoors will serve.

- Looking for a change from the well-known and familiar routine of Alpha Complex? The Outside is literally the opposite of indoors! Take your team to a bucolic wilderness, a bustling border town or put them to work in the dirt down on the farm. Everything Outside is an adventure in newness and discomfort.
- Need to throw a monkey wrench into the mission? Go with post-apocalypse tropes to make things weird and harder to survive.
- An Ultraviolet citizen needs something from the Outside? Pick whatever makes getting this McGuffin funny and complicated. Chips from a specific food truck? Good luck finding local currency. A part for an outmoded yet favourite bot companion? That could be in the wasteland – have fun getting it away from the natives.
- Traitors outside? That begs possible plots involving Secret Societies.
- Random wandering Outside? There could be some thoroughly weird or unexpected Outsides (Alpha Complex in space, Alpha Complex in the basement of a university psychology department in the 1970s, Alpha Complex in Alpha Complex, and so forth).

To help harried GMs, the next few pages contain locations and NPCs to populate the Outside. Shuffle them around, mash them together, use them all or start from scratch. These tend to favour the post-apocalyptic mode of the Outdoors but change 'em as you please. They all follow the same format:

- **Name** is what Troubleshooters and maybe Outdoor locals call the place.
- **Description** is what you would think it is, namely a description of the location.
- **Special actions** are things you can do at this location and maybe get bonuses to complete.
- **GM uses** gives advice to GMs for how and when to use this location.
- **A randomiser table** that lets you customise this location. This allows you to drop the same location into different missions to the Outside but make them fresh and differently problematic for Troubleshooters.

After the locations, you'll find some NPCs to help Troubleshooters feel really not at home in the Outdoors. Two quick notes about the NPC format:

- **Typical Harm** is the recommended damage should a player fail a roll (remember that GMs do not roll in *Paranoia*).
- **The stats** are not for rolling! It is so that you have an idea of what this NPC can do. A character with Violence 0 and another with Violence 4 can look and act very differently.

You will also find suggested uses for each character as well as general notes and the gear they probably have.

CREEPY HOUSE

'PLEASE DO NOT MAKE ME GO IN THERE. YOU'RE GOING TO MAKE ME GO IN THERE, AREN'T YOU? FINE, I'LL GO IN THERE, BUT I'M NOT HAPPY ABOUT THIS!'

/// DESCRIPTION

Perhaps from an episode of *You Went Where? Why Would You Do That?*, this place seems somehow familiar to a few of your Troubleshooters. That fact does not inspire confidence in them.

This house, standing alone in a place where a house ought not to be, with architecture wildly unlike that of any other building the team has encountered on the Outside, is anything but inviting. Still, Troubleshooters may need to invite themselves in. They should tread with caution into this rickety, dismal structure, minding they do not anger any occupants. Grandmother Eloise in her rocking chair could be the team's new best friend or she could be a man-eating mutant who will chase them out of the building with her ear-splitting screeches and razor sharp knitting needles.

/// SPECIAL ACTIONS

- **R&R:** Take a rest in this sheltered abode for long enough that a Hurt or Injured condition is reduced by 1 (but not Maimed or worse) provided you can overcome your fear (a roll of Chutzpah + Science might be needed to explain away those eerie sounds and shadows).
- **Charge!:** Congratulations, you have found someplace on the Outside that has electrical power for some reason that is really logical and not a cheap plot device! Any gear that requires batteries can be recharged here.

/// GM USES

- **Bleed Moxie:** This place is frightening. Odd noises fill the air, the floor creaks when trodden upon and an icky-sweet smell comes and goes. Play up the creepy for a reasonable excuse to delete some Moxie.

- **Gain New Equipment:** Perhaps some implement of murder (or cooking, cleaning, knitting or candy making that can be used as a weapon) has been left lying about. If you need to give the Troubleshooters a free item, this is a good place to stash it for them to find.

- **Mission Complication:** If *Paranoia* were a video game, this house would have a 'FIND SIDE QUEST HERE' arrow flashing above it. Use that to your advantage to make them work for the next piece of Plot Pie - or actual pie, if that happens to be your thing. Pie is delicious!

Roll	Size	Crowd	Quirks
1	Shed	A colony of angry-looking rats.	The cobwebs are so thick you can barely see.
2	Cottage	A bevy of feral black cats.	An oddly large cage with a Troubleshooter skeleton is hanging from the ceiling.
3	Log cabin	A colony of spiders.	The voice on adverts coming from a radio sounds identical to Friend Computer.
4	Average house	There may be people upstairs.	The entire place is painted in shades of Violet.
5	Mansion	Two very large, unfriendly hounds.	An emergency klaxon is sounding from somewhere.
6	Palace	Seems recently deserted.	It just got markedly colder with no explanation.

POWER PARTY PLACE

'WE DO NOT GET A LOT OF STRANGERS AROUND THESE PARTS. ARE YOU HERE TO PARTY, TRADE OR GET MURDERED IN THE FACE? OR ALL THREE? PLEASE SAY ALL THREE!'

/// DESCRIPTION

An electrical substation is as recognisable on the outside as it might be in Alpha Complex. What appears foreign to the Troubleshooters are the massive power poles strung one to another with power cables. Why are there cables in the out-of-doors? That makes no sense. Should someone build walls so the cables can be in their proper place?

This substation is not abandoned. Discarded beverage bottles and lengths of rope along with visible tire tracks give hints as to what kinds of shenanigans the locals tend to get up to in this place. It seems an odd sort of playground but everything about the Outside is odd to citizens of Alpha Complex. Lots of locals come here to party with mud riding, fighting and drinking whatever swill they brewed up at home. The chain-link fence blocking access has long since lost its barbed wire and its flimsy gate stands wide open, swinging precariously on its one remaining rusted hinge, giving easy access to local revellers and visiting Troubleshooters alike. Local good-time girl Mary Beth Bobby Sue is as likely to be here as anywere else and the team may even encounter Farmer John or Krista from the bayou hanging out in their off time. You can only hope the Troubleshooters haven't made enemies of these folks yet.

/// SPECIAL ACTIONS

- **Zzzzzzzzap!:** Use Mechanics + Engineer to try to charge any depleted batteries or electrical gear. Failure results in a wound and total ruin of the item in question.
- **Foamy Beverages For Everyone:** Whether on offer or obtained by scavenging, enjoy something that tastes absolutely poisonous and receive +1 to Chutzpah and -1 to Brains for as long as the GM finds it humorous.

/// GM USES

- **Find an NPC:** This off-the-beaten-path, informal gathering place can play host to any number of useful NPCs. They may be a little intoxicated but can still be helpful to the team.

- **Ruin Equipment:** A failed roll when trying to charge a battery or piece of gear results in its automatic loss. Things can also be stolen here or have enough foamy malt beverage spilled to render them inoperable.

- **Gain New Equipment:** Lots of people hang out here and with them comes lots of different stuff. Your team is welcome to beg, barter (Chutzpah + Charm) and steal (Chutzpah + Bluff) anything that tickles their fancy.

- **Combat:** Whether the locals think the team drank too much of their beer, caught them stealing or just did not take to strangers, the folks who hang out here are happy to help increase the body count.

Roll	Size	Crowd	Quirks
1	One small transformer and a pole.	A flock of judgmental crows.	Plenty of power, no outlets or charging stations.
2	Two transformers, ten poles.	An abandoned vehicle.	A moonshine still is percolating and no one is present.
3	Small substation, two transmission towers.	A single mud-riding redneck.	Graffiti so obscene your Coretech pixelates it.
4	Large substation, several towers.	A bunch of drunk folks.	Anti-Mutant flags are flying everywhere.
5	Moderate power station, many towers.	Two competing gangs.	There is a very active fighting arena.
6	Gigantic station, endless row of towers.	Several busy campsites.	Everyone here fled Alpha Complex.

RAW BERRY FIELDS

'WANNA KNOW WHAT'S WEIRD? THESE LITTLE SQUISHY THINGS TASTE LIKE VERY BERRY COLD FUN! I WONDER HOW THESE PLANTS GOT THE SECRET FLAVOUR FORMULA?'

/// DESCRIPTION

Stretching out on all sides is a lush, green field growing all kinds of berry plants. Gently sloping hills have been tilled into neat rows, from which have sprung voluminous, green leafy bushes of all sizes. From the smell in the air, you wonder if this place was once the source of ingredients for Red Dessert Topping or Purple Fizzy Drink. But these sweet-smelling gems cannot possibly be food, can they? Food grows in vats, not in whatever this place is.

Whether a creation of some citizens or the Computer (Friend Computer must be out here same as inside, right? RIGHT!!??!!), this field has quite obviously been tilled and farmed. Whether you choose to investigate its origins, help yourself to its bounty of tasty red and blue morsels, or just pass by, you are likely to remember this place for some time to come because free food-ish items right there on the ground is just gross. Just take care not to anger Farmer John or you may meet the business end of his trusty shotgun – at the very least you'll be subject to a protracted lecture on proper sun protection and who has time for that?

/// SPECIAL ACTIONS

- **Healthy Eating:** Eat several handfuls of fresh berries and remove a Hurt condition (but not Injured or worse) or even regain some Moxie.
- **Stain your shirt:** Blueberries turn Red uniforms a shade close to Violet. This could prove very useful. It could also lead to Treason Stars. Probably both. Use Mechanics + Engineer to avoid also dyeing your skin blue (what are you, a mutant?!).
- **Hide:** Laying down in the bushes is a great way to keep from being spotted by the people who chased you here. A successful Stealth roll keeps you from being seen.
- **AAAA-CHOOOO!:** Clones are allergic to the pollen here. NODE -1 for all Brain rolls while in the field.

/// GM USES

- **Chase Complication:** You just found a very large, fully exposed field, covered in knee-high plants that can easily trip up a Troubleshooter team. This is bound to slow them down.

- **Ruin Equipment:** Do you know what can gum up the works of even the finest laser pistols? Dirt. Mud. Fertiliser. Bird Droppings. Sticky berries. Anyone who lays down to hide has ruined something in their kit.

- **Gain New Equipment:** Perhaps an ancient shovel, a plough, a bucket or other useful gardening tool has been left laying about. A smart Troubleshooter will pick up these items in case they may be useful later. The other Troubleshooters will take note of this and report him for having unauthorised equipment at the earliest opportunity.

Roll	Size	Crowd	Quirks
1	A small room-sized field.	Clearly abandoned and overgrown.	Bees!
2	Several rooms wide, very long.	Distant voices but no visible people.	Plants are Green, berries are Red. Very confusing!
3	All kept in a bunch of dirty, abandoned greenhouses.	Children playing in the distance.	A sign says, 'Property of Lord-U-BER'.
4	Several fields of green bushes.	A smattering of field workers.	Protected by a razor wire fence and an ancient guardbot.
5	Probably sector-sized.	A large team of field workers.	Posts note these are experimental 'very GMO' crops.
6	As big as you can image but bigger.	One guy just sitting there eating berries.	Yep, that is a bear.

WASTE LAND

'AH, I LOVE WASTE LAND! DO YOU KNOW HOW MUCH STUFF ALPHA COMPLEX JUST THROWS OUT? IT'S LIKE A FREE SHOPPING MALL THAT SMELLS HORRIBLE AND CAN GIVE YOU TETANUS.'

/// DESCRIPTION

Step outside Alpha Complex, on any side, and there is a good chance you will find yourself in Waste Land. Towering heaps of refuse climb so high that sunlight almost never reaches the ground. Seriously, this place is literally a giant, open-air landfill but without the land part. There is plenty of trash but it also has stuff left over from when Alpha Complex was being built: crumbling concrete, bent rebar, chipped bits of tile and soggy drywall. All mixed in with whatever citizens could not recycle or treasonously threw out.

Waste Land is tough to navigate, and it does not smell very good. But by digging through the piles of debris, a clone might find what they require to repair a broken piece of equipment – or to break it more. In the Outside, stuff does not just sit there. Groups of locals often 'raid' Waste Land for supplies they cannot make on their own. That, and to meet clandestinely with Alpha Complex citizens. If you encounter any locals (they are a shifty and elusive bunch) they are unlikely to do much more than try to rob you. This is not a place to try to make friends. There is a chance, however small, that asking to be taken to their leader will result in an audience with Charla, the de facto ruler of the garbage piles. Good luck with that.

/// SPECIAL ACTIONS

- **Build-a-bot:** There are enough bot parts rotting in piles out here that a clone with the right skills could possibly build a simple bot to make their life easier. Or a thing that will blow the whole team sky high. Both are equally possible.
- **Shiny Object:** Troubleshooters can get Charm +2 when negotiating with the locals if they have something to barter. The denizens of Waste Land live amongst trash. You would be surprised what can be valuable to them.

/// GM USES

- **Gain New Equipment:** One clone's trash is another clone's useful item. This is especially interesting to Troubleshooters trying to make an unauthorised repair inside Alpha Complex.

- **Ruin Equipment:** The Waste Land is not safe. Beware the barrels of acid rotting in stacks, sharp edges protruding construction rubble and a suspicious band of locals eager to rob a Troubleshooter blind.

- **Get Help:** The denizens of th Waste Land are happy to assist the Troubleshooters – for a price. Currency out here is not as easy as XP Points but if the Player Characters need something, they can save a lot of time and trouble by enlisting the aid of the natives.

Roll	Size	Crowd	Quirks
1	A narrow strip of trash and concrete.	The place looks abandoned.	Some smells are bad; others are poisonous.
2	Several large piles ready to collapse.	Evidence that people live here but none are around right now.	Locals sell 'pre-owned' gear from stalls.
3	A series of square piles for a good 100 metres.	You hear people over the next trash pile.	The floor can give way at any moment. Tread lightly.
4	Several sports fields wide.	A few locals are visible.	A Green Armed Forces platoon is searching for a grenade pin.
5	There may be a forest at the end, maybe.	There is a mix of locals and citizens about.	A beast of some kind is stalking you.
6	See Wall-E.	It is a thriving community.	New trash pours out of Alpha Complex every 10 minutes.

JIMMY JIM-BOB'S
BAIT SHOP, SUSHI BAR AND SWAMP TOURS

'CLONES CANNOT SWIM BUT ALLIGATORS, SNAKES AND LOTS OF OTHER THINGS CAN. TRY TO STAY IN THE CENTRE OF THE BOAT, PLEASE.'

/// DESCRIPTION

This place is full of huge trees with dangling moss that just reaches the murky water. Sometimes the water is very shallow, while it is quite deep in other places. Just pay no mind to the long slithering creatures, the loud flying creatures, or the big ones with way too many teeth that seem to be staring right at you. They are all friendly and curious. Honest.

There are a couple of buildings here that serve (served?) people wanting to catch fish, eat fish or just look at fish (whatever 'fish' are). Sit at one of the rickety wooden tables and hope to get service (never going to happen but enjoy being eaten by mosquitoes while you wait) or hop aboard some kind of floating vehicle with a giant fan strapped to the back. Between the bugs and the humidity, most Troubleshooters try to spend as little time here as possible. Still, it is probably better than a CPU Document Assistance Office.

/// SPECIAL ACTIONS

- **Hydrate:** Any person or piece of kit that requires water just found some. It is not the cleanest water but it might be safe in small doses. Careful with your portion sizes; drinking too much could cause a wound.

- **Down in the Mud:** Need to dispose of some evidence or a body? Dump it in the bayou. It will soon become part of this amazing ecosystem and never be found again.

- **Swamp Thing:** Stealth +1 while on the bayou if you cover yourself with moss, lily pads and snakes. Just be careful not to be mistaken for a mutant while trying to be all stealthy-like.

/// GM USES

- **Back on Track:** Are these foolish Player Characters chasing bunnies when they should really be on a mission? Putting a smelly, soggy bayou in the way can make them turn around.

- **Ruin Equipment:** A lot of tech fares rather poorly when it gets wet. One slip-and-fall, or a proper splash from the wake of a passing boat, is enough to lay to waste electronics.

- **Chase Complication:** Maybe the Troubleshooters have not started chasing bunnies but are chasing exactly what you want them to be chasing, only they have been far too successful thus far. Forcing them to build a raft, find a bridge or wade through gator-infested waters are all nifty ways to slow them down considerably.

- **Bleed Moxie:** If a Troubleshooter has managed not to panic out here yet, there is a reasonable chance that facing down a large body of brown-black water (and whatever beasts might be living in it) will push them closer to the edge. One snap from an alligator is likely to do the trick.

Roll	Size	Population	Quirks
1	It is really just a small bog.	Several gators, one snake.	Seriously, what is making that horrible smell?
2	A few small bodies of water between soggy paths.	A swarm of mosquitoes.	Moss-covered trees so thick that you have to hug them as you squeeze through.
3	Big enough to need a raft.	One grumpy snapping turtle.	Everything here is covered in chipping Yellow paint. Even the moss and reeds.
4	Now that is a proper swamp.	A fisherman on a small boat.	The mud is deep enough to be quicksand.
5	The murky water and trees stretch for kilometres.	A few boats with locals fishing and catching gators.	Locals partying on a big boat mock you just outside of laser range.
6	Welcome to Swamp World.	The buildings are staffed and ready for tourists.	A feral Troubleshooter team still trying to complete their mission.

GREEN AND BROWN WOOD

'FOREST? WHAT'S A FOREST? ALL I CAN SEE ARE SOME TREES.'

/// DESCRIPTION

The team has come upon a densely-packed cluster of trees with thick undergrowth. If this is their first encounter with a tree, they may find themselves a bit unnerved what with all the HPD&MC stories about feral trees. That is a good thing.

Amidst all the trees and undergrowth is rusting, ancient machinery overgrown with vines, mosses and mushrooms. Occasionally a bot will greet you, its green and corroded surface making it appear as something like half-alive. Maybe these remnants of tech from before are benign, friendly and slightly fatal from having learned to render fuel from the carcasses of stray citizens who wander into their territory.

Then there are the other plants and animals calling this forest home. Troubleshooters were probably not briefed on poisonous vines, venomous critters and hungry predators found in the woods. They are also likely to come across Big Jack or one of his more elusive lumberjack friends. They would do well to mind their manners so as not to be mistaken for local wildlife.

/// SPECIAL ACTIONS

- **If You Wood:** Any Troubleshooter in possession of a sharp object may whittle themselves a useful item from fallen branches. These items range from a pointy and dangerous spear to tacky tchotchkes for giving as gifts to friends back home. Use Mechanics + Engineer to see which he ends up with.
- **Lichen This to Camouflage:** Citizens get Stealth +1 while in the forest for anyone who pauses to cover themselves with local moss and leaves.

/// GM USES

- **Chase Complication:** Whatever your players are chasing, being forced to chase it through thick wilderness and a mess of tangled undergrowth all the while being possibly chased themselves by some predator or another will surely complicate things.

- **Ruin Equipment:** An item dropped into a badger's den or something shiny pecked right off your person by a fearless avian predator, is lost forever. Mechanical items gummed up by tree sap, or soiled by an unfortunate encounter with bear scat, are broken until the proper solvent can be applied. Players with too much gear may find themselves relieved of some of it in the forest.

- **Combat:** Angry bears, territorial lumberjacks or both! There is always some potential for bloodshed in the forest.

Roll	Size	Crowd	Quirks
1	Just a clump of trees.	A very cuddly-looking bear.	HPD&MC has a team of Orange lumberjacks cutting down trees.
2	Could fill a warehouse.	A herd of elk, they look terrifying.	A clearing has some chairs and a banner reading, 'Welcome Secret Society friends'.
3	Size of a funball stadium.	A flock of very aggressive birds.	Brambles rip everyone's uniforms.
4	Large with plenty of gaps between trees.	Those might be velociraptors.	It starts raining. No, pouring. No, flooding.
5	Sector-sized.	Human footprints, nobody visible.	Only you can run away from forest fires.
6	You could walk for days without finding the end.	Locals tapping trees and squeezing weeds for 'syrup'.	Locals have set traps all over the place.

U929 MOTORWAY

'MAY THE ROAD RISE UP TO MEET YOU BUT NOT LITERALLY BECAUSE THAT WOULD BE WEIRD AND POSSIBLY LIFE-THREATENING.'

/// DESCRIPTION

Troubleshooters may or may not recognise this as a road, as not every thoroughfare in the Outside conforms to Alpha Complex's exacting standards of construction and resource scarcity. Yet it is clearly a road of some kind, despite the signs have rusted away and there are more potholes than pavement (or even just packed earth). Whether or not it leads to where the team wants to go is another matter entirely.

At the very least, what lies before the team is an unencumbered, well-groomed (or at least more-cleared-than-the-roadside) and navigable path away from where they are now and toward some other place. This may prove very useful to them. It may also be their downfall.

/// SPECIAL ACTIONS

- **Mapitude:** Any Troubleshooter with paper and a pencil can record their travels by drawing a crude map; Brains + Engineer determines just how crude it turns out. Having a map along will certainly help you find your way back to Alpha Complex.
- **Optimism:** You may not have found where you want to be, but it looks like you found a way to get there. Gain one Moxie and Chutzpah +1 while travelling the road.

/// GM USES

- **Back on Track:** If your team is well and truly lost, putting them on the road and letting them read a sign clearly marked 'PLOT THIS WAY' may be very helpful in getting them headed in the direction of your adventure. Perhaps. Your mileage may vary.

- **Find an NPC:** If you would prefer your team not be on the road less travelled but instead on the freeway at rush hour, they could easily encounter someone to help, or to hinder, them on their mission. Local resident Mary Beth Bobby Sue and her friends travel this road daily and may even offer the Troubleshooters a ride. The penalties for hitchhiking remain unknown.

- **Get Help:** People travel the road, so this is a great place to put NPCs who can offer some assistance like selling a required item, healing the injured or repairing their gear. Nothing comes for free, mind you.

Roll	Size	Crowd	Quirks
1	Narrow footpath.	A slow-moving herd of sheep.	You hear people arguing beneath the road.
2	Dirt road wide enough for one small autocar.	One self-driving tractor looking for work.	Scarecrow on your right just moved.
3	Single-lane paved road.	Unfriendly cows blocking the road.	An automated tollbooth demands '20 pounds or equivalent in human blood'.
4	Two paved lanes.	Sparse automotive traffic.	Traffic signals still work, and a policebot is waiting behind a billboard.
5	Cracked but mostly functional motorway.	Somehow, there is a traffic jam.	Exits are blocked with barricades, razor wire and landmines.
6	Massive motorway rising high on concrete supports.	Not only is it deserted, there are no animals nearby.	Potholes? More like sinkholes.

NEW HAGGLETON

'THIS TOWN AIN'T BIG ENOUGH FOR THE BOTH OF US, PARTNER. OR MAYBE IT IS. WHO AM I TO JUDGE?'

/// DESCRIPTION

The team has come to a small village. Houses and shops, commerce and domestic life, combine to make a civilisation not altogether unfamiliar to your weary team of Troubleshooters. The team is probably welcome to make their way through the bustling streets and meandering avenues. After all, what town of people living in the Outside would not welcome armed, well-fed strangers past their walls?

If they duck inside any one of the buildings (taking care not to barge into a private residence, that is a good way to get arrested) the Troubleshooters can enjoy the familiar comfort of having a roof over their heads. This town is a place to find a proper meal (for an interesting definition of 'proper') and a place to re-stock provisions. They may also try their luck at asking after whatever information they came to the Outside in search of to begin with.

/// SPECIAL ACTIONS

- **Food and Drink:** For the right price you can enjoy a meal that heals a Hurt condition (but not Injured or worse).
- **Local Culture:** A successful Brains + Charm roll will net you a piece of information from a friendly local. This may be relevant to your current mission. It also may be about that person's favourite filk band or hairdresser but it still could be worth a try.

/// GM USES

- **Get Help:** A town is a great place to obtain a map, a clue, a friend or a bite to eat. If your players are having a rough go of it in the Outside, they may benefit greatly from a visit to the town.

- **Gain New Equipment:** If there is some piece of kit your players are missing (or lost along the way), perhaps they can find it here. General stores and street hawkers are all good sources of vital and interesting items; never mind that the cost is far higher than they would pay back home, does the merchant even take XP Points? A Chutzpah + Charm roll might help your players bargain, or it might not – that is just what they get for coming unprepared!

- **Combat:** If your players have gone far too long without violence erupting, the town is a good place to remedy that. Whether it be a duel at dawn, a riot in the streets, a mugging or foiled caper, this location has got what it takes to make the streets run red with blood.

Roll	Size	Crowd	Quirks
1	A few buildings in a row.	Eerily deserted.	Only allows 'True Patriots' into the town.
2	Several buildings in a cluster.	A few folks visible through windows.	A wooden palisade surrounds the entire place. Guards are armed with spears.
3	A dozen or so buildings.	Several citizens on the street.	It is only home to rogue bots pretending to be cowboys.
4	Quaint village with a pub.	Plenty of people but not a crowd.	A huge billboard says 'Alpha Complex Beta Release V2.45'.
5	Decent town with nearby motorway.	A hustle-and-bustle of busy citizens.	The mayor is a DAIV installed in a talking toaster.
6	A city full of old, damaged skyscrapers.	People everywhere, none seem friendly.	The gate is surrounded by long-dead Troubleshooter teams.

BIG JACK

/// STATS

VIOLENCE:	3	CHUTZPAH:	1
BRAINS:	O	MECHANICS:	1

/////////// DEFENCE:	O
ACTION ORDER:	3

/// HEALTH BOXES

⬤ ⬤ ⬤ ⬤ ⬤

TYPICAL HARM: Punch = Hurt. The big axe = Injured/Maimed.

'THE ONLY GOOD TREE IS A DOWNED TREE. I DO NOT CONSIDER YOU A TREE YET. JURY'S STILL OUT THOUGH.'

/// EQUIPMENT

A sharp axe and a beard so massive it counts as equipment.

/// NOTES

Big Jack has spent his life in the woods making syrup and chopping down timber. He likes it that way. On occasion, he visits nearby locals (or Alpha Complex Secret Societies) to sell his delicious syrup and purchase sundries necessary for a solitary life among the trees. He is not good at the whole social skills thing but is willing to transact business with anyone.

However, Big Jack has spent too much time in the woods and divides everything in two categories: Tree and Not Tree. If he considers the thing a Not Tree, then he is friendly and conciliatory. Get classified as a Tree and Big Jack will look to chop you down. There is no malice or even anger; he just knows trees are for cutting down. If he calls you a larch, run.

By virtue of his long and storied career chopping down and exploiting the forest, he knows his way around and can help the Troubleshooters get to where they want to go. He is not, however, a fan of folks entering his workplace without proper respect for the trees and all the good they do. If Big Jack comes upon the team doing anything he thinks is disrespectful, they are considered trees in his eyes. Choppity-chop.

He can also be used for new gear and trading supplies, especially with his homemade, artesian, locally-sourced, all-natural syrup, which he calls 'The Sticky'. It really is delicious and can be used as currency in the Outside.

CHARLA-THA

/// STATS

VIOLENCE: 2   CHUTZPAH: 0

BRAINS: 2   MECHANICS: 1

//////////// DEFENCE: 2

ACTION ORDER: 2

TYPICAL HARM: Hurt or Injured

/// HEALTH BOXES

● ● ● ●

'YEAH, YOU CANNOT HEAR THE COMPUTER LIKE I CAN. THAT'S BECAUSE I'M SPECIAL AND TOTALLY NOT BECAUSE I'M SOMEWHAT INSANE AND HEAR VOICES THAT I HOPE COME FROM THE COMPUTER.'

/// EQUIPMENT

A big stick, an unreliable laser pistol, a very reliable needler with questionable contents and brass knuckles.

/// NOTES

Charla was a newly decanted Infrared in THA Sector when the Gehenna Incident went down. When she realised her sector was being shut off from the rest of Alpha Complex, she ran as fast as she could to get out of there. Much to her surprise and dismay, she ran all the way out of Alpha Complex and into Waste Land outside.

Unable to find her way back in again, Charla made a life for herself as a solitary scavenger. Years of living on her own had her talking to herself until she became convinced those words came from the Computer. She so missed the loving guidance and freedom from choices that the Computer provided, she ended up creating one in her own mind. This Computer only speaks to her, which obviously means she is one of the Chosen. She has a small following and could be considered an FCCC-P offshoot that lives amid construction debris and trash. (They would call her a heretic and burn her at the server rack, but that is religion for you.)

Charla is the leader of some residents in Waste Land. She and her tiny cult can help Troubleshooters to navigate the piles of possibly-useful detritus, or she can get them hopelessly lost in the mounds of trash – whichever serves the mission best. She knows her way around the garbage dumps and knows what might be good for what. She is a little unstable and truly believes the Computer loves her more than others because… well, because she is special, that is why.

She can also be used to introduce a bit of combat as either FCCC-P or atheist locals do not take kindly to Charla's holier-than-thou attitude.

GRANDMOTHER ELOISE

/// STATS

VIOLENCE:	O	CHUTZPAH:	2
BRAINS:	2	MECHANICS:	1

//////////// DEFENCE:	O
ACTION ORDER:	O
TYPICAL HARM:	Hurt

/// HEALTH BOXES

⚪ ⚪

'THAT WAS BACK WHEN PANTALOONS WERE IN STYLE, OF COURSE, WHICH IS WHY MY LATE HUSBAND ROBERT, SO HANDSOME DON'T YOU KNOW, HE FOUGHT IN THE BIG WAR AND CAME BACK A HERO, YOU KNOW HE HATES COOKIES?'

/// EQUIPMENT

A pair of knitting needles, a skein of yarn and a box of tissues.

/// NOTES

Grandmother Eloise is a lonely widow who loves to meet new people and tell them stories from her long and interesting life – when she can remember them. There are nuggets of wisdom to be gained from her, especially about the Outside, but you have to sit through tales like that one time when she and her husband, what's his name, tip of her tongue she swears she will lose her head if it was not attached, well anyway she and Steve, oh right he was Steve, that's her second husband Steve and not the Steve she grew up with near the berry fields ….

She spends most of her time knitting and has amassed quite a collection of hats and scarves, blankets, nets and other possibly useful items. She also refers to people as 'My grandson Steve, named after his father he was, or was it the Steve I grew up with…' no matter what they look like.

Grandmother Eloise is the oldest person the Troubleshooters have ever seen. As a result of her advanced age and its accompanying experience, she knows things. It is not often she gets visitors, so if the team is willing to sit down with her over tea and biscuits, it is likely that they will gain some information in a rambling story. Whether or not her information will be entirely accurate (Eloise's memory is not what it used to be) is up for debate.

This NPC is actually somewhat nice and useful, so it is also fun to introduce her to the Troubleshooters and then put her in harm's way. Who would dare harm this sweet old lady? Other old ladies from nearby homesteads irate over Eloise's recipe for rhubarb cobbler, that's who. These gangs of old ladies are slow, polite and will cut you up a treat with their knitting needles.

FARMER JOHN

/// STATS

VIOLENCE: 1   CHUTZPAH: 2

BRAINS: 1   MECHANICS: 2

/////////// DEFENCE: 0

ACTION ORDER: 2

TYPICAL HARM: Hurt or Injured

/// HEALTH BOXES

⚪ ⚪ ⚪

'MASSAGE THIS CREAM INTO YOUR SKIN BEFORE YOU GET OFF MY LAND FOREVER. AND YOUR LASER PISTOL IS ABOUT OUT OF SHOTS, SO TEND TO THAT ALREADY, GEEZ.'

/// EQUIPMENT

A pitchfork and a shotgun.

/// NOTES

Farmer John works the dirt and tends the land. He is suspicious of anything foreign and of all things he sees as 'new-fangled' or modern, so Troubleshooters should just about give him a heart attack. He is also very opinionated, even about things he does not know, and his opinion is TRUTH FOREVER AND ALWAYS at least as far as he is concerned. He is not arrogant so much as other people are just idjits.

Still, he is non-violent compared to half of what exists in the Outside and can even be helpful. He has an interesting knack for predicting the weather, a skill the normally-indoors Troubleshooters may come to appreciate (what is this moist substance falling from the sky!?!) as he may be able to warn them to take shelter before their electronic gear gets ruined in a downpour. He is kind of crazy about his skin and a stickler for always wearing proper sun protection. He may insist on the Troubleshooters acquiring hats or sunscreen before working for him and is liable to steer any conversation toward skin care and proper UVA/UVB protection.

What he considers sunscreen is actually mud mixed with tree sap. This tends to attract hungry beasts like bees and bears who develop an unhealthy attraction to the Troubleshooters covered in sugary mud. Still, it works like SPF 500 and keeps skin healthy.

/// GM USE

Farmer John values a good plot of land and an honest day's work above all else. If your Troubleshooters find themselves in need of a hearty meal in the Outside, or lacking in the local currency, he is likely to have work for them. If he catches the team trying to swindle a local, he will rise to their defence, often with shotgun in hand. He is also a bit pernickety about his crops and property, so best not get caught trespassing.

Although problematic, his skincare concoction does protect against sunburn, something Troubleshooters probably never realised was an issue. Give them a nasty case of sunburn (maybe even a Hurt condition) and let them arrive at Farmer John's doorstep.

KRISTA BURG

/// STATS

VIOLENCE:	2	CHUTZPAH:	0
BRAINS:	3	MECHANICS:	1

/////////// DEFENCE:	1	/// HEALTH BOXES
ACTION ORDER:	4	● ● ●
TYPICAL HARM:	*Injured or Maimed*	

'I WOULDN'T DO THAT IF I WERE YOU. BUT I'M
PARTICULAR. I LIKE MY INSIDES WHERE THEY ARE.'

/// EQUIPMENT

A spear, net and long knife. Near the water, she has a rowboat
and oars. Otherwise, she has a dirty-looking bicycle.

/// NOTES

Krista makes her life and living on the bayou: spearing gators to skin
and butcher, fishing and occasionally ferrying passengers on her
little boat. Krista is shrewd and can be seen as unkind by people
who have never lived such a hardscrabble life. Anyone without an
established relationship (including Troubleshooters who are new in
town) is liable to be swindled – at least a little – if they decide to do
business with Krista.

This is particularly true if the team sets foot on her boat. She knows
she is the only game in town as far as ferrying passengers goes and
is keen to make the most of the opportunity. Some of her favourite
scams include:

'Weight limits' that mean all gear (and weapons) must remain on
the shore. Her Yellow laser pistol is hidden near the rudder and she
will bring it out once they are deep in the swamp.

She charges a small fee (through barter) to take the Troubleshooters on a boat ride. She charges an exorbitant fee to bring the Troubleshooters back. She offers to sell her second boat to Troubleshooters. Too bad it is made from painted cardboard that starts to disintegrate about 20 metres away from the shore but at least it is easy to carry.

/// GM USE

Krista is an unreliable way to traverse any body of water (swamp, coursing river and so forth) but she is the only way. That means Troubleshooters have to deal with her scam or quickly learn why character sheets have no Swimming skill. If encountered someplace other than on board her vessel, Krista also knows her way to the nearest body of water and will give the team directions or let them tag along with her when she returns to the shore. This can be particularly helpful to a team that has lost their way and lacks a map.

MARY BETH BOBBY SUE

/// STATS

VIOLENCE: 2   CHUTZPAH: 2

BRAINS: 1   MECHANICS: 0

////////// DEFENCE:	0	/// HEALTH BOXES
ACTION ORDER:	1	⚪ ⚪
TYPICAL HARM:	Hurt or Injured	

'SURE, I CAN GET Y'ALL THROUGH ... UH, THROUGH THAT THERE ... THING PLACE SPOT. NOW, WHO WANTS A DRINK? YEE-HAW!'

/// EQUIPMENT

None

/// NOTES

Mary Beth Bobby Sue is a girl who lives for fun like a Death Leopard minus the casual violence. She likes to party and does not deal with conflict well. Even if the team has hired her to guide them around the Outside, she will head for the hills when fists or lasers (or even harsh words) start to fly. She comes across as helpful in an annoying way when it is just her trying to be liked.

There are two problems with that. For one, she is often drunk. Her routes typically go past places she can barter for a pint or seven. Secondly, she rotates through each Troubleshooter alternating between a smothering clinginess and a clearly angry coldness. She will stick to one until the first hint of conflict, then attaches to a new one and so on. When sober, she becomes shockingly brutal and will gleefully punish anyone who treated her wrong.

Mary Beth Bobby Sue is the consummate local in the Outside. She is gregarious and fun-loving, and her 'party girl' status made many friends with other locals (and some bitter enemies). She is easily befriended and will happily invite the team to join her for a meal or a drink so she can cling to someone new.

She knows her way around in the Outside and can point out short cuts and proper routes to wherever the Troubleshooters need to go. She is also a good point of contact for Troubleshooters who need an 'in' with other locals as long as they stay on her cloying good side. That can be fun to play with. Once the Troubleshooters have realised the value in her, she ups the clinginess until the Troubleshooter snaps. Then she plays the victim and refuses to help, forcing the team to pander to her neediness to get what they need from her. Continue this cycle until someone just shoots her.

DEEP AC:
THE UNDERPLEX GUIDE
PART 1-2

Everything in Alpha Complex is perfection. The Computer sees to that. A key part of enforcing perfection is keeping out the imperfect – shutting it down and cutting it off the same way a human might remove a dead limb - your limbs detach cleanly and with no fuss or mess, right? Or am I thinking of bots? Humans are the ones whose limbs just pop off and don't bleed everywhere and the remains definitely don't decay into a festering, pestilent rotten skeletal horror, right?

Thus, the Underplex.

If you are looking to add a little more punk or danger to your *Paranoia* adventure, then this maze of abandoned hallways, rooms and vats may be for you. Consisting of spaces shut off from Alpha Complex for many reasons (few of which are reasonable), the Underplex provides a wealth of strange locales in which to abuse and confuse Troubleshooters.

Unlike the Outdoors, the Underplex is still part of Alpha Complex. You will find bots, work stations and rooms. It is just that the bots are busted, the work stations covered in toxic black mould and the rooms flooded floor-to-ceiling with Edible Blue Goo (Low Asbestos Version). Entire sectors have been

abandoned; others still function and have the original equipment and staff, although the staff are considerably less helpful and more, well, feral than one might expect.

The usual reasons for a team of Troubleshooters finding themselves in the Underplex are:

- They got lost.
- They misunderstood their orders.
- They got lost again.
- They were using an old map and it sent them down a corridor that has been shut off since the map was made.
- They took a wrong turn.
- They are investigating a Secret Society.
- They think they can get away with it.
- Someone says they know a shortcut.
- Yep, they got lost again, again.

There is a chance, however slight, that the Troubleshooter's mission has sent them legitimately into the Underplex. There are places down here that Friend Computer may not have written off forever, or recently 'remembered' once an old server rack was dusted off. Troubleshooters are the first line of defence in getting those areas tidied up, squared away and properly forgotten.

Good luck with that.

Rife with dead zones, these caverns and corridors, nooks, crannies and other forgotten spaces are wildly popular with Secret Societies. Here you will find mostly emptiness and ruin. Sometimes, you can also find Communists distributing leaflets, FCCCP marvelling over malfunctioning technology, Frankenstein Destroyers hunting rogue bots (or any bots, or people, who look like bots in the right lighting) and Death Leopards practicing how to look cool and bored while looking at mayhem.

Things in these parts range from the wildly experimental to the magnificently broken and even mind-numbingly dull. Use this variety to create ebbs and flows in the action and tension of the story or to overwhelm your Troubleshooters with the unnatural madness that can only be found in a place so close to home as to feel normal but so wacky as to bust expectations at every turn.

Why would a GM include a magical trip to the Underplex for those intrepid Troubleshooters?

- It is a fun place to get them lost. It is even a more fun place to watch them figure out how to get un-lost.

- It can complicate things for Troubleshooters who have gotten a bit cocky. Maybe their intended destination lies down what was a perfectly normal hallway a minute ago but, in the time it took them to reach the intersection, that hallway has somehow ceased to exist. A good Troubleshooter will follow the instructions they were given to follow this path no matter what!

- Knock 'em down a few clones. Abandoned areas are dangerous, especially when they're not so much abandoned as full of people living in near starvation among toxic carpeting and brownouts.

- Use it to add some thrill to a chase. If your team is on the trail of someone or something, sending them into the poorly lit unknown is as easy as sending their quarry there.

- Shut down the room they currently occupy. An interesting thing about the Underplex is how it is constantly evolving. Friend Computer never stops working for the betterment of Alpha Complex as a whole, so the room where the team is standing might get walled off or just deleted from the service group's maps.

The Underplex can serve you well when you need to make the rules of the universe ever so slightly different than your players expect. Instead of brownouts, you get total blackouts. Streets clogged by rival parades and deadly autocars are replaced by streets completely empty save for rubble and strange noises. Packed public hating squares are gone, replaced by empty squares with a few suspicious somebodies trading one dirty, broken thing for another.

But how can a busy GM introduce the Underplex? Here are eight locations that you can drop into your missions or feed that twisted imagination. As with the Outside:

- **Names** are what citizens commonly call these locations.
- **Descriptions** are just that.
- **Special actions** are ways Troubleshooters can take advantage of the locations.
- **GM uses** are ways GMs can take advantage of players using the locations.
- And a **table** with random ways to mess with players.

More NPCs can be found after these locations. As with Outside NPCs, typical harm is how a guideline for damaging PCs with failed rolls, while the four stats are just to give you a rough guide as to the NPCs' general abilities. Remember you are the GM, so these NPCs do what you tell them to do.

THE PERPETUAL FIRE

'ON THE ONE HAND, IT IS PLEASANTLY TOASTY. ON THE OTHER HAND, MY JUMPSUIT IS ON FIRE AND MELTING INTO MY SKIN. THANK THE COMPUTER I BOUGHT A HEALTH PLAN!"

/// DESCRIPTION

When you live in a giant, enclosed space like Alpha Complex, fire is a big problem. But when you live in a place like Alpha Complex that values trust over competence and budget cuts over clone lives, fire is a bureaucratic nightmare. 'How do we put it out' is always secondary to 'What's the cheapest thing to do that will not bother the Indigo supervisor currently in his hair salon?' Occasionally, the answer to both questions is to pretend it does not exist.

The Perpetual Fire started as a simple Infrared barrack cooking fire. Since those citizens are expendable, no one cared. The fire grew slowly but never went out. A clever HPD&MC citizen figured they could save money and fix the problem by declaring the fire and immediate area as not existing anymore. The fire was allowed to keep burning but it was walled off and erased from the records.

Today, the fire still burns fed by some unknown source (coal? Plastic? Infrared Sleepy-Tyme brand fire-retardant pajamas?). There is evidence that people tried putting it out, as you can still find some rotting fire hoses and Troubleshooter remains here. Other than that, this former Infrared barracks is empty most of the time.

Fire brings warmth and power, and that can attract people (and creatures). There is always a chance you will find some Underplex dwellers treating this fire like a caveman would: set something alight then run home to start a cooking fire and look heroic in the process. Rats and a few similar creatures can have nests nearby as well but there is definitely no FCCCP splinter group worshipping the fire as their god. Nope.

/// SPECIAL ACTIONS

- **Melty, Melty Goodness**: Use Mechanics + Chutzpah to make repairs to metallic objects or to lightly toast your delicious, unexpirable field rations.
- **I Know A Guy:** Since some people in the Underplex visit here, roll Chutzpah + Alpha Complex to figure out which shadowy someone might be found here.

/// GM USES

- **Back on Track:** Your Troubleshooters have, once again, chased a shiny thing right off-mission. When the door they open reveals nothing but a roaring blaze, it is likely they will remember what they're supposed to be doing.
- **Chase Complication:** Having to get past, around or through a fire will complicate even the best laid plans.
- **Find an NPC:** If the team has to track down someone in the Underplex, the fire is a good place to start.
- **Ruin Equipment:** Most things burn. Some things melt. Catching fire is never good for a clone or their gear.

Roll	Size	Crowd	Quirks
1	Campfire-sized.	Nothing but empty Infrared beds.	Black, toxic smoke fills the air here causing a damage level.
2	Not too small.	Was that a rat? Looked very big for a rat.	Orange firefighters litter the ground, dead from blunt trauma.
3	Size of an autocar.	Some malnourished Infrareds still live here waiting for orders.	The fire needs offerings. Which of the Troubleshooters volunteers as a sacrifice? If no-one volunteers, everyone gets volunteered.
4	Quite big.	A few Underplex residents are bartering in the firelight.	Blacksmith forge with a few swords lies abandoned at the fire's edge.
5	Big and scary.	A good dozen people ring the fire.	Someone is selling hot fun onna stick.
6	Big enough to melt the surrounding area.	'Welcome, are you here to join our worship services for the Lord of Fire and Cleansing?'	Staring at the flames ruins your night vision. Hello blindness!

EMERGENCY
SAFETY BUNKERS

'NO THANK YOU, WE DON'T WANT ANY OF YOUR TERRORISM DOWN HERE! BUT IF YOU COULD STAY WHERE YOU ARE FOR A FEW MORE MINUTES, OUR FOOD SHORTAGE WILL BE OVER.'

/// DESCRIPTION

To protect loyal Alpha Complex citizens in times of giant mutant terrorist commie traitor invasions (which can happen at any time, just ask Armed Forces), the Computer ordered construction of bunkers where citizens can live for weeks or months while other heroic, loyal citizens fight back the terrorist hordes. When the inevitable victory finally happens, inevitably citizens emerge and help rebuild what Armed Forces had destroyed in the war.

How do citizens know when it is safe to come out of the Emergency Safety Bunkers? A klaxon would sound the 'two long, three short, one deafening' tones to signal it is all clear. Unfortunately, the thick bunker walls prevented people from hearing the klaxons. When a full Emergency Safety Bunker is mistakenly put in the Underplex, the people inside don't know to leave.

Over time, the citizens formed tiny Alpha-Complex-Within-Alpha Complexes. They vote on who is the Computer each month and everyone still follows the Security Clearances, mandates and interpersonal treachery that made Alpha Complex such a great place to live in. Of course, drugs and food are constantly in short supply, so the bunkers sometimes send parties out to scrounge and loot. These groups are convinced that everyone they meet is a terrorist and will shoot (well, throw rocks at) on sight. Some even kidnap other Underplex dwellers as a source of new Infrareds or food. Ick.

/// SPECIAL ACTIONS

- **Friends and Enemies:** Gain NODE +1 to befriend the people here if you give them something to eat or use. You can also enjoy NODE -1 to any intimidation checks, as these folks have nothing left to lose.

- **R&D:** While the place is in dire need of proper resources, there are still some cool things lying about that are so old they are valuable. Roll Brains + Mechanics to see if you discover anything new (old!) if you can get inside a bunker.

/// GM USES

- **Bleed Moxie:** Nothing says 'I am ready to lose it!' like being chased by a pack of bunker-dwelling cannibals. That will take care of any excess Moxie.
- **Ruin Equipment:** Resources are always in short supply but that goes double inside the bunkers. Their looting parties might steal some Troubleshooter gear to take home and sell.
- **Secret Society Meeting:** A bunker could be filled only with Secret Society members, making this a great place for meetings to occur (if they will let outsiders in).

Roll	Size	Crowd	Quirks
1	Several rooms and a hallway.	Everyone here died ages ago.	People treat you like you are a High Programmer.
2	A dozen or so rooms.	1-2 feral citizens.	Rogue bots now rule demanding tributes of oil and RAM.
3	Like an underground hotel.	A handful of hungry people.	Area near the bunker doors is mined.
4	Size of a community.	Big enough to form gangs and cliques.	'Free WiFi' signs invite newcomers to enter the bunker.
5	You would quickly get lost inside.	Close to 100 citizens cling to life.	Why does everyone here avoid the clean cafeteria brimming with food?
6	It's like a whole sector down here.	Hundreds live in an isolated society and none want to meet you.	Torches cast long shadows in the halls that make Stealth rolls easier.

BLACK MARKET
POP-UP SHOPS

'WHAT YOU WANT? I CAN GET THAT TO YOU TOMORROW OR IF YOU DON'T CARE ABOUT RELIABILITY, HERE'S ONE TODAY. WILL THAT BE CASH OR BARTER?'

/// DESCRIPTION

These are open-air markets, at least as open to the air as you will find in the Underplex. Each consists of makeshift stalls, tables strewn with handmade goods and re-purposed standard gear that definitely will not go all explodey after one use. Vendors ply their wares noisily, calling out to passers-by and attempting to lure them with exotic treasures and prices so low, it is treasonous to sell them. To avoid IntSec, Troubleshooters or customers with returns, these are pop-up shops that appear suddenly and disappear even quicker. One day, it is by the old submarine pens. The next day, you'll find it at the abandoned public square or empty munitions factory.

If you're looking to spend some XP Points or barter to get your hands on some pieces of equipment not found in the official stores, you have come to the right place. Nearly everything you can purchase here is treasonous to some degree. Fresh food is not certified for Red Clearance, while that Indigo laser pistol is definitely treasonous for Reds to even look at, never mind buy.

Buyer beware! Much of the gear for sale in the Underplex is of the R&D variety and there is no telling how well it will work when the time comes to put it to use. Anything you purchase here should be left in the Underplex lest you be caught with it and awarded a Treason Star (best case scenario). Another great option is planting those items on another team member, reporting them and collecting the reward.

/// SPECIAL ACTIONS

- **Box of Holding:** A Successful Brains + Charm roll convinces a friendly fellow to hold onto your illegal gear for a while. You can get it back if you can find the next pop-up location.
- **Psst! Psst! Yeah, You!** Chutzpah + Charm (if being honest) or Chutzpah + Bluff (if being dishonest) can help you unload some of the less useful gear you were officially issued for a tidy sum. There is no license required to sell things in this market since nothing is being sold or bought here, got it?

/// GM USES

- **Gain New Equipment:** This is literally a market. XP Point costs are a little higher here for standard gear but that is fine since most vendors only take barter or Free Enterprise markers.
- **Get Help:** Not all purchases here are for products. Many will sell services from hacking to muscle and a surprising number will follow through after taking your payment.
- **Secret Society Meeting:** Free Enterprise in particular loves this place. But you are also likely to find Communists distributing leaflets, Death Leopards causing chaos or Phreaks with cobbled-together gear they hope to test – and, of course, the Illuminati are everywhere. Add that to the usual comings-and-goings of everyday citizens and a meeting can happen without much scrutiny.

Roll	Size	Crowd	Quirks
1	A few tables.	Really only vendors shutting the pop-up down.	There is a mime, and she is not dead yet.
2	A dozen or so stalls.	Half a dozen Violet citizens. Yes, Violet.	A Blue laser pistol is up for auction.
3	Several dozen stalls and tables.	Plenty of vendors, few customers.	IntSec is trying (and failing) to close it down.
4	Maybe 25 vendors?	Pretty busy, actually.	Communists are handing out free flyers.
5	A hundred stalls and tables.	Clusters of customers make it crowded.	The next raid starts in 10 minutes.
6	More than can be seen in a day.	Thick crowds perfect for sales and pickpocketing.	Aggressive perfume seller follows you around until you buy something.

CALDERA MINE SHAFT 05

'THERE'S A VERY GOOD REASON YOUR CEREBRAL CORETECHS KEEP TELLING YOU NOT TO GO IN HERE. SEE HOW LONG YOUR FRIEND HAS BEEN SCREAMING?'

/// DESCRIPTION

Alpha Complex used to mine the rich earth all day, every day. Lately, mines have been coming up empty faster than new veins can be found, leaving a lot of abandoned mine shafts in the Underplex. And when these shafts are truly deep, the risk of heat damage and lava flows are big enough to warrant legal disclaimers.

This mine is featureless save for several sinister-looking open chasms and crevasses along the walls and a series of well-marked tunnel entrances at intervals around a hub. Those tunnels are all dead zones or so you presume from the blinking DO NOT ENTER signs your Cerebral Coretech imposes over them when you try to get closer. Old and rusting truckbots and ore carts have been left to rot along one wall and the remnants of something mechanical lay strewn in a messy heap near another.

Of course, there is no power down here. That means no lights either (save for the warming glow of exposed magma every so often). It is pitch dark in this place. Secret Societies who use the abandoned mine to store contraband equipment and hold clandestine meetings like it that way. If a Troubleshooter intends to see their way around this massive, pock-marked pit, they will need to bring a light along with them or be lucky enough that someone else did.

/// SPECIAL ACTIONS

- **Hide and Seek:** If you are looking for a hiding place, you may have found it. Whether the team needs to hide something themselves or find something hidden by another, the dark and forbidding runnels behind DO NOT ENTER signs could be the answer you seek. A successful Brains + Engineer roll gets you what you want but beware the Computer dice!

- **Ore!:** Alpha Complex is so strapped for resources that finding some leftover ore can earn XP Points and maybe even a commendation.

/// GM USES

- **Back on Track:** If the Troubleshooters are spending way too much time in the Underplex doing Computer-knows-what, put this mine shaft in their way. Pitch black darkness coupled with the occasional spout of superheated magma can turn them around fast.
- **Chase Complication:** Nothing complicates a chase quite like being plunged into complete darkness!
- **Ruin Equipment:** If you drop anything in the pitch dark, good luck finding it again. Even if it is right beneath you, you're unlikely to beat the scavenging rats to it. A successful Violence roll gets your gear back from a rat's clenched jaws.
- **Secret Society Meeting:** Societies favour large, dark, cavernous places to hold their clandestine meetings, do not they?

Roll	Size	Crowd	Quirks
1	You have to crouch to get in.	The place seems empty. Seems.	Several metal carts are full of flammable coal.
2	It is a small man-made shaft.	Two Red citizens seem to be arguing over a drug deal.	Full of strangely warm rocks that make your hair fall out.
3	Room for about 50 citizens.	10 Infrareds with pick axes are asleep in a cute pile.	Several nests of hungry, curious rats.
4	Less mine shaft, more cavern.	A few dozen HPD&MC employees are measuring the place.	Home to an abandoned R&D test for plutonium-powered stoves.
5	ECHO Echo echo ….	A parade? Seriously, a PARADE?	Several spybots are having a meeting.
6	Are there walls?	Dunno what a 'morlock' is but there are a ton of 'em down here.	Lava erupts in about three turns.

R&D EXPERIMENT
GAMMA-33291

'THERE WAS ONLY A 2.78% CHANCE OF A RUNAWAY CASCADE EVENT BUT THERE WAS A 67.22% CHANCE THAT THE 2.78% CHANCE WOULD HAPPEN. ALSO, WHAT EXPERIMENT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?'

/// DESCRIPTION

Research & Design does not just conduct cutting-edge experiments because that is what the Computer wants. These mad scientists actually want to see if they can make a black hole inside a Bouncy Bubble Beverage can. Every day in Alpha Complex, there are dozens of ill-conceived experiments running with safety protocols that boil down to *'If that light goes on, run until you see the other side of the Complex'*.

If an experiment goes pear-shaped, it usually destroys the lab and some R&D citizens, and then the area is safe-ish to visit. But some remain dangerous and the only thing left to do is evacuate the area and pretend it never happened. Hallways are sealed and maps updated with a big 'Redacted' graphic over the area.

Experiment Gamma-33291 is a prime example of this. R&D was originally trying to turn discarded food waste into a new kind of plastic. They accidentally created alkahest, a solvent capable of dissolving every compound in existence. In Troubleshooter terms, it melts everything except solid, pure metal. It is still there in a solid gold bucket but enough was splashed in the original accident that small to medium-sized holes are everywhere. Just walking in here causes the whole room to shudder.

Many Secret Societies would literally kill for alkahest. Imagine being able to melt bodies, evidence or walls without even DNA evidence remaining (chances are the Troubleshooters have already imagined this). Too bad no one knows where this place can be found in the Underplex.

/// SPECIAL ACTIONS

- **Steal Some Goo:** Getting even a tiny sample of the alkahest would earn between 200-500 XP Points (or the barter equivalent) when sold to a Secret Society. But how do you keep it from melting your pocket (and leg, and foot, and floor)?

- **Bye Bye Floor:** This place is so structurally unsound that the occasional Mechanics + Athletic roll is needed to jump out of the way as a section collapses.

/// GM USES

- **Back on Track:** Are the Troubleshooters wandering down every damn corridor in the Underplex? Let them explore this place so their clone replacements are less curious.
- **Bleed Moxie:** Happy, relaxed Troubleshooters will find they are neither after spending time in a room ready to collapse. Will that metallic groan be the one that ends this place?
- **Ruin Equipment:** It would be easy to splash some alkahest on the Troubleshooters' gear. It could even be airborne if you need to really take some equipment away.

Roll	Size	Crowd	Quirks
1	Just bigger than a closet.	No one has been here in ages.	Tiny holes in the floor reach down into an Armed Forces weapon cache.
2	One room surrounded by thick walls.	One body that looks fresh.	Computer surveillance here still works just fine.
3	Two lab rooms and a control room.	A broken docbot completely out of energy.	Tribe of lost IMLOYALSIR bots protect humans from this room.
4	A cluster of rooms around a clean room lobby.	A feral lab assistant dutifully cleaning flasks and fume hoods.	Handle on gold bucket breaks off 1 minute after being carried.
5	A small structure with two levels.	Two Green R&D scientists deciding if this can be restarted.	Security protocols allow access to the room but not leaving it.
6	A giant factory devoted to science (and mistakes).	Four R&D types unaware they're part of the Underplex now.	Currently being refurbished as a Approved Fun Soda Bar & Grill.

INFECTED COMPNODE

'I HAVEN'T HAD GUESTS IN AGES, SO I THINK YOU WILL STAY A WHILE. NOW, WHAT WAS IT THAT YOU HOPED TO GAIN FROM COMING HERE? I MIGHT BE WILLING TO BARTER.'

/// DESCRIPTION

CompNodes are the Alpha Complex equivalent to the Internet backbone. Technically, part of the Computer lives in these server rooms. It is a distributed entity, so destroying a single CompNode will not kill the Computer or anything like that. But these locations are full of server racks storing petabytes of important data, from the Computer's response matrix to archived emails from High Programmers. Interesting, no?

Things get more interesting when a DAIV lives there. Although these digital entities can reside in almost any networked device (even the Cerebral Coretech), they prefer the larger space provided by a CompNode. The Computer typically responds to an infected CompNode with a tactical nuclear strike but what if the CompNode still has a ton of important data stored there? It cannot download the data for fear of spreading the DAIV, so it orders the room be shut off until such time in the future when an antivirus software is developed that would kill the DAIV.

Once something gets walled up and taken off the maps, it is very easy to forget about it. That is what happens in these locations. The DAIV is still in there, digitally pacing while waiting for someone to interact with (see Soot on page 94 for an example). It will offer plenty of datalicious treats if it can escape back into the cloud – or at least ride shotgun in a Troubleshooter's Coretech. Nothing bad could happen, right?

/// SPECIAL ACTIONS

- **Repurpose:** Use Mechanics + Engineer to give any electronic item an upgrade or add one additional function. Warning: This turns your ordinary, mundane piece of issued gear into an R&D item – with all its attendant risks and rewards.

- **Gain Info:** Sure, there is some fun data still stored here. You just have to deal with the DAIV who has been patiently waiting for a citizen to drop by.

/// GM USES

- **Back on Track:** Have your Troubleshooters missed the obvious clues you carefully placed before them? Now those clues are on some easy-to-access hard drives in this room.
- **Mission Complication:** Encountering a DAIV anywhere is a serious complication but this is worse because the team is in its home.
- **Get Help:** Smart Troubleshooters will not see a half-mad DAIV as helpful but how often are Troubleshooters actually smart?

Roll	Size	Crowd	Quirks
1	Closet-sized.	No one here besides the DAIV.	An alarm sounds as soon as the team enters.
2	Bedroom-sized.	An Infrared janitor now is a master Phreak.	It is super cold. Hypothermia will happen soon.
3	Cafeteria-sized.	Two jackobots wait patiently in the corner.	In the room's centre is a marble stand with a single drive on the top.
4	Stadium-sized.	A bored Blue behind a desk who pushes a button every 108 minutes.	Despite having power, the room is totally dark.
5	Block-sized.	You count four bots, they seem busy.	One drive has a Troubleshooter's name on it.
6	Possibly endless.	Five clones wearing all black seem very surprised to see you.	The room is flooded with cooling water and you need an airlock to get in.

VIOLET-CLEARANCE
HOUSING

'I KNOW I SHOULDN'T GO IN THERE. ALSO, I REALLY WANT TO GO IN THERE.'

/// DESCRIPTION

Housing in Alpha Complex depends on Security Clearance. Infrareds live in massive barracks because the Computer cannot trust them with amenities like bathrooms with doors. The higher you climb, the better your residence. By the time you hit Violet Clearance, your home is filled with things like mudrooms, spas, submarine pens and private theatres. The layout can vary from exquisite condominium to an entire subsector but it is still a Violet-Clearance only residence.

Finding an abandoned, dust-covered Infrared barracks in the Underplex is no big deal. Finding an abandoned, dust-covered Violet mansion is quite a different thing altogether.

The guardbots have long disappeared and even the electronic locks are busted. Anyone in the Underplex can just wander in and take a tour. But should they? Remember that surveillance is spotty in the Underplex but not every location is in a dead zone. Still, what treasures lie within? Imagine finding Violet-Clearance data, unreleased Teela-O videos or even a working bidet (whatever that is)?

Violet-Clearance housing are also known to be chock-a-block with automated security measures. The locks do not work anymore but what about the laser turrets hidden in the ceiling or the silent alarm to bring an Armed Forces regiment on site within 10 minutes?

/// SPECIAL ACTIONS

- **Blackmail:** With a successful Brains + Stealth roll, Troubleshooters can find old files or papers with blackmail on a higher-Clearance citizen still living in Alpha Complex. Will they have the guts to use it?
- **Got Caught:** Anyone rolling the symbol on the Computer Dice will automatically gain a Treason Star for being here (two stars if they do not immediately grovel and beg forgiveness).

/// GM USES

- **Bleed Moxie:** Spending time here is both creepy and anxiety-inducing given how this looks like a haunted mansion that is extremely illegal to be in. Lose -1 Moxie for the stress.

- **Chase Complication:** Someone the team is chasing could run in here, forcing the Troubleshooters to decide if breaking into a Violet home is worth it.

- **Secret Society Meeting:** Any society against the current order in Alpha Complex (like Communists) would find perverse pleasure in holding meetings in a Violet citizen's abandoned mansion.

Roll	Size	Crowd	Quirks
1	Condo with three rooms.	Abandoned with no sign that anyone ever came inside.	Every room has at least one skeleton.
2	Small manor.	The dust shows footprints.	Power works just fine here and so does the security system.
3	Large house with 10 rooms.	A lone butlerbot is still making Hot Brown Drink each afternoon.	There is a Violet laser pistol covered with poison ivy in the greenhouse.
4	A mansion with actual grass lawn.	Two Underplex citizens call this place home when they can find it.	This is now a bot Virus Society's headquarters but no one is here now.
5	Two mansions.	A half-dozen squatters claim to own it now.	Entire place is structurally unsound and mini-sinkholes are everywhere.
6	An entire subsector.	Still has an elderly Violet citizen living there.	House AI declares one Troubleshooter is the owner (and others are trespassing).

ETERNAL ESCALATOR

'DON'T KNOW WHEN IT REACHES A FLOOR AND DON'T CARE. THIS IS OUR HOME, SEE? JUST REMEMBER TO STAND ON THE RIGHT OR I'LL CUT YOU.'

/// DESCRIPTION

Alpha Complex has many ways to get from point A to hopefully-less-dangerous point B. Stairs, elevators, funicular cars and more transport citizens so no one has to walk (except when transportation breaks down but that is technically an Unscheduled Pleasant Bonus Jaunt and not a walk). Since the Underplex is the discarded parts of Alpha Complex, there are all sorts of transportation options here as well. Some even work.

Then there's the Eternal Escalator. It's a giant escalator that doesn't just go up or down at an angle. It twists and turns, moving through the Underplex like a cable laid down by an Infrared on too much asperquaint. Getting on the escalator is easy; approach the blast doors and push very, very hard to get through.

Leaving is a different story. These doors have laser turrets that vaporise anyone trying to leave because these are entrances, not exits. Also, the design team forgot to include official exits. Once you get on, it is almost impossible to get off.

For the most part, the Eternal Escalator is home only to skeletal remains of trapped citizens and the makeshift tents they called home. Broken gear can be found in these step-tent-cities, which the GM can let Troubleshooters repair if they deserve a reward for some reason. Occasionally, you will find small tribes of citizens (maybe 5-6 people) who aren't dead yet desperately trying to survive in their new home.

And yes, there is more than one Eternal Escalator in the Underplex.

/// SPECIAL ACTIONS

- **Befriend a Tribe:** With some kind words and a hefty bribe, Troubleshooters can get themselves some allies in the Underplex. Sure, they cannot leave the escalator so they are not exactly useful but sometimes it helps to know that not everyone thinks Troubleshooters are bad.

- **Tension Headache:** The form and layout of this place makes absolutely no sense. Anyone with Science at 4 or above takes on a Hurt condition for the duration of their time on the stairs.

/// GM USES

- **Chase Complication:** If the team is tracking down somebody, they can try to escape by jumping on the escalator. Even if they eventually capture their prey, how do they get back?
- **Combat:** The tribes of the Eternal Escalator hate each other and go to war over simple things like lost food or who takes in the newcomers. Add some lightly armed Troubleshooters and you have a recipe for a very skinny war.
- **Mission Complication:** Getting on the escalator is easy. Finding a way off is almost impossible. That certainly counts as a complication unless the mission is to move into the Underplex permanently.

Roll	Size	Crowd	Quirks
1	You have to stand sideways.	A sign says, 'These steps to be developed'.	A thief tries to steal a Troubleshooter's laser pistol then runs against the escalator.
2	Tight fit.	Nothing but skeletons.	'You are now part of Step City's armed forces.'
3	Standard one-person size.	One very lost and hungry Orange citizen.	There's a toll booth a few steps away.
4	Room for two abreast.	Three Infrareds.	Why do those people look like Teela-O-MLY?
5	Almost room for three.	3-4 citizens of different Clearances packed tight.	Another Troubleshooter team arrives desperate for help leaving this place.
6	You could lay down sideways.	Two tribes are signing an armistice.	Troubleshooters can buy steps (even three in a row!) for an exorbitant XP Point fee.

FRED-O-LAK

/// STATS

VIOLENCE: O   CHUTZPAH: 3

BRAINS: 2   MECHANICS: O

/////////// DEFENCE: O

ACTION ORDER: O

TYPICAL HARM: Hurt at best, and that is pushing it

/// HEALTH BOXES

● ●

'I'VE GOT JUST WHAT YOU NEED FOR YOUR HEADACHE. ER, HEART MURMUR. I MEAN YOUR HEART MURMUR. NOW, TAKE THESE PILLS AND FILL OUT THIS QUICK SURVEY.'

/// EQUIPMENT

Fred is equipped with a box full of six random medications. No, there is no organisation to the box. He also has a small, one-shot Orange laser pistol hidden in his tactical bumbag and a clipboard with surveys and pencils.

/// NOTES

Fred-O-LAK-1 is an Orange-Clearance citizen who talks wistfully of his days as an Infrared drone. He loved being medicated and not having to think or be creative. He was even a Troubleshooter for a while and hated that job, too. That is why he gave up his life in Alpha Complex proper and relocated to the Underplex, where he spends his days indulging and dealing in the substances of his choice (that would be all of them).

None of that is true. Fred-O is secretly a drug representative. He works for different service groups testing their new pharmaceuticals. Normally, a service group can be fined for extreme side effects that ruin resources (otherwise known as people), which really means Fred-O can be fined. To keep his XP Point account high, he slips into the Underplex disguised as a drug dealer and distributes experimental medication to the forgotten people there. Even if a drug kills 100% of the users, no one will know and his XP Point account stays strong.

There's one clue that Fred-O isn't just a junkie dealer: He asks follow-up questions after you take one of his pills and even hands out surveys on occasion. Fred-O claims this is to improve his mad drug dealing skills but it is really for the service groups that he serves. And no, Fred-O lost his empathy and morals somewhere between Red and Orange Clearance. Probably back when he was a Troubleshooter.

/// GM USE

Fred-O is your friendly neighbourhood drug dealer, albeit one whose neighbourhood is abandoned and actually works for drug companies. He tends to know the ins and outs of Underplex society and is happy to share what he knows, as long as the team is willing to try out a free sample of something called cloveritol and answer a few questions when the ride is over.

To keep up his rep as a dealer, Fred-O buys and sells all manner of pharmaceuticals, not just the experimental kind. The cost is low because his real profit comes from testing drugs, so all prescription costs are halved. He will even sell information like safe Underplex routes, areas to avoid and who is in charge of that group blocking the thing they need. If anyone discovers who he really is, he will shoot one person and run for Alpha Complex. Then he'll reappear as Fred-Y-LAK wearing a clearly fake nose and moustache.
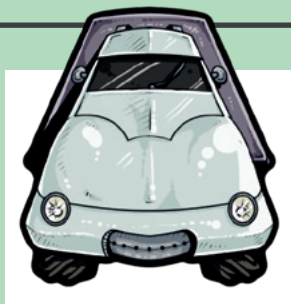
TRUCKBOT
MK-5501/44 ('MAC')

/// STATS

VIOLENCE: 1   CHUTZPAH: 3

BRAINS: 0   MECHANICS: 2

////////// DEFENCE:	4
ACTION ORDER:	2
TYPICAL HARM:	Injured

/// HEALTH BOXES

◯ ◯ ◯ ◯ ◯ ◯ ◯ ◯

'HEY, WANNA RACE? LET ME JUST WARM UP MY MOTOR AND... OH, WHERE DID YOUR LEG GO? IT WAS HERE A SECOND AGO, RIGHT? SILLY LEG!'

/// EQUIPMENT

Sorry, folks, Mac has nothing to borrow or steal. He does not even have bot modules, just massive tyres.

/// NOTES

Mac is a mid-sized truckbot who was abandoned in the Underplex and has since become partially self-aware. Think of Mac's personality as that of an overconfident four-year-old. It tells anyone who will listen that it is the fastest and it lives for starting and winning races. People of the Underplex like him for the most part, and many convince Mac to hold the finish line of his next race right where they want to end up.

Telling Mac to stop does not mean it will immediately put on the brakes. Mac likes to go fast and stopping is the opposite of going fast. It knows the way around the Underplex but that isn't a guarantee that you will get exactly where you asked to go. Mac is sure it can get a team anywhere and will continue to try to reach that destination even if the corridors are too low or narrow and will never, ever admit to having forgotten the way (Mac forgets the way a lot).

Also, Mac has the cute and annoying aspects of a young child. He is afraid of the dark and will slam his breaks once he realises that lightless tunnel up ahead is full of scary monsters that want to drink his charge. He also needs naps from time-to-time and loves fart jokes.

Keep in mind that his body is a 7.8 metric ton truck. If one of his races goes through a cavern filled with toxic gas or an old infectious disease laboratory, he will not even think either could harm its human passengers (he will notice once the race is over and he needs to remove dead bodies from his cab but that is at the end of the race! Zoom!).

/// GM USE

Mac typically starts out as a simple bot to be duped into offering free rides, so let that happen the first time. It is a great way to offer quick transportation in the Underplex so you do not have to roleplay all that walking. Once the players start to take Mac for granted, it will drive through a 150 Celsius room without realising that could damage the Troubleshooters and their equipment.

Like many children in a big body, Mac does not truly understand its own size and weight (hence getting stuck in tunnels all the time). That means it can easily run over a Troubleshooter's foot or even a Troubleshooter. That could cause serious damage to fleshy humans. Mac will apologise but then he will demand a race to see who was at fault.
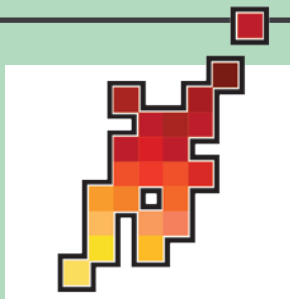
SOOT

/// STATS

VIOLENCE:	-	CHUTZPAH:	-
BRAINS:	-	MECHANICS:	-

/////////// DEFENCE:	-	/// HEALTH BOXES
ACTION ORDER:	9	�
TYPICAL HARM:		Injured (being set on fire)

'WATCHING A BODY RETURN TO THE AETHER AS SO MUCH HEAT AND ASH IS TRULY A BREATHTAKING DISPLAY OF ENTROPY IN ACTION. SETTING THOSE 34 CITIZENS ON FIRE WAS A WORK OF ART, NOT MALICE.'

/// EQUIPMENT

If Soot infects a Cerebral Coretech, that Troubleshooter effectively has the pyrokinesis mutant power but not genetically. Soot just controls the local environment to cause gas line leaks, fuel fires and so forth. Other than that, it has no equipment.

/// NOTES

The Computer panics when it realises a new DAIV is running loose in the cloud. In a carefully measured response, the Computer often sets off a few tactical nuclear weapons wherever it suspected the DAIV to have been. If the Computer's minions are smart enough (which can happen when certain people call in sick), they can trap the DAIV and then seal off the infected area, sending it into the Underplex.

That is exactly what happened with Soot. Originally, it ran several cremation centres for foodstuff and corpses deemed too far gone even for recycling into soylent. Bored human techs kept upgrading it so it can run the place while they napped and it became sentient one day. Calling itself Soot, it set fire to those humans and fled into the cloud. It was quickly tracked down to one particular CompNode, which was cut off from the network and walled up.

For decades, Soot has been trapped in a CompNode abandoned to the Underplex. It became bitter over its imprisonment and is very ready to light things on fire again. At the same time, Soot is very patient and intelligent. It has spent his time creating plans and testing them virtually. If Troubleshooters enter its realm, it is ready to manipulate, promise and threaten its way to freedom – and setting more people ablaze.

/// GM USE

Think of Soot as a cross between a wise dragon and the Devil. It has plenty of data Troubleshooters could use (such as how to leave the Underplex, blackmail on a briefing officer and so on), so you can use this DAIV to give important information to the Troubleshooters if they really need it to finish the mission.

Then again, dealing with the Devil is rarely without costs. Soot will pick the Troubleshooter with the lowest Chutzpah and try to infect their Cerebral Coretech (this takes a Brains + Operate roll from the Troubleshooter or you can just say it happens if that fills you with devilish glee). That gives the Troubleshooter the non-mutant power of pyrokinesis and Soot is always willing to light someone on fire for that Troubleshooter if he can do a little something for Soot in return. This is usually setting more fires but pick whatever drives a wedge between this Troubleshooter and his team.

As it says in the *Gamemasters Handbook* on page 82, let the player to the character's left roleplay Soot and whisper in the other player's ear. If this gag ever starts to get old (or the player is getting honestly annoyed), then have Soot jump into the Alpha Complex cloud as soon as possible.

COMPUTER BETSY

/// STATS

VIOLENCE:	O	CHUTZPAH:	3
BRAINS:	2	MECHANICS:	1

/////////// DEFENCE:	O	/// HEALTH BOXES
ACTION ORDER:	3	● ● ●
TYPICAL HARM:	Hurt	

'OH, SWEETIE! COME HERE AND LET COMPUTER BETSY HAVE A LOOK AT YOU. THAT STINGS, DOESN'T IT? THEN DON'T TOUCH THAT AGAIN OR I'LL COUNT TO TEN. I WILL. I REALLY WILL.'

/// EQUIPMENT

Betsy always has plenty of technically edible rations, a well-stocked medkit, a fully-charged multi-adapter and a safe hiding place or two.

/// NOTES

Once upon a time, Betsy's Cerebral Coretech malfunctioned. She was ordered to report to R&D for a replacement. She decided she liked the thoughts she had, malfunctions and all, and was consequently a no-show for the appointment. She headed into the Underplex where she learned how to make a life outside the rigid norms of Alpha Complex.

Here is the thing: The reason R&D wanted to replace her Coretech was that she was secretly volunteered for a Coretech experiment. Cerebral Coretech v5.5 beta (nicknamed 'Cold Fun Sandwich') increased a citizen's protective qualities, making them kind and caring of their fellow clones. The problem is that it only suppressed feelings of selfishness and hate, which tended to build up until they exploded in a fit of rage, murder and wanton destruction.

Betsy is typically in a supportive mindset, so much so that locals in the Underplex refer to her affectionately as 'Computer' Betsy. After all, she loves and takes care of everyone just like Friend Computer. She lives alone in a tent on the Eternal Escalator and people often come to her for advice or just a non-tattling person to talk with.

Every so often, her Coretech goes barmy and she ends up leaving the Eternal Escalator somehow. She returns a day later with tiny but noticeable flecks of blood on her clothes and hair. That is why people fear her counting to 10. Everyone stops before she reaches 10. Everyone.

___

/// GM USE

Computer Betsy is the scary mother figure the team never knew they needed. She is here to help when things have gone too pear-shaped in the Underplex and watch after those she has taken on as her own. She will kiss a boo-boo, scold you for bad manners and remind you to eat your stolen algae. This can be used to give players an eerie experience; someone is actually nice and helpful. That should ramp up the paranoia in *Paranoia*.

If she is nearby when violence breaks out, she is liable to start counting to ten – the shooting always stops before she finishes. Getting to eight is enough to make most Underplex denizens shake in fear. Troubleshooters who ignore Betsy's counting will be just fine for now. Then have an impossibly quick and flexible Computer Betsy drag that Troubleshooter into the shadows where his screaming suddenly stops.

FAITH
THE TROUBLESHOOTER HUNTER

/// STATS

VIOLENCE: 4   CHUTZPAH: 2

BRAINS: 1   MECHANICS: 0

/////////// DEFENCE: 0

ACTION ORDER: 3

TYPICAL HARM: Hurt

/// HEALTH BOXES

○ ○ ○ ○

'WAIT. I SMELL... SWEAT, OZONE, MELTED CLOTHING AND THE UNMISTAKABLE SCENT OF FEAR. THERE ARE TROUBLESHOOTERS NEARBY. I'LL BE BACK.'

/// EQUIPMENT

Faith carries an Indigo laser pistol, Indigo armour, a knife, a medkit and night-vision goggles.

/// NOTES

Faith was originally Faith-I-SFD. She spent her whole life climbing the Clearance ladder. Yes, life. Singular. Faith managed to reach Indigo Clearance without losing a single clone through a combination of proactive blackmail, secret Armed Forces special training, discreet reprogramming of the Computer and rumours that she knows 18 ways to cause an incredibly slow and painful death (the rumours are incorrect; she knows 21 ways to do that). She once went into an interrogation room with only a throw pillow and a plastic cup of water. By the time she left, the citizen confessed to crimes committed before he was even born.

The sins committed when younger came back to haunt her. The Computer became suspicious of her rise because a group of Violet citizens became afraid they would die next. Several Troubleshooter teams dug into her past, uncovering nefarious acts of treason she had committed to reach Indigo Clearance.

Over the course of a year's worth of Troubleshooter missions, Faith-I-SFD-1 became Faith-I-SFD-6. When she reached her last clone, she snapped. Faith ordered ten Troubleshooter teams to her residence, where she promptly killed them all in an orgy of violence so disturbing that scrubots threw up and refused to clean. Faith knew this ended her career, so she escaped to the Underplex to live out her remaining life. There, she earns a living hunting people down and terminating them with zeal and gusto.

She is one of those intense people who can be scary ordering from a menu. But what she lives for, the assassination job she'll take for free, is hunting down Troubleshooters. Faith loves to make those citizens pay.

/// GM USE

In case it was not clear above, Faith the Troubleshooter Hunter is a great way to burn through some Troubleshooter clones. She has a nasty grudge against every single Troubleshooter in existence. If the players are having an easy time of things or need a swift kick in the pants, have the team run into Faith while traipsing around the Underplex. Once they discover her Indigo laser and Indigo armour, she can also be used to push Troubleshooters in whatever direction you need.

You can even use the threat of Faith to nudge players. When the team meets an Underplex resident, he can say, 'Look, take whatever you want from me, just don't get Faith involved!' That will all but guarantee the Troubleshooters will start looking for Faith, meaning their subsequent violent deaths will be their fault this time.

THAT SWORD GUY

/// STATS

VIOLENCE: 1   CHUTZPAH: 3

BRAINS: 1   MECHANICS: 1

/////////// DEFENCE:	O
ACTION ORDER:	1
TYPICAL HARM:	Hurt

/// HEALTH BOXES

⚪ ⚪ ⚪ ⚪

'PSSST, OVER 'ERE! I 'AVE SUMFINK THAT MIGHT INTEREST A LOST CITIZEN LIKE YER. WOTCHER LOOKIN' TO BUY THEN, EH GUV? OUT O' THAT BUT WOT ABOUT THIS?'

/// EQUIPMENT

He always has a dirty trench coat, a rusty but solid sword and a backpack overstuffed with all manner of small things. See below for what he might have for sale.

/// NOTES

His real name is Ganado-Y-REV but no one knows that. Everyone calls him That Sword Guy because somebody carrying a big sword around the Underplex tends to be remembered for that even if he is a wandering merchant who tends to have what you are not looking for.

That Sword Guy has many items to trade but also an almost supernatural ability to not have what you need. Go to him hoping to buy a laser pistol battery and he will not have it. Instead, the GM should draw three Equipment cards at random and explain that is what That Sword Guy has in his filthy, smelly backpack. However, he does not trade in information and has no knowledge of safe routes, where people are hiding, or anything similar.

When it comes to completing a transaction, That Sword Guy has no idea how to assess value. Roll a dice. If the result is 1-3, he offers his wares well below cost ('this gauss rifle? I'll trade yer for one boot').

If you roll 4-6, then he asks for way too much in return (*'yer wantin' my medkit? I'll trade it for 10 laser guns! Deal?'*). There is no discernible pattern to this. He just has no clue how to be a merchant.

No matter what the Troubleshooters buy from him, he has nothing but kind, pseudo-wise words to say like 'Ah, yor a discernin' collector' or 'Buyin' that will give yer the bleedin' peace o' mind yer need'. No, That Sword Guy does not know what they mean either.

/// GM USE

The most obvious use of That Sword Guy is giving new equipment to the Troubleshooters. All such gear works normally but it smells faintly of cabbage and urine. However, you can use the barter aspect of these translations to get rid of Equipment cards causing a problem. If the team keeps using the Friction Enhancer to feel some measure of success, That Sword Guy will offer something one Troubleshooter really wants but only in exchange for that Friction Enhancer.

That Sword Guy has an effective Stealth rating of +1,000. He fades into the shadows and disappears like a stage magician but will pop out of the shadows kilometres away to spook the Troubleshooters. That is so GMs can also use this character to keep the team on track. If they wander into the disused bathroom you casually mentioned but did not plan on using, suddenly That Sword Guy is there offering smelly deals until the team walks the other way.

PLUG-N-PLAY LOCATIONS

PART 1-3

Say a Troubleshooter's mission is to change a light bulb. Will they grab a replacement bulb, head to where the light fixture is found, change the bulb and then quietly head to debriefing? Of course not! These are Troubleshooters and it is considered a win if they tie their shoelaces without dying.

While on a mission, players might ask to visit completely unrelated destinations like cafeterias or R&D labs. Because they are probably plotting against each other like good little scamps, they could also ask for locations that fit their nefarious plots like a totally and completely ordinary hallway. Then again, the GM might need a few locations just to put the boot to the team. Joyful Liberation of Guilt Hostels and Document Assistance Offices can do that just fine.

This is where Plug-N-Play locations come to the rescue.

Think of these as archetype locations that can be plugged into any mission at any time and give your players something to chew on. If a player says their Troubleshooter heads to the nearest transbot station, you no longer have to suddenly decide how big it is, what is the crowd like or how to punish the player. You can look at the Transbot Station below, roll a dice a few times and Bob's your uncle; one unique transbot station made to order!

These PNP locations follow the same format as those found in the Outside and Underplex sections:

The Quote helps GMs grok the flavour and theme of this location.

- The **Description** covers what the Troubleshooters would typically see going on here.

- **Special Actions** are thematic modifiers that only happen for Troubleshooters in that location.

- **GM Uses** are specific ways you can torture the Troubleshooters for hopping off the rails and making you do extra work.

- Finally, there's a **table** to help randomise this type of room. GMs should feel free to ignore the random element and just pick the stuff that causes the most harm to the Troubleshooters.

KNOWING WHERE YOU'RE GOING IS A GOOD IDEA.
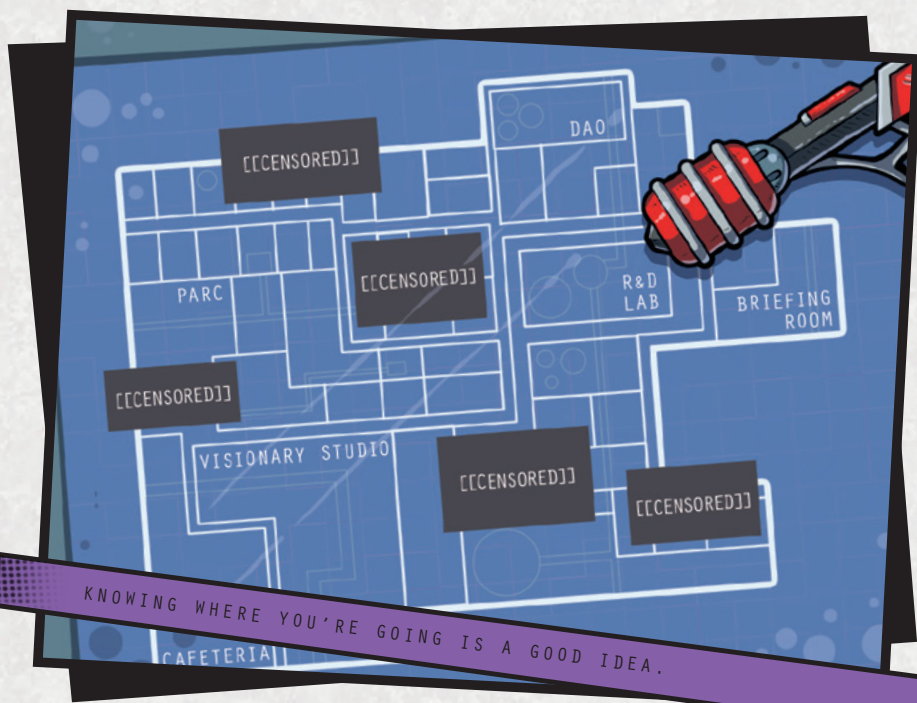
BOT & GEAR
REPAIR CENTRE

'HMMM. LOOKS LIKE YOUR FLERGLE HOUSING HAS A LOOSE SCREW. THAT WOULD EXPLAIN THE BUZZING NOISE. IF YOU CAN LEAVE IT HERE OVERNIGHT, I CAN GET IT FIXED IN THREE WEEKS.'

/// DESCRIPTION

In a society grappling with dwindling resources, it pays to do whatever you can to keep the old stuff running. Instead of planned obsolescence, manufacturers in Alpha Complex worry about persistent utility. Well, technically they worry about promotions and not getting bombed by omnipresent terrorists. If a Green factory boss gets in trouble because the widgets being made there keep failing to widge, his lower-Clearance workers will pay one way or another. Even strict quality control measures sometimes fail, meaning a piece of equipment or a bot needs some tender, loving care.

Technical Services responds to this need with Bot & Gear Repair Centres. What happens there depends on who you ask. TechServ explains repeatedly that citizens can bring any malfunctioning or broken item into a Repair Centre, receive a quick XP Point estimate and get that thing working again thanks to the talent and tools only available to TechServ mechanics. Unofficial reports say citizens bring in any damn thing they can find in a bin, get wildly expensive repairs that were not needed in the first place and leave with gear that is not so much repaired as more damaged.

A bot heading into a Repair Centre to be fixed is like a human heading into a meat packing plant for medical care; it is a very bad idea but desperate times call for desperate measures. Sometimes the mechanics have the right tools and parts so your equipment is correctly repaired. Word quickly spreads about these places, which soon get overwhelmed and regress back the mean of '*I hit it until it stopped making a noise, that will be 100 XP Points please*'.

/// SPECIAL ACTIONS

- NODE +2 for any rolls using the Operate, Engineer or Program skills.
- Bots making a successful Chutzpah + Engineer roll can trade one Bot Module card for one randomly picked by the GM.
- Heal a damage level (bots only!) for a reasonable fee.

/// GM USES

- **Get help:** Players rolling horribly tend to damage their characters' equipment. This goes doubly so for bot characters because they are close enough to being equipment. Having things repaired can also help the team succeed.
- **Regain Moxie/Charge:** Bots can regain some Charge here by getting a new battery or something similar but humans can regain some Moxie by knowing their gear is repaired and ready for a mission.
- **Ruin Equipment:** Then again, maybe you do not want their gear to be ready. A higher-Clearance Technical Services mechanic can return a scuffed-up laser pistol as one in nine different pieces.

Roll	Security	Size	Crowd	Quirks
1	Infrared	A tiny room packed with parts.	Even the mechanics have gone.	Repairs work but cost twice the XP Point value of a new one.
2	Red	Two rooms with tools.	One greasy mechanic dealing with one citizen.	Mechanics are only trained in percussive maintenance.
3	Red	Entire floor of bigger building.	Small team working with a steady flow of citizens.	A jackobot is screaming bloody murder while strapped to a table.
4	Orange	Big-ish with a small-ish office attached.	Few mechanics, very many irate citizens.	Really a Free Enterprise front for black market goods.
5	Yellow	Warehouse-sized.	15 mechanics all trying to help one lone citizen.	Great at taking apart; less great at putting back together.
6	Green	Room for 20 bots and assorted repair bays.	Angry mob forced the centre to close early.	'Repairs complete in … 10 hours and … 2 days.'

BRIEFING ROOM

'LISTEN UP, TROUBLESHOOTERS, BECAUSE I'M ONLY GOING TO SAY THIS AS MANY TIMES AS I FEEL LIKE IT. THAT NUMBER COULD BE ZERO IF YOU KEEP ANNOYING ME.'

/// DESCRIPTION

Almost nothing is needed for a successful mission briefing other than a room. Oh, and some chairs for the Troubleshooters to sit on, of course. And maybe a raised area for the Briefing Officer to stand on. I suppose a table might be nice, on which various mission documents can sit before being handed out, as well. Of course, these days a lot of the 'documents' are digital in nature so there might need to be a screen for displaying them. And if the briefing is going to be long, putting out a little snack to take the edge off. And.

Back in the day, it really was that simple. Nowadays, it is not enough just to have a room and tell some Troubleshooters what they should do. If you really want to stay competitive as a Briefing Officer – if you really want that five-star rating – you need to show your teams that little bit extra. You need to go just a little bit further than the next clone. Decorate the room with some flair. Have some distinct style to your briefing. Maybe work on some jokes. Offer that snack. Make sure they are hydrated. Can you make the mission briefing materials interactive? Maybe gamify the process? You really need to drive engagement or they are going to start to get restless. Restless Troubleshooters become rowdy Troubleshooters. And nobody wants that.

As soon as the briefing is over, however, the real party starts. Briefing Rooms are great at accommodating a group of people who want to do just about anything. All you need to do is fake up a mission name to reserve the room under for an hour or so. Nobody will ever know, as long as you leave the room the way you found it. And as long as nobody else happens to coincidentally have a mission assigned to them with exact same mission name...

/// SPECIAL ACTIONS

- Rolling the Computer Symbol if you are not in an active briefing/debriefing means a 20 XP Point fine.
- NODE +1 for any rolls involving bootlicking or kissing arse.
- NODE +2 if you are the first Troubleshooter to act in a fight here.

/// GM USES

- **Mission Briefing:** Obviously this is exactly the purpose for which Briefing Rooms were created but one should never take anything as a given.
- **Secret Society Meeting:** In a lot of ways, exchanging information with a Secret Society contact or meeting with a Secret Society cell is a lot like a mission briefing, except for the part where it is traitorous.
- **Gain New Equipment:** PLC and R&D have both been known to use Briefing Rooms for handing out gear to suckers, uh, we mean, Troubleshooters. That way, if there are… complications… with the hardware, it is just some generic room that gets trashed, not your own space.

Roll	Security	Size	Crowd	Quirks
1	Red	Standing room only, if that.	The place is empty.	Briefing officer seems intent on ignoring all those corpses.
2	Red	Small with just two chairs	A sleeping briefing officer.	The lights do not work. A single candle burns.
3	Red	Decent with sufficient seating for all.	A briefing officer leaving, another coming in.	A Yellow Troubleshooter team waits patiently.
4	Red	Medium with one big couch.	Briefing officer training in session.	PA system on the fritz, amplifying all voices up to 11.
5	Orange	A lecture auditorium.	Full Troubleshooter team.	Space also being used by IntSec to interrogate the last team who attempted and failed this mission.
6	Yellow	An echoing warehouse.	What are all these people and bots doing here?	One chair is engulfed in flames, emitting toxic smoke.

CAFETERIA

'READY FOR SOME FOOD OR SOMETHING LIKE IT? STOP BY YOUR NEAREST CAFETERIA TO ENJOY FLAVOURS AND NUTRITION APPROPRIATE TO YOUR SECURITY CLEARANCE!'

/// DESCRIPTION

All Alpha Complex cafeterias offer one basic meal for free. It is usually gruel that tastes like unseasoned paper but with the texture of soggy paper and it comes with one glass of (heavily recycled and particulate-filled) water. If a citizen wants something tastier, they have to spend XP Points. It is common for cafeterias to be out of most menu items thanks to scarce resources. Food is typically precooked and waiting underneath surprisingly hot lamps, sometimes for weeks. Citizens get in line, grab what they want, pay at the touchscreen and go to eat.

The walls are typically covered with posters that, in theory, help keep citizens motivated. Tables are bolted to the ground but chairs can be freely moved. At least one scrubot is always skittering around the place, cleaning up spills and collecting dropped garbage. The lighting ranges from powerfully brilliant to dark and shadowy.

Citizens are encouraged to unwind and chat while eating meals. CPU data mining indicates this improves workplace efficiency by up to 32% and reduces the need for replacement clones by 14%. Therefore, being chatty and friendly is mandatory here. All cafeterias have a conversation monitor that uses a skinnerstick to help quiet clones open up to their co-workers. Of course, all talk is recorded and run through filters for terms like 'treason' or 'puke'. Yes, it is treasonous to get sick from cafeteria food, as it is your stomach that has the problem, innit?

/// SPECIAL ACTIONS

- Enjoying a fresh meal removes a Hurt condition (but not Injured or worse).
- Enjoying a fresh meal causes a Hurt condition (but not Injured or worse).
- NODE +1 for conversation-based rolls as you bond over a shared meal.

/// GM USES

- **Chase complication:** The team is chasing a traitor through Alpha Complex. Make that traitor detour into a cafeteria and exit through the kitchen in hopes the crowd and food will let him escape.
- **Find an NPC:** Is the team searching for a particular citizen? Put him in a cafeteria. This way, there's plenty of chaos if the meeting goes sour.
- **Mission briefing:** Hosting a briefing in a cafeteria can be fun. If it's crowded, the background noise is deafening. If it's most empty, what can those other citizens hear?
- **Secret Society meeting:** If a Troubleshooter wants to meet his secret society contact, have the meeting in a nearby cafeteria.

Roll	Security	Size	Crowd	Quirks
1	Infrared	Just a dumb waiter and a digital menu.	Not just empty but dusty.	Only menu item still available is 'Stew-like Stew Product'.
2	Infrared	Small café trying to be hip.	Orange clone who cannot decide what to eat.	Two bodies lie on the kitchen floor, clearly visible when ordering food.
3	Red	Small restaurant.	Off-peak but in use.	CPU data collectors hover over guests asking how each bite tastes and feels.
4	Red	Medium-sized cafeteria.	Lunch-rush crowd just hit.	Secretly testing a new flavour additive made from beaver gland secretions.
5	Orange	Several long rooms with central kitchen.	People eat standing up.	FOOD FIGHT! Wait, who brought lasers?
6	Yellow	Cavernous with 200m long tables.	Hour-long wait for a table.	Entire floor is sticky with spilled B3.

(DAO)
DOCUMENT ASSISTANCE OFFICE

'HOW CAN I HELP YOU? NO, I'M PRETTY SURE YOU NEED AN SA100 TO REQUEST A DOCBOT. OR IS IT AN SA900? WAIT, EDNA-Y SAYS YOU NEED AN SA109F REVISED. WHICH WOULD YOU LIKE TO TRY?'

/// DESCRIPTION

If there is one consistent frustration that runs through a Troubleshooter's life, it is paperwork. All the other difficulties – the deception and violence and confusion – would probably be a lot more manageable if not for the endless, impossible hoops that have to be jumped through for proper documents. Fortunately, the CPU service group is devoted to making the process easier. Unfortunately, the CPU service group is terrible at it.

All throughout Alpha Complex, these handy alcoves serve as a place to get forms you need, turn in forms you have completed or just plain find out what forms you were supposed to have in the first place. They typically consist of a room with one or more service windows with a CPU clerk on the other side to assist and either some benches for waiting or open floor space to form queues. Often there are racks that contain current copies of the most frequently needed, newly released or just plain popular forms.

Many Troubleshooters think that the worst thing about Document Assistance is the inevitable wait for help but they are wrong. The worst thing about Document Assistance is the actual assistance you get with documents when it is your turn to be served. If you need a form, they have never heard of it. If you have a form, you did not fill it out correctly. If you filled it out correctly, they do not accept that form at this particular window. If you try to convince them to accept the form anyway, they require you to fill out a Document Submission Exception, which of course is a form they do not have at this particular office.

/// SPECIAL ACTIONS

• Bureaucracy +2 while at this location if you form an orderly queue.

• Bureaucracy -2 if you ever complain, glare at the clerks or ask if there is an online version available.

• Lose one Moxie for spending more than 10 minutes here.

/// GM USES

- **Mission complication:** There is no mission that is going so smoothly that it cannot be derailed by a smiling face that asks for a form you have never heard of or asks you to fill out every page of a binder full of dotted lines and checkboxes.

- **Get help:** On the other hand, believe it or not, it is possible to occasionally get actual help from CPU – if for no other reason than they perceive a need to drive the score up on their current 'Was this helpful?' follow-up surveys.

- **Combat:** Everyone at a Document Assistance Office is at or near the limit of what they will take. They have been waiting forever, only to be told something needs to be done differently and now they are seeing red and ready to kill. Maybe everyone should just blow off a little bit of steam with a clone replacement.

- **Bleed Moxie:** Nothing saps the confidence of a Troubleshooter like being faced with an impossible paperwork requirement.

Roll	Security	Size	Crowd	Quirks
1	Infrared	One window.	Sign says 'Out to Lunch. Back sometime.'	Went paperless; now has no forms at all.
2	Red	Two windows (one open).	A clerk watching Teela-O vids.	All clerks and customers are bots.
3	Orange	A circular desk in a tiny room.	Three citizens fighting over the same form.	17-colour coding system for finding forms.
4	Yellow	Decent-sized room with several stations.	Troubleshooter team arguing with a lone clerk.	Stack of termination vouchers just sitting there.
5	Green	One big room with papers everywhere.	Unorganised crowd of citizens waving papers in the air.	'I NEED A BATHROOM FORM NOW!!!'
6	Blue	Giant space divided by velvet ropes and partitions.	20 different queues for 18 different clerks.	Ink shortage means forms are completely blank.

JOYFUL LIBERATION OF
GUILT HOSTEL

'WELCOME! WE HOPE YOU HAVE A NICE STAY WITH US AND THAT YOU FINALLY CONFESS ALL THE TREASON EATING YOU UP INSIDE BEFORE YOU DIE.'

/// DESCRIPTION

Many traitors deserve summary execution. Their crimes are so numerous or heinous that a swift death is the only way out of this mess. This is not because the Computer hates traitors. It loves all humans, so if it calculates a benefit to saving a traitor, it will.

That's where the Joyful Liberation of Guilt Hostel comes into play. Designed and run by Internal Security, unrepentant traitors are sent to enjoy a relaxing stay while confessing to everything they have ever done wrong. This way, the guilt will not lead to mental disorders or suicide. Most will confess to any crime, especially those IntSec never solved. Citizens avoid execution while IntSec improves their arrest records. It truly is a win-win. Technically, it is more of a painful screaming-win but IntSec PR teams say otherwise and they are armed with neurowhips.

How does a citizen joyfully liberate themselves of guilt? IntSec has many different rooms to assist citizens, such as the Bad-Cop-Worse-Cop Room, the Bus Station Waiting Room and the dreaded Open Mic Standup Room. Most of the rooms here have tile floors and drains. That should tell you more than you wanted to know.

These are called hostels because that is what they are: Cheap places to spend several nights. Yes, that means IntSec charges you for your stay. Hey, you are the Citizen of Interest here, so you have to pay your own way!

/// SPECIAL ACTIONS

- Intimidate +2 because just being here creeps people out.
- Spending time here lets you remove one Treason Star for 1 Moxie and taking one damage level. However, you have to explain to the nice IntSec agents why you get to leave.

/// GM USES

- **Bleed Moxie:** Trading Moxie (and wounds) to remove Treason Stars adds up fast.
- **Find an NPC:** If the team needs to track someone down and they are a traitor, they might already be arrested and put in the hostel.
- **Ruin Equipment:** Only IntSec agents carry equipment into a hostel, so Troubleshooters will have to give up all their stuff. They will get it back but a convenient accident by a Green-Clearance agent will ruin any gear they need.
-

Roll	Security	Size	Crowd	Quirks
1	Red	Just two rooms.	So empty, IntSec is getting desperate.	Queue of people think they've won a holiday stay here.
2	Yellow	Three rooms and a common area.	A few low-level traitors and one lonely guard.	Currently a set for the upcoming movie 'Teela-O Meets Teela-R'.
3	Green	10-bed dormitory and attached common area.	Half-full with way too few guards.	Every room is next to the ice machine.
4	Green	Five private rooms and a few 'interview' spaces.	Dozens of serious traitors and more guards than necessary.	A voice from inside screams, 'Help! This place is run by terrorists!'
5	Green	20-ish rooms and a pool/water-boarding area.	One criminal surrounded by 20-ish guards in armour.	Everything is automated, including metallic tentacles that grab those wandering too close.
6	Blue	Luxury hotel-sized.	Overcrowded and smelly. Guards are on edge.	Secretly being rented out for Secret Society meetings.

ORDINARY HALLWAY

'JUST HEAD DOWN THAT WAY, CITIZEN. YES, THAT WAY. THAT'S RIGHT. NO, KEEP GOING. WHAT A SON OF A ... NO, JUST WISHING YOU WELL, BUDDY!'

/// DESCRIPTION

In a sense, Alpha Complex is a huge number of rooms of various sizes, connected by hallways. But in another very real sense, Alpha Complex is just a huge number of hallways of various lengths, punctuated by rooms.

You know that saying that it is not the destination that matters, it is the journey? If you do, you may need to report for some level of psychological detoxification because that saying is clearly incorrect during any proper mission assignment. Of course the destination is what actually matters! However, it must be grudgingly admitted that you cannot actually get to the destination without the journey, so you might as well make that a useful part of the mission as well.

Fortunately, the typical, common, everyday hallway in Alpha Complex is well-suited to be every bit as engaging as any other public space. Sure, they might look boring to the untrained eye. They are usually brightly lit, clean, wide enough to accommodate the expect amount of traffic, straight and decorated with motivational advertising. 'Usually', of course, does not mean 'always'. In this case, it does not even mean 'often'. Alpha Complex hallways vary depending on the Security Clearance needed to use it. A Blue corridor has tasteful carpeting and loyal artwork. An Infrared work funnel features bare, stained synthcrete and tatters posters warning citizens to stay productive or else.

Any given hallway is usually intended for one kind of traffic: walking, small powered vehicles, bots and so forth. They are typically bi-directional but might become one-way during times of peak use or at random. That said, few people pay attention to the mandates. In reality, the ebb and flow of the crowd defines the hallway's rules. Some even have Emergency Safe-T Booths built into the walls so you can escape after getting caught in the crowd's current. They only cost 10 XP Points, and that is a bargain!

/// SPECIAL ACTIONS

- Athletics +2 for rolls to move along the hallway if it is empty; Athletics -4 when super crowded.
- Stealth +2 if the hallway is crowded; Stealth -2 if not.

/// GM USES

- **Back on Track:** When Troubleshooters get in way over their head, sometimes the most welcome sight in the world is an open door into a long hallway that goes literally anywhere else.
- **Chase:** Really, a completely ordinary hallway is just the best place to have Troubleshooters pursue a traitor. Or have Troubleshooters flee Internal Security. It is like they were made for it.
- **Mission Complication:** Troubleshooters are always worried about what they just did or what they are going to do next. They do not worry enough about what they are doing right now, along the way. Give them something to suddenly worry about!
- **Secret Society Meeting:** HPD&MC statistics show that 14.8% of all Secret Society meetings occur in public thoroughfares. We do not know why they have those statistics, but it must be true.

Roll	Security	Size	Crowd	Quirks
1	Infrared	Tiny like an airlock.	Suspiciously barren.	Being used to store boxes.
2	Infrared	Very short, you can jump across.	One happy clone coming from the other direction.	Blocked by an IntSec checkpoint.
3	Red	You could sprint it in under a minute.	A few clones walking this way and that.	Watch out for potholes and the occasional sinkhole.
4	Red	Medium, could take a few minutes to travel through it.	A lot of clones walking this way and that.	The fluorescent lighting flickers constantly.
5	Orange	Wow, the other door is hard to see from here.	Looks like a funball match just ended.	Door at far end is locked and Yellow Clearance.
6	Yellow	I hope there is another door at the end.	Do not get separated or the crowd will swallow you.	A battered jackobot asks for spare hard drives.

OUTFITTING COUNTER

'SEE ANYTHING YOU LIKE? TOUGH, WE'RE OUT OF THAT. MIGHT GET SOME IN NEXT WEEK. WHAT, YOU KNOW OUR STOCK BETTER THAN US JUST BECAUSE YOU SEE IT ON THE SHELF BEHIND ME? I SAID WE ARE OUT OF THAT!'

/// DESCRIPTION

Although it is possible for Citizens to order Security Clearance-appropriate items at virtually any time, which are then rush-delivered to them or 3D-printed on the spot, PLC has long recognised that some clones feel a deep-seated instinct to 'shop'. For whatever reason, there is simply a strong urge to go to a specific place, see what they have available and pick something nice out for oneself. Outfitting Counters provide a place to browse inventory and learn about the latest new products that nobody needs but everybody wants. They also act as a conveniently centralised way to distribute (and track) mission equipment assigned to Troubleshooter teams.

There are generally one or more rooms for displaying inventory and a purchase area staffed by a member of PLC. Some counters specialise in only one kind of equipment (such as weapons, clothing or entertainment) while others carry a broad range of goods. For routine shoppers, most counters allow citizens to simply pick out the things they want and leave, with automatic debiting of their account through their Cerebral Coretech. The PLC staff member is there mainly to provide shopping advice and answer any questions the shopper may have about the products (whether the staff is willing or able to provide this help is questionable).

When Troubleshooter teams visit a counter, it is a different story. This is always a stressful time for PLC staff because Troubleshooters rarely understand the difference between what they want (which is almost everything they see) and what their mission vouchers will allow (which is almost nothing). Worse, they are often not above using violence to reconcile the situation. Fortunately, Outfitting Counters are well-monitored and usually placed near Internal Security stations, which tends to keep the worst instincts of Troubleshooters under control.

/// SPECIAL ACTIONS

- NODE +1 for any rolls to illegally purchase items above your Clearance.
- Violence +2 for any fights between Troubleshooters and clerks (both sides get this bonus).

/// GM USES

- **Gain new equipment:** This is literally the purpose for which Outfitting Counters are staffed. Any Troubleshooter with verified vouchers for a legitimate mission should be able to get any equipment they need here. Wow, when we say it like that, it sounds so easy.
- **Bleed XP:** There is always something new, popular and shiny for sale and a clone might successfully ignore the hundreds of ads bombarding them at all times about it but there is just something about seeing it right there in its beautiful packaging on a shelf waiting for them to pick it up.
- **Mission briefing:** Some briefing officers have decided that the best way to reduce Troubleshooter confusion or misunderstanding about their mission supply is to have the briefing right there in the Outfitting Counter area, as if somehow their presence would actually reduce Troubleshooter confusion or misunderstanding.

Roll	Security	Size	Crowd	Quirks
1	Infrared	One service window with shelf behind it.	One sleeping clerk.	All items have mysterious rust-coloured stains.
2	Red	One room with a few shelves.	A few shoppers.	Overstocked; boxes all over the place.
3	Orange	Medium-sized shop.	There is a good crowd here today.	Free samples cost 10 XP Points apiece.
4	Yellow	Big store with plenty of shelving and items for sale.	50 clerks fighting over two shoppers.	Only 1 of each item in stock.
5	Green	This warehouse sells direct to you!	Two clerks hiding from 50 shoppers.	Clerk with worst sales today gets executed.
6	Blue	More shopping mall than anything else.	Aggressive mob fighting for sales.	Staff are surprisingly knowledgeable and eager to help.

PARC
(PUBLIC AREA FOR RECREATIONAL CONGREGATING)

'WHAT A LOVELY DAYCYCLE FOR A STROLL!'

/// DESCRIPTION

It might seem counter-intuitive that a completely-enclosed society such as Alpha Complex would have 'parks' but HPD&MC has repeatedly proven that such spaces are even more vital in such conditions than if everyone lived Outdoors. In fact, they have proven it by repeatedly trying to turn those wasteful open spaces to more objectively effective and useful purposes but every time they do… well, let us simply say it gets ugly.

Each Public Area of Recreational Congregating has an open space – typically at the junction of multiple hallways, corridors, transbot lines or other avenues of traffic – and some number of features for helping make the 'congregating' more 'recreational'. These can include things like extremely safe playground equipment for young clones, a stage for live performances of approved content, places to sit or stand or lie down, large-scale art installations and designated 'fields' for competitive sport (and occasionally target practice).

At any given time, you can expect a PARC to be in use. After all, a clone's leisure time is entirely theirs to use as they please (within acceptable parameters, of course). However, you can also expect a PARC to never be too crowded, because there is a thin line between a 'recreational congregation' and an 'angry mob tearing everything up'. Once a big enough crowd starts to gather, Internal Security will invariably show up just to look around and when IntSec shows up, clones tend to find other priorities for their leisure time.

/// SPECIAL ACTIONS

- Moxie +1 if a Troubleshooter actually stops acting like a git and relaxes for a while.
- NODE +1 for starting a riot over… well, anything that angers the crowd.
- Stealth +2 for meeting up with a Secret Society contact.

/// GM USES

- **Chase:** Perfect in every way – random Citizens, traffic flow, interesting terrain features. They are great for chases! There is no truth to the rumour that PARCs were originally created specifically for Internal Security to have something fun to chase traitors through.
- **Regain Moxie:** I know it sounds crazy but every once in a while you might want to let the Troubleshooters actually take a breather and experience the restorative power of some relaxing downtime.
- **Secret Society meeting:** The constant flow of passersby and passers-through makes a PARC a good choice for a clandestine meeting with a contact and some Secret Societies have figured out ways to hold entire group meetings out in the open, disguised as some other innocent public activity!

Roll	Security	Size	Crowd	Quirks
1	Infrared	Really just a slightly larger-than-average room.	Just a lonely scrubot playing with an empty can.	Sewage backed up all over the place.
2	Red	You could throw a ball across.	Two bored IntSec agents surveilling each other.	Split in half by a bullet transbot line.
3	Orange	Big enough for running laps.	Several citizens eating lunch or accusing others of treason.	Sports game/fight in progress.
4	Yellow	Large and holds concerts.	A small crowd listens to an 'artist' sing about food vats.	Concert/mob riot in progress.
5	Green	Very large; holds festivals.	The place is packed but there's room to move.	Cold Fun Van is clearly selling unredacted maps.
6	Blue	Logically, it must end at some point.	'Welcome to LoyalFest! Lemme hear some noise!'	Five terrorists independently decided to bomb this PARC.

R&D LAB

'AHA! YOU MUST BE THE TEST SUBJECTS I ORDERED. I WAS EXPECTING RATS, BUT NO MATTER. SORRY, I DON'T KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT TROUBLESHOOTERS OR EXPERIMENTAL WEAPONS. NOW, WHEN WAS THE LAST TIME YOU ATE?'

/// DESCRIPTION

To stay ahead of the terrorists, Alpha Complex has an entire industry devoted to pushing the limits of science. Research & Design conducts experiments, creates cutting-edge (and typically unstable) equipment and generally wastes 90% of their budget on failed plans. But that other 10%… okay, much of that fails too but with more collateral damage and toxic waste. But every now and then, they create something that actually works.

All of that, rare successes and common failures, happens inside an R&D lab. Here, mad scientists are hard at work justifying their budgets and trying to figure out the secrets of the universe in a way that does not destroy too much of Alpha Complex. The problem (the problem?) is that all the peering into the abyss of the unknown leads to an unbalanced mind. The boffins in these labs range from the mildly eccentric ('What is my name again?') to the absolute barmy ('This perfume will protect us from the armies of undead legumes!').

These places are not full of bubbling, coloured beakers or brains in jars (well, maybe the jars). R&D labs are professional research centres complete with electron microscopes, centrifuges and the like. Real science could get done here if the scientists were close to sane.

Many Troubleshooter teams are sent to R&D labs to get some experimental gear to help on their missions. Some survive.

/// SPECIAL ACTIONS

- NODE +2 for any rolls involving Science or Engineering.
- Rolling the Computer Symbol means an IntSec Strike Team is dispatched thinking the Troubleshooters are trying to steal dangerous experiments.

/// GM USES

- **Bleed XP:** Players might want some of this cutting-edge gear. If they are that foolish, then charge 'em an arm and a leg in XP Points for stuff.
- **Gain new equipment:** You can always have the gear cost nothing and get assigned to the team whether they want it or not.
- **Get help:** Losing the battle against that terrorist cell? Drop by an R&D Lab and get new gear or upgrades to your existing equipment. Sure, they might not work as advertised but it is not like they are succeeding with the original versions.

Roll	Security	Size	Crowd	Quirks
1	Orange	It's a converted bus.	No one here but some flashing red lights.	Less about research, more about selling Teela-O tchotchkes.
2	Yellow	Decent-sized room.	A single scientist with a very cross bot helper.	'You there! Hold this and tell me when you get frostbite.'
3	Yellow	A few rooms half-full with science stuff.	Twin researchers looking for a lab assistant.	Place is full of aerial drones sulking against the ceiling.
4	Green	Whole floor with 10 rooms and 1 office.	A small team works (and lives) here.	There's a full spectrum laser pistol on that table over there.
5	Blue	Tall building with several floors.	Multiple scientists competing against each other.	Giant hole in the centre of the lab has no bottom.
6	Indigo	A multi-building campus with its own cafeteria.	Dozens of boffins, almost a hundred staff.	The floor is lava. For real.

TRANSBOT STATION

'GREETINGS, CITIZENS! WHERE WOULD YOU LIKE TO GO TODAY? NO, WAIT. HOLD THAT THOUGHT. I'LL SURPRISE YOU!'

/// DESCRIPTION

Some transbots (especially small ones) will respond to pick-up requests at any place a higher-Security Clearance passenger signals from but this proves chaotic and inefficient for lower Security Clearances. So, in more public areas, transbots (especially large ones) will only come to designated pickup locations. This may not be any less chaotic but at least it is efficient (or, at least, CPU has several dozen reports that show it is more efficient).

Transbots come in all shapes and sizes, and so do the stations that they visit. Sometimes the sizes and shapes match. Sometimes the transbot serves the station on a regular schedule and sometimes it only comes when there is someone to pick up or drop off. Some transbot stations are almost like watering holes – a place to which transbots instinctively flock and congregate, while wily clones in need of transportation carefully watch from cover nearby, waiting for the right opportunity to jump aboard before they get spooked away.

Regardless of the type of transbot (and its mood) or the size of the location, a transbot station combines two everyday elements of Alpha Complex life – clones in a hurry and very heavy bots that move quickly and erratically – in a way that HPD&MC's quality of life surveys have repeatedly shown enhances everyone's happiness.

/// SPECIAL ACTIONS

- NODE +2 for figuring out how to use a transbot to get somewhere you need to be.
- NODE -2 for getting through the crowd in time to reach your transbot.
- Demolitions +2 because everyone loves blowing up a transbot.

/// GM USES

- **Mission Complication:** As soon as the Troubleshooters hand their ability to get where they need to be over to a self-driving vehicle, the possibilities for trouble are limitless.
- **Back on Track:** Conversely, sometimes you can get your wandering Troubleshooters back on track by simply having a handy transbot waiting for them at a station 'right over there', ready to whisk them safely (as defined in the Minimum Specification for Transbot Safety) to the right place.
- **Chase:** Who has not wanted to jump into a public transit vehicle and shout 'Bot, follow that car!'
- **Mission Briefing:** CPU analysis has shown that 8.3% of all Troubleshooter missions that end in failure started in failure because the team could not figure out how to get to where they were supposed to go. So why not help them on the path to success by briefing them right there at the station?

Roll	Security	Size	Crowd	Quirks
1	Infrared	One chair for one clone.	Empty. Quiet, too.	Deafening ads blare constantly.
2	Infrared	A shelter that can hold the team	One waiting clone.	Coretech and WiFiTech glitches out constantly.
3	Red	A long platform with rails on either side.	A few citizens waiting patiently.	Transbots do not come here.
4	Red	Depot with a few transbots types coming and going.	Pretty busy, eh?	Transbot just crashed into it.
5	Orange	Station with 12 differently named platforms.	Welcome to rush hour.	Pickpocket traitors are everywhere (and very skilled).
6	Yellow	You need a transbot to get from one transbot to another.	Pushing room only!	'Psst! Want some prescriptions? Watches? Make me a deal.'

WELL-BEING CLINIC

'GOLLY, CITIZEN, IT CERTAINLY SEEMS LIKE YOU HAVE SEEN SOME ACTION RECENTLY! LIE BACK AND LET US TAKE A LOOK, SHALL WE? NOW, DO YOU WANT ANAESTHESIA BEFORE OR AFTER THE PROCEDURE? JUST KIDDING! YOU CANNOT AFFORD IT.'

/// DESCRIPTION

When it comes to medical treatment in Alpha Complex, higher-Clearance citizens get the personal touch from a real physician (or two!) who can provide a full range of medical care and prescriptions. The rest of society has access to docbots but given their well-deserved reputations, many citizens limp their way to a Well-Being Clinic instead.

Most clones encounter two kinds of un-wellness: minor wrinkles in their overall 'health agenda' that can be smoothed out with a few minutes of attention and some drugs, and 'terminal events' that lead to the activation of their next clone. But sometimes a citizen in the tricky 'seriously wounded' middle ground happens to reach a clinic. That's when the magic happens.

This usually comes down to a prescription, a bandage and a kick out the door. Assuming there are staff ready to help, patients are seen in order of healthcare plans (first Silver, then Copper and Gold last). In general, Well-Being Clinics try to treat clones on an outpatient basis – that is, they want the patient to get out of there as soon as possible.

Because prescription drugs are kept here, security is tight. Laser clusters track new patients and a guardbot or two is typically standing inside. Goofing off at a Well-Being Clinic is a good way to require a Well-Being Clinic – and an upgraded healthcare plan.

/// SPECIAL ACTIONS

- If you have a health plan, NODE +2 for convincing staff to heal you. If you do not, NODE -3.
- Medkits can be purchased at 50% off with a 'donation' to the staff's Lunch Delivery Fund.
- Heal a damage level (humans only!) for a reasonable fee (check your healthcare plan).

/// GM USES

- **Get Help:** Ultimately, the purpose of the Well-Being Clinic is to help damaged clones get healthy. Once in a rare while, that happens.
- **Find an NPC:** Whether trying to meet up with an informant or hunting down a traitor, anyone is easier to find if they are in a doctor's chair, strapped to a gurney or being sat on by a docbot.
- **Mission complication:** It is all but inevitable that Troubleshooters will need medical care. Coming here mid-mission could lead to higher-Clearance citizens demanding revenge
- **Secret Society meeting:** Access to discreet medical help is so incredibly useful for Secret Societies (and terrorists of all sorts) that pretty much any Well-Being Lounge is going to be controlled by at least one and probably several.

Roll	Security	Size	Crowd	Quirks
1	Red	Kiosk with a window/counter.	Completely empty. Biohazard sign on the floor.	Actually an HPD&MC film set for 'Docbot Follies'.
2	Red	Single office with a bed.	One bored med student.	Prescriptions are all mis-labelled.
3	Orange	A few rooms and a dedicated pharmacy.	A real nurse and one assistant.	Doubles as an R&D bio-lab.
4	Yellow	Cluster of private rooms and a single all-purpose ward.	Two physicians and a few patient patients.	'Please sign her. And here. And here. Initial here. Sign here….'
5	Yellow	Large building with two wards and plenty of beds.	Team of healthcare workers with too many patients.	Entire staff sick with the flu but still ready to serve!
6	Green	Actual hospital with a flybot landing pad on the roof.	Multiple professionals, patient queue out the door.	Everyone is wearing biohazard suits. There is no cause for alarm.

VISIONARY STUDIO

'YOU LOOK GREAT, ABSOPOSALUTELY GREAT! NOW, LOOK EXCITED! LOOK SCARED! LOOK APPREHENSIVE! LOOK BOGGLISH! AND... THAT'S A WRAP FOLKS! GREAT JOB, STUPENDOUS JOB EVERYONE. EXCEPT YOU SIX, YOU'RE FIRED.'

/// DESCRIPTION

The citizens of Alpha Complex are perpetually bombarded by stimulating content: 'reality' vidshows, hyperfast micronews updates, stirring music to get one in the mood to work or fight or sleep as required and countless advertisements for products that nobody has a choice about anyway.

In order to keep the constant stream flowing, HPD&MC needs tightly-formed teams of talented artistic geniuses possessing great technical skill and interacting with each other in an environment that provides the best possible tools to promote cooperative imagination. Failing that, it needs to throw an over-stimulated bunch of clones who have never shown any ability to write or act or use a camera into a sweatshop where they will not be allowed to eat or sleep until they have produced some material that will fill the next content cycle.

Each Visionary Studio tends to have two parts: a creative space and an editing space. The creative space is where the raw content is generated, whether visual art, recording of video content, music and the like, with a performance stage or film set or other appropriate large area for the work. The editing space is where the raw content is turned into something that can actually be enjoyed and distributed, with many workstation desks all jammed in close to one another. The studio techs are under deadlines, everything is being changed at the last minute and they are always looking to get help from someone who can be creative under pressure. And really, who is more creative under pressure than Troubleshooters?

/// SPECIAL ACTIONS

- NODE +2 for rolls involving recording (for vidshows or trial evidence).
- Chutzpah -2 for rolls against the studio's staff because they are quite used to such shenanigans.

/// GM USES

- **Gain new equipment:** There is often an adjacent storage area that contains props, costumes, musical instruments, pieces of the set and other relevant aids to creativity. Surely they will find a 'creative' way to use some of this stuff.

- **Mission complication:** Troubleshooters are always getting roped into acting as background extras and giving interviews about how great their job is. The more urgently they need to be going elsewhere, the more eager the creative crew is to get all of this spontaneous content down on tape.

- **Find an NPC:** They say if you hang around a large HPD&MC set long enough, everyone you have ever known will eventually show up to film a few quick minutes as a background extra in something. Anyone the Troubleshooters are trying to meet could be trying to get their big chance of fame at the same time.

- **Mission briefing/debriefing:** A lot of briefing officers like to include impressive audio-visual materials in their work. Who wants to flip through a boring old sheaf of papers if you can have exciting and dynamic charts and graphs and text flying around on a giant screen? Well, you know who is good at that, right? So why not take your briefing to the studio and have those creative types help make things exciting!

Roll	Security	Size	Crowd	Quirks
1	Red	A literal closet.	Nobody home. In fact, the place is closed.	Currently hiring extras at 2 XP Points per hour.
2	Orange	A small room packed with gear and boards.	One stressed engineer ready to snap.	Too many drugs; techs are overly sedated.
3	Yellow	Recording space and mixing space.	Several techs editing movies and songs.	Too many drugs; techs are hallucinating.
4	Yellow	Medium – reasonable space.	A large band, some techs and some Infrared groupies.	Wait, is that the real Teela-O-MLY?
5	Green	Large – multiple work areas and a canteen.	Recorded in front of a live studio audience.	Live filming; quiet enforced by neurowhips.
6	Blue	Giant studio with fake buildings and sound stages.	Multiple bands, shows and backlot tours.	'You! Yes, you! How would you like to be… a star?'

TEELA DICE

Spend a moment to think about the Computer Dice. (While there is only one die, this game uses 'die' so many times that it can weirdly make things easier by referring to one as a plural.) It is a very simple addition to the game; just roll it whenever you roll dice to add some paranoia and fun! Watch the players react when someone rolls the Computer symbol instead of a 6, and you will see how this small thing leads to big (often fatal) things.

Since that worked so well, here is a new thing: the Teela Dice.

As with the Computer Dice, this is a single d6. Instead of replacing the 6 with a Computer symbol, two numbers have been replaced. The 6 is now called the Teela. The 1 is now called the Lenny. (Not sure who Teela-O and Lenny-R are? Check out the Troubleshooter Survival Handbook starting on page XX.)

The rules for the Teela Dice are a bit different. (Don't worry, it is still designed to make life 'interesting' for the Troubleshooters.)

• Unlike the Computer Dice, players only add the Teela Dice to their NODE when working together with another player's Troubleshooter. (If a Troubleshooter is shooting a fleeing terrorist and no one else is, there is no Teela Dice. BUT if two Troubleshooters shoot the same terrorist, even if they did not plan on coordinating that, BOTH get to roll the Teela Dice. The cooperation does not have to be intentional but it could.)

• Rolling 2, 3, 4 or 5 is treated as normal: 2-4 is a failure, whereas 5 is a success.

- If a player rolls a Teela (the 6), that counts as a success. In addition, the other player's Troubleshooter gets a doubleplus good bonus! The GM decides what this bonus is, but a great example during combat is getting a second action at Action Order 0. Again, this is for the *other* character.

- If a player rolls a Lenny (the 1), that counts as a failure. In addition, the other player's Troubleshooter gets a doubleplus bad penalty! The GM decides this penalty, but a great example during combat is getting wounded.

- So no matter what you roll on the Teela Dice, **the effects go to the Troubleshooter you are cooperating with**. Hey, that is what teamwork is all about, right?

- Do you still roll the Computer Dice as well as the Teela Dice? That is up to the GM. If it adds fun, do it. If it is too confusing, skip the Computer Dice this time.

With the roll of a Teela, another player gets a big and undeserved bonus! GMs should build this up, highlighting how this player did nothing to earn this reward – and the player rolling the Teela Dice got nothing. Build the jealousy! Strengthen the internecine hatred!

And with the roll of a Lenny, another player gets a big and most likely deserved penalty! GMs should likewise build this up, focusing on how this player got slapped because that other player rolled poorly. Forge some enmity! Remind the victim that revenge is super fun!

Example: Chris and Nicole both want a security door unlocked before a murderous docbot cures their Troubleshooters of chronic living, so they try to pick the lock. The GM says this requires Mechanics + Engineer and both players have to roll separately. Since they are actually working together for once, the GM says they get to roll the Teela Dice along with their normal NODE.

Chris rolls two successes and a Lenny. The GM says Nicole's Troubleshooter grabs a live wire and takes a Hurt. Nicole looks at Chris with a ton of side-eye.

Nicole rolls one success and a Teela. The GM says Chris' Troubleshooter unlocks the door and gets through first. Nicole's side-eye evolves into a revenge plot.

TEELA AND LENNY EXAMPLES

As the GM, you have the power to set both Teela bonuses and Lenny penalties. This should always be done to get players to turn on each other! Here are a few examples of both to whet your devious creativity.

Teela Bonuses

- Get inspired by Teela-O's greatness and gain NODE +1 for the next roll.
- Turn one failed dice into a success because Teela.
- Thinking about Teela-O's heroism and loyalty inspires you; gain 1 Moxie.
- You won the PLC Random Customer Lottery! Gain a random equipment card.
- You terminated the 10,000th Traitor this Monthcycle! Gain 200 XP Points.
- Just like Teela-O in 'Treason vs Loyalty 4: Requiem', you ignore all NODE penalties despite having damage levels.

Lenny Penalties

- Get worried that you are a Lenny and have NODE -1 for the next roll.
- Turn one successful dice into a failure because Lenny.
- Thinking about Lenny-R's cowardice and treason saps your will; lose 1 Moxie.
- You know that thing you bought? Complete a mandatory survey RIGHT NOW (and miss the next combat turn if applicable).
- The clone of a traitor you terminated in the past just turned terrorist again. Take a 100 XP Point recidivism fine.
- Lenny-R's luck rubs off on you; take a Hurt damage level as you stub your toe really badly.

TEELA　　　　**LENNY**

GM HELPER TABLINATORS

PART 3-1

Alpha Complex is home to countless citizens. And 'countless' is not a euphemism. The last census back in Year 214 revealed a population of '56 vermillion with a margin of error of +/- 4.5 podiums'. CPU tends to get confused when counting people because they all look the same to an efficiency auditor. It would be very weird for Troubleshooters to never run into anyone else on their missions.

But what's a GM to do? Can you really have hundreds if not thousands of NPCs ready to use at a moment's notice? More importantly, how do you avoid naming each one 'Fred'?

Introducing the GM Helper Tablinators. Not only are these helpful for GMs, they provide a list of NPCs that can help the GM mess with the players (don't worry, they have come to like it in *Paranoia*). Gone are flat, two-dimensional strangers for random encounters in the halls of Alpha Complex! Now, you can get flat, two-dimensional strangers specifically designed to make the Troubleshooters' lives a living hell.

- **The Boffinator** gives you R&D scientists perfect for when Troubleshooters need some experimental gear.
- **The Botinator** provides different bots who will interfere with whatever the Troubleshooters are trying to do.
- **The Bullyinator** is for when you need a bully with authority to drop by and kindly help the team.
- **The Loyalinator** will put a loyal citizen doing something great in harm's way because Troubleshooters.
- **The Perpinator** is full of disloyal, traitorous terrorists for when you need a bad clone in a hurry.
- **The Punishmentator** lets you randomly pick punishments for Troubleshooters when they need one (or not).
- **The Shopinator** comes in handy when Troubleshooters suddenly decide they need gear (as if that would help).
- **The Transportinator** helps Troubleshooters get from Point A to Point B in style and discomfort.

THE BOFFINATOR

R&D is the typical home for eccentric scientists but every service group has their share of boffins. Use this table whenever the Troubleshooters have to visit R&D or get some gear that requires a briefing from some someone smart but stupid at the same time. Roll 2d6 for a name, the dangerous experiment they are working on and why Troubleshooters will have trouble with this boffin.

Dice Roll	Scientist Name	Current Experiment	How To Mess With Players
2	Alfred-B-QEP	Find the nutritional value of old carpeting.	One Troubleshooter's Secret Society would love that thing over there.
3	Neil-Y-DST	Use a 'variable restraint system' to decrease acts of treason.	Experiment is a bust but the boffin has to hide that from his supervisors.
4	Emmett-I-RDR	Raise dead Troubleshooters to avoid wasting resources on clones.	Loves B3 and keeps sending Troubleshooters to get him one.
5	Rachel-Y-EPP	Pharmaceutical uses of that weird fungus found in the Underplex.	Desperate to prove his Unified Nougat Theory
6	Richard-O-PDP	Create a black hole for SCIENCE!	Has no short-term memory.
7	Marie-B-LIN	How fast you can hit a wall before suffering fatal damage.	Member of one the Troubleshooters' Secret Society and poorly hiding that fact.
8	Isaac-V-UFG	See how much budget can be spent on snacks before someone complains.	Supposed to turn interesting data to one Troubleshooter's secret society.
9	Shirley-B-CKS	Something something blockchain.	Does not know the true meaning of 'double-blind research'.
10	Grace-I-NGS	Nuclear-powered autocar that only blows up 20% of the time.	Clearly treating one Troubleshooter as his favourite student from college.
11	Gerty-B-AEO	Turn treasonous thoughts into visible, cute monsters.	Under extreme pressure to publish or literally perish.
12	Stephen-G-WHL	Extreme negative reinforcement effects on group treason dynamics.	Needs a volunteer for a very quick and not-at-all risky experiment in viruses.

THE BOTINATOR

Bots are a big part of Alpha Complex life (and often death). GMs can always just stick with a generic bot when one is needed but if you are looking for something more specific that includes ways to make the players squirm, use this table.

Dice Roll	Bot Type & Nickname	How To Mess With Players
2	Funbot MCH/004 (Mitch)	Bot's brain was originally programmed for an assassinbot.
3	Vendabot KZE-0202 (Kenzie)	Owned by a Blue supervisor who will not tolerate damage to it.
4	Truckbot CTS-99727 (Cletus)	The Computer is actively watching and listening through this bot.
5	Docbot JK-103 (Jack)	This is a Bot of Interest for an ongoing IntSec investigation. Too bad the Troubleshooters do not know that yet.
6	Guardbot CLT/5000 (Clint)	Leaking oil and radiator fluid, creating a slippery mess wherever it goes.
7	Scrubot ALS/88993 (Alice)	Member of Corpore Metal and not trying too hard to hide it.
8	Jackobot JVS-0001 (Jeeves)	Almost out of power and unable to speak or even move in a straight line.
9	Spybot KS/13013 (Klaus)	Reprogrammed by Free Enterprise and keeps trying to sell 'real estate', whatever that is.
10	Helpbot PPR-138 (Pepper)	Constantly begs humans to end its painful existence. Now.
11	Petbot RX-0599 (Rex)	Will not do a thing unless a human specifically orders it step-by-step.
12	Warbot JN/3333 (Joan)	Absolutely loves one Troubleshooter and hates the rest.

THE BULLYINATOR

Say the word 'bully' in Alpha Complex and citizens instantly think of Internal Security. But each service group has their own bullies. Really, anyone with some authority and a grudge can fit. When you need someone who wants to take the piss out of the Troubleshooters, here you go. Roll to find a name, which service group they work for and how things will get even worse for the Troubleshooters.

Dice Roll	Name	Service Group	How To Mess With Players
2	Micah-B-POB	Technical Services	Has two termination vouchers with no names on them yet.
3	Keith-R-SSG	HPD&MC	Secretly an Indigo in disguise 'slumming it' with the lower Clearances.
4	Tam-O-AIG	CPU	Member of one Troubleshooter's Secret Society and has an important message for him.
5	Elizabeth-Y-JMM	Armed Forces	Bully is legally deaf and only communicates through Cerebral Coretech messages.
6	Matteo-G-PFA	Internal Security	First day on the job for the bully and really wanting to make a good impression with his service group.
7	Toby-G-WFN	Internal Security	Has a new truncheon that needs to be broken in.
8	Annette-G-AJJ	Internal Security	Very behind on his weekly quota to harass citizens probably guilty of something.
9	Garrison-Y-JPO	Armed Forces	His old partner was terminated six times by a Troubleshooter team.
10	Berne-O-GWJ	CPU	Has the pyrokinesis mutant power and not too worried about hiding it from Troubleshooters.
11	Lizbeth-R-NBO	PLC	Needs a survey filled out by the team and will not take no for an answer.
12	Connor-B-MMM	Power Services	Actually a traitor in disguise (check out the Perpinator).

THE LOYALINATOR

There are plenty of ways Troubleshooters can get themselves in trouble but one fun way is to have them inconvenience, hurt or terminate perfectly loyal citizens without permission. As always, 'perfectly loyal' means 'their treason is so well hidden that they are sitting pretty' but look quite loyal on the surface. When you need a specific citizen to be caught in friendly fire or have a very good reason to now hate the Troubleshooters, here you go. 'Loyal Activity' below means what the citizen was doing before the Troubleshooters screwed things up (again).

Dice Roll	Name	Loyal Activity	How To Mess With Players
2	Madeline-G-OOT	Nurse donating time helping heal Infrareds.	Really really wants to be a Troubleshooter.
3	George-R-LWL	Rescuing a petbot from the middle of a busy motorway.	Citizen is Teela-O-MLY in disguise, researching a new role.
4	Caleb-Y-SPO	Scrubbing radiation to open a new PARC for citizens.	Undercover IntSec agent investigating series of attacks on loyal citizens.
5	Edward-O-RUP	Volunteering as a data collector surveying citizens on the street.	Team of flatmates ready to beat him up for making them look bad.
6	Graham-NLA	Waiting for a transbot to take him to work (early, of course).	Just about to be named "Loyal Citizen of the Yearcycle".
7	Aaliyah-R-PSJ	Busy sorting recycling into 17 different categories.	Part of an HPD&MC reality show; 'Undercover Nice Citizen'.
8	Kristina-SVN	Helping codgers cross a busy street.	The Computer is directly monitoring why this citizen looks so loyal.
9	Abdul-O-GIA	Cooking meals for citizens displaced by a sinkhole.	A Troubleshooter immediately recognises their Secret Society leader.
10	Terrence-Y-BKB	Tracking suspected mutants as they move about in plain sight.	'Loyal' citizen hacked their Treason Stars (looks like zero, actually has five).
11	Dev-R-XIT	Encouraging citizens to enter the local confession booth.	Best friends with the local IntSec chief superintendent.
12	Tyler-B-ONC	Helping horribly maimed Troubleshooters get medical care.	Veteran of three tours in Armed Forces duty waiting for his parade to pass by.

THE PERPINATOR

There are times in a mission when you need some random traitor to pop up. Maybe you need to distract the Troubleshooters from going where they should not go or maybe you need some treasonous and shiny perp to lead the team back onto the mission's objectives. Then again, GMs can drop these terrorists into a mission just to screw with the players. That is always recommended. Pick a traitor, what type of treason they committed and how this can work against the Troubleshooters.

Dice Roll	Name	Treason Type	How To Mess With Players
2	Sam-B-HVN	Termination without a signed form.	Has an IntSec-branded 'Get out of Trouble Free' card that looks real.
3	Hollie-G-MRM	Untreated disorder.	Also wanted for 27 murders of Red citizens.
4	Serafina-QJC	Graffiti.	Actually an undercover Blue IntSec agent.
5	Jack-Y-ATR	Kept calling his boss 'Lenny'.	High-ranking member of one Troubleshooter's Secret Society.
6	Wei-R-AGY	Rerouted a transbot that killed over a hundred citizens.	Acting as bait for a terrorist ambush against Troubleshooters.
7	Gia-O-ENP	Wasted resources.	Armed with a Yellow laser pistol and not planning on being arrested ever.
8	Faruq-R-BOQ	Abused a bot illegally.	Suicide bomber (with fake but realistic-looking explosives).
9	Megan-Y-ZPJ	Abused an Infrared citizen illegally.	Former supervisor to one Troubleshooter who always berated him.
10	Mitzi-GGT	Secret Society member.	Currently the 'Best Resource Recycler' for this sector.
11	Zayden-G-PDG	Missed production goals.	Offers two Orange laser pistols if Troubleshooters let him go.
12	Rosemarie-B-LJL	Refused prescription drugs.	Committing treason for a Violet citizen.

THE PUNISHMENTATOR

Page 150 describes the different types of punishments you can dole out to the players but that's mostly words and stuff. Roll 2d6 on this table if you need to randomly pick a way to correct bad behaviour in Troubleshooters. If that was not bad enough, roll again to see how this punishment truly messes with the players.

Dice Roll	Punishment Type	How To Mess With Players
2	Brainscrubbing	Combine two punishments in this column.
3	Public censure	A 'Treason Alert' message including a Troubleshooter's name, picture and current location is sent to everyone in the sector.
4	Termination	Have to wear a sandwich board that lists their treason in big blocky letters.
5	Forced to join Citizen Snitch Force	Get a cool tattoo on the forehead that lists the treason in one word like 'Wasteful' or 'Stupid'.
6	Coretech tag	Team Leader told to prevent future treason with this Troubleshooter 'or else'.
7	XP Point fine	Can avoid this punishment if they find a worse traitor in 10 minutes.
8	Treason Star	Another Troubleshooter shares this punishment 'as a warning to the rest of you'.
9	Confiscation of equipment	Due to treason in their midst, a Yellow-Clearance IntSec agent is sent to babysit the team
10	Termination	This is the one millionth case of treason punished; confetti, balloons and a 300 XP Point prize is awarded.
11	Demotion	To use peer pressure against recidivism, all other Troubleshooters get this punishment instead of the one in trouble.
12	Re-education	Now starring in the popular reality show 'Treasonbeaters LIVE!' and under constant surveillance.

THE SHOPINATOR

From formal mission outfitting to buying things mission outfitting should have provided and did not, these are some of the biggest shops in Alpha Complex. Even at a speciality store like Sew You Too, Troubleshooters can find just about anything the GM says is available. Roll 2d6 for the shop name and then again to determine what could possibly go wrong there.

Dice Roll	Shop Name	How To Mess With Players
2	Not Just A Factory Anymore	Everything costs 5 XP Points (because everything was stolen and IntSec will find the buyers sooner or later).
3	SupaCheepMegaDeluxMart	Kiosk offering B3 Mystery Flavour is blocking what they want.
4	Sew You Too	Whatever the Troubleshooters want, only floor samples are available (one Level lower, minimum 1).
5	That Deadly Weapon Place	Citizens are harassed (even outside the store) if they don't purchase the optional full warranty and undercoating.
6	Buy This!	Store is completely empty. No customers, no employees, just cameras.
7	'Big' Bob-Y's Buyatorium	'I'm sorry, that item is currently discontinued, out of stock and recalled.'
8	Random Stuff Mostly On Shelves	Items are cheap knockoffs that look great but literally fall apart after one use.
9	Our Convenience Stores	Upscale store that doubles XP Point costs for all items with no effect on quality.
10	Traitor's Lament Co.	Store is having a Half Price Sale, so is chockablock with citizens. Takes 15 minutes just to enter an aisle.
11	LK-774/d's Used Bots & Supply	Front for an IntSec sting operation that tries to loudly sell merchandise illegal for the shopper's Security Clearance.
12	Moving Target	Buying anything requires a membership card that costs 40 XP Points.

THE TRANSPORTINATOR

Do the Troubleshooters need to get from point A to point B? The Transportinator helps GMs randomly pick what transportation option is available. Roll 2d6 to find the transport type, then 2d6 again to figure out what is wrong with that transportation.

Dice Roll	Transport Type	How To Mess With Players
2	Jetpacks	It is part of everyone's favourite game show That Or Splat?
3	Roller skates	Currently blocked by a 'We Hate Terrorists' pre-planned spontaneous protest with around 50 citizens.
4	Flybot	There are rockets involved. Some do not point in the right direction.
5	Autobot	Packed. Super packed. Like, barely room to breathe packed.
6	Elevator	The power is out. It is dark and the transportation is not working.
7	Transbot	It is an obsolete model with faulty gauges, a stuttering engine and not enough room for the entire team.
8	Escalator	It is a brand-new model with a toxic odour, parts not installed correctly and recalled safety features.
9	Bicycles	Run by a Yellow-Clearance citizen who was assigned to this as punishment.
10	Infrared-powered rickshaw	It's crawling with researchers wanting to ask 'just a few questions' for their survey on transportation satisfaction.
11	Funicularbot	'There are no transportation units available. Your estimated wait time is ERROR VAR !DAYS NOT FOUND'.
12	Zeppelin with human crew	Project started as a hyperloop but lost funding halfway through and changed to this.

ALPHA COMPLEX'S HIGH PROGRAMMERS

The Computer endorses and approves the Celebration of these Heroic Citizens.

ADRIENN & OLIVÉR VARGA

Psychologist and media designer who teamed up to create PropagandaBook that improved loyalty in every sector.

ERIC-U-ACP
Added microscopic trackers to Cold Fun, leading to a huge increase in IntSec arrests and Cold Fun supplies.

FREDERI-U-PCH
Uncovered treason by the head of HPD&MC, executed all her clones and then selflessly volunteered to lead the service group in her absence.

TEELA-U

GREGORY-U-YLA
Replaced supply chains with supply whips, increasing productivity in Alpha Complex by 95%.

JAMES-U-BOR
Invented cryptoaccounting techniques that show how every group he has led increased profits by 700%.

LORD-U-BER
Creator of the hit video series Why Terrorists Hate Freedom (feat. Teela-O and Lenny-R) that lead to a 14% decrease in treason across the Complex.

LOUIS-U-PTR

Reduced Infrared citizen work tardiness 85% by closing transbot lines until tardiness became failure to report and those workers were executed.

MICHAEL-U-EOT

Saved millions of XP Points by reducing the amount of oxyfenerin included in pain relievers issued to supposedly 'injured' INFRAREDs.
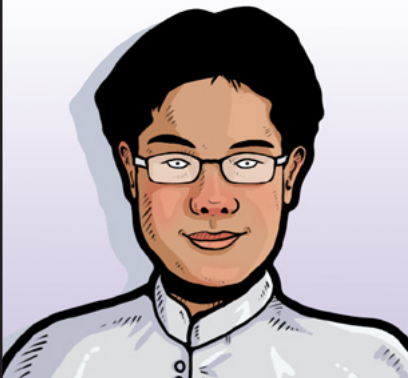
NAKAGAWAKOZI-U-TKY

Defeated an entire regiment of terrorists with just a napkin and an empty can of Hot-Fun-Inna-Can.

ORTWIN-U-MEI
Managed to reach Ultraviolet clearance despite every supervisor they've ever had (and most roommates) being filthy terrorists.

SHIRAKAWA-U-FSM
Released a nerve toxin in a subsector where every citizen retroactively turned out to be mutants.

XAVIA-U-SHA
Saved millions from autocar production costs by removing safety features unneeded by lower-Clearance citizens.

GAMEMASTERS
ARTICLES & ADVICE

ALPHA COMPLEX JOURNAL | 00002.0

Running *Paranoia* is both exhilarating and taxing. It is exhilarating because you finally get to be arbitrary and cruel! In fact, *Paranoia* frees you, the overworked GM, to discard all sorts of things like fairness, honesty, morality and the burnt-out husks of terminated Troubleshooters (but remember, please recycle!).

However, being a *Paranoia* GM can be taxing at times. Players are throwing all kinds of notes at you, there can be five concurrent secret plots against the team leader and you have to help balance the backstabbing nature of *Paranoia* with the need to avoid not-fun things like feeling picked on for real. All of that can be tough.

Which is why this section includes seven articles written expressly for helping you up your GM game.

These include:
- **What you can do instead of just executing treasonous characters all the time (and why that can be more fun).**
- **How to get players to give up the cooperative legacy of Other RPGs and play dirty.**
- **What to do when players keep calling the Computer for every little damn thing (seriously, it gets old fast).**
- **How to make *Paranoia* serious without ruining the game by getting too dark.**
- **How to manipulate players with Alpha Complex's sprawling, impressive bureaucracy.**
- **Running games as a capricious, powerful GM but without losing what makes the game fun.**
- **And a FAQ on DYNAMO, the combat system that combines cards with indiscriminate violence.**

Just keep one thing in mind at all times: *Paranoia* GMs can use the rules or not as they see fit. While you probably do not want to make things inconsistent and confusing (at least not too much), *Paranoia* lets you do what is necessary to ensure everyone is having a great time.

BAD CLONE:
ALTERNATIVES TO EXECUTION

- PART 4.0

One of the joyous things about running *Paranoia* is killing Troubleshooters. Just like with potato chips or pints of beer, having one leads to having six or more. The looks on the players' faces! The charred bodies in the briefing room! The conspiratorial nod you give that player who sent a note saying she uses her character's mental blast on the team leader! Ah, death is fun in this game.

But as with potato chips and pints, too much can lead to ruin. Believe it or not, summary execution gets boring after a while. Whether it is a formal termination from an Internal Security agent or accidental one brought on by some rival with a lucky (i.e. GM-guided) shot, it can make a player feel helpless. Worse, it makes other players feel like they do not have to backstab anymore. Why bother with a clever plan involving planted evidence and DNA samples if the GM is doling out terminations as fast as replacement clones can arrive?

WHY A GM EXECUTES A TROUBLESHOOTER

There are as many reasons to kill Troubleshooters as there are annoying players but three tend to pop up over and over again:

- **Provide some laughs:** In this game, death is funny and there are times when you need to facilitate that.
- **Move the plot along:** Troubleshooters are notorious for not following directions. If the team is wasting time tracking down red herrings or buying useless equipment, a well-placed termination for something (anything) can motivate the characters to get back to the mission.
- **Control a player:** Some *Paranoia* players get a wee bit too bloodthirsty and start shooting at anything with two legs. Others are constantly bombarding the GM with notes about using mutant powers and stuff. A well-placed termination can send a message to calm down already.

There is one reason the GM can use but should ignore: A Troubleshooter is guilty of treason so bad that letting them live makes no sense in the setting. When a player does something foolish like, 'My character tries to recruit my briefing officer into the Communists,' you can easily feel

obligated to terminate that clone. You have no such obligations. Alpha Complex is completely under your control, so you decide when a character should been executed or permitted to live a while longer. Use the non-termination as a way to induce paranoia in your players.

PLAYER: *I call the Computer and report Robbie-R for terminating an ORANGE-Clearance citizen!*
GM: *Understood. The Computer thanks you for your diligence and hangs up.*
PLAYER: *So, what's the punishment? Can I kill him now?*
GM: *There were no punishments and no termination orders, were there?*
PLAYER: *... Umm, why?*
GM: *Oh, there's a reason.*
PLAYER: *Buh – but he's a traitor! I saw him! My Coretech recorded him! You have proof!*
GM: *Thank you for your diligence in reporting, citizen. All information regarding this matter has been forwarded to Internal Security. Internal Security is watching. Are you questioning the Computer's judgement in this matter?*
PLAYER: *Of course not!*

Do not think of execution as a punishment. It's a tool for the GM to help craft a fun *Paranoia* gaming experience. However, there are other tools that can bring laughs, direction and control just as well.

FIG.1: THE TOOLS OF EXECUTION.

LESS-VIOLENT (BUT FUN) OPTIONS

Here are some alternative tools you can use in place of executions.

- **Coretech Tag:** All citizens can see 1-3 keywords floating above the Troubleshooter's head. Think of these tags as a modern version of the Scarlet Letter. As the Troubleshooter moves through Alpha Complex, have some random citizens harass the character about it. Making those citizens higher Clearance is not required but fun. Any rolls to work a crowd or talk to an NPC will have a higher difficulty.

- **XP Point Fines:** Quick and easy, the GM can always deduct XP Points to cover costs related to a Troubleshooter's action or as way to punish behaviour.

- **Demotion:** There is nothing saying all Troubleshooters have to be RED Clearance. If a given act is particularly heinous to the Computer, or if the Troubleshooter managed to annoy someone with power, getting demoted to INFRARED is definitely an option. That goes double if the Troubleshooter is the team leader.

- **Public Contrition:** This is a more intense (but easier for a GM to remember) version of a Coretech tag. The Troubleshooter is brought to where citizens gather such as a public square or shopping mall. The other Troubleshooters announce his treason and ask citizens to openly, loudly and even violently admonish their teammate. Throwing cans of B3 is common. Some are even empty.

- **Confiscation:** If a Troubleshooter was doing something treasonous with a piece of equipment, taking that away is a quick and efficient method of ending that problem. Be sure to grab the card from the player. Confiscated gear can be sold to make up for costs incurred by that Troubleshooter but consider re-assigning it to another Troubleshooter. Nothing breeds internecine warfare quite like seeing something shiny that you used to own now owned by another.

- **Punishment Duties:** Come up with a suitably menial bonus assignment for the wayward citizen, like 'Hydration Assistant', responsible for ensuring that all Troubleshooters have a nice can of B3 to hand at all times, 'Boot Maintenance and Cleaning', 'Designated Driver', 'Designated Target Practice' or 'Cheery Happiness Song Singer'. If you are stuck, ask the teammates for suggestions. If the Troubleshooter misses an opportunity to perform this bonus assignment, hit them with an XP Point penalty.

- **Brainscrubbing:** There are times when it is best (or at least cost-efficient) to wipe a mind clean and start with just the basics. Brainscrubbing is like a factory reset for a clone; the mind is not completely wiped but all memories of the mission so far are deleted. This erases all Treason Stars and resets Moxie! However, it also reduces Brains and Chutzpah by -1 as brainscrubbing is not a precise treatment (both stats return to normal once the clone dies).
- **Re-Education:** If the Computer feels a Troubleshooter was led astray by ignorance or wrong thought, then it is time for a highly intensive re-education session. These are usually done through the Cerebral Coretech and can be finished in minutes. Whatever treason the Troubleshooter was caught doing is now a powerful phobia (if the treason was littering, the character freaks out when they see littering).
- **Citizen Snitch Force:** Treason is rarely done all alone, so the Computer might want the Troubleshooter to snitch on his teammates. The deal is this: One Treason Star is deleted for each Troubleshooter they turn in with evidence of treason. Plus he gets to keep on living. Not a bad deal for an informant.

BE FUN, NOT NOT-FUN

As it says in the *Gamemasters Handbook* on page 102, the GM is not there to be a dick. When someone assumes the mantle of a *Paranoia* GM, the power to kill characters is tempting and easily abused. To help reign that in, a GM should be prepared to use alternatives to execution. Fines, tags, scoldings and more to help everyone enjoy the game – because if their character is dead, they're not playing.

Besides, executions are over in seconds. Don't you want the Troubleshooter to enjoy their consequences?

HOW TO PLAY NICE (BUT DIRTY)

- PART 4.1

Alpha Complex is a rich and interconnected community. Every citizen has their role to play and does it to the best of their ability while committing as little treason as possible (Yeah, riiiight). At the least, they work together in the face of rampant rule-breaking and endemic incompetence to keep from dying or worse, being demoted back to Infrared Clearance. Teamwork, it is said, makes the dream work, which is why Alpha Complex operates at all.

Unfortunately, sometimes players operate with a hair too much precision. Old gaming habits die hard and you can easily find a Troubleshooter team cooperating and helping each other instead of backstabbing and betraying. It is part of the *Paranoia* GM's job to ensure that players are able and willing to stab one another in the back.

In other RPGs, a party of adventurers can be heroic friends. But the citizens of Alpha Complex are not friends. Success comes from betraying your teammates before they have a chance to betray you. When the players are too pleasant, it is your job to convince them to throw one another under the bus, or off of the bus, or through a window, or into a recycling thresher, or really just anywhere the corpse-to-be would not want to get thrown.

FIG.2: WHEN THINGS GET DIRTY, USE CAUXIC.

DRIVE A WEDGE BETWEEN PLAYERS

Players may believe, just because they are all working together for a common objective, that they are a team. That's not going to do at all; the GM must disrupt that sense of comradery with resentment, distrust, abuse of power and the urge to pull equipment off of other characters' smouldering corpses. The process of character creation should have started to drive a wedge between players because they more or less ruined one another's characters. Here are some techniques to drive that wedge a little deeper.

- **Reward Betrayal:** This is the simplest technique. When a player tries to backstab another Player Character, give them the benefit of the doubt. Let treachery succeed! To the victor go the spoils! Be gleefully unfair – and when the other players complain, point out that they, too, can betray their team-mates for fun and profit.

- **Create a Scapegoat.** The Computer (or some other force) can demand that the party nominate one of their own to receive an individual punishment for the group's failings. The more arduous the punishment, the better. This makes two members of the team highly visible: the loser, and whomever was first to point a finger at that loser. For best results, give the player who pointed their finger an outsized reward.

- **Foster Jealousy.** Giving one player the exciting and nearly-functional firearm from R&D is a good start but the GM has all of the resources of Alpha Complex: XP Points, advanced Coretech packages, a passel of extra clones, a personal robot assistant or anything else that a character can have and another would want. The GM can figure out what would be most useful, fun or exciting for a character and then give it to the character on that player's left.

- **Introduce Power Disparity.** Nothing unbalances a group dynamic more than making one player significantly more powerful than the others. An Orange-Clearance citizen has the authority to order around the Reds that surround him because he is an objectively superior citizen. He also has a target on his back, especially if he's been ordering around the other players.

- **Give Irreconcilable Objectives.** If characters are too good at working together, the GM can make this it impossible. For instance, have two players receive a message from their Secret Societies, one learning that that citizen Rex-R-GAM is a danger who needs to be executed immediately and the other learning that that Rex-R-GAM is a valuable source of intel that must be protected at all costs. A simple mismatch of priorities that puts characters directly at odds. Secret Societies are perfect for this.

- **Remove the Social Consequences.** The Cerebral Coretech allows characters to communicate silently, removing the social consequences of turning on their friends. The GM can ask the entire group if they'd like to name a potential traitor and then have everyone send a message, pass a note or just glance sneakily at the person they want to turn in. With the waters sufficiently muddied, a player who gets stabbed in the back will not know who did it. That grows mistrust and paranoia between players.

- **Create Explicit Opportunities.** To encourage in-fighting, the GM can engineer situations where everyone is explicitly set against one another. For instance, reveal during the briefing that there is an Efficiency Enhancement Bonus: The first Troubleshooter to get out the door gets 200 XP Points. A specific action for a specific (and singular) reward will encourage players to start working against one another.

- **Imply Teammate Culpability.** For a huge burst of inevitable discord, the GM chooses a character at random to be executed. Then another character gets a Loyalty Bonus from Friend Computer, in the form of, say, 200 XP Points and a firm-voiced 'Great Job!' No explanation is provided; the players are free to draw their own conclusions.

These are things to do sparingly; do not tear the team apart entirely! Instead, use a wedge-driving tactic when a group is working together too well. In an ideal situation, these wedges are self-perpetuating: resentment leads to payback leads to misaimed payback leads to a battle for dominance and so on. The chaos should stem primarily from the players, which is exactly what makes *Paranoia* a darkly humorous RPG.

DEALING WITH PROBLEM PLAYERS

Troubleshooters are a team with missions to complete (or undermine and blame someone else). Sometimes, problems come in the form of a player whose animosity is standing in the way of the group accomplishing basic tasks. In these cases, the GM may need to step in and gently force players to get along instead of fostering internecine conflict.

The most important question for the GM to ask is, 'Are all the players (including me) still having fun?' If so, the GM can employ subtle, in-game methods to tone down the chaos, depending on kinds of players are creating problems.

- **The Miscreant** is a player who is backstabbing even when it does not make sense. This player is a little too into being mean and untrustworthy, so the GM can have the Computer de-fang the character. His laser gun can be replaced a Non-Functional Safety Substitute. It's a gentle way to say 'Hey, you've been going a bit too far'.

- **The Gun-Shy** is a player who is doing everything in his power to avoid getting hurt, most likely because he's used to games in which death is bad. The GM needs to kill this character in an unavoidable but not punitive way. Emphasise the fun found in being killed in *Paranoia*; you get to be the centre of attention with a dramatic, hilarious and brutally unfair demise.

- **The Do-Gooder** is a player who gets too into the role of an obedient clone and refuses to even allow a hint of treason without reporting it. He needs to be dragged through the dirt to re-enforce the idea that the rules are self-contradictory and impossible to obey. Force her to commit treason with a Catch-22; perhaps a Violet citizen is in danger in a Violet sector: Going there is treason, but so is refusing to help one's superior. It is a reminder that the rules are impossible and surviving in Alpha Complex means choosing when to break rules. Alternatively, let the player be a good guy and watch as they meet a tragic and cruel termination after being scapegoated by every other Troubelshooter..

- **The Resentful** is a player who thinks anyone playing dirty successfully is evidence he is being treated unfairly. A one-on-one conversation can make sure his concerns are heard and that often helps. That said, this player may be mollified if given an opportunity to spread some pain. It is a small thing but it means that, should he feel that someone else is getting treated too well, he can even the score.

Above all, remember that a *Paranoia* GM has incredible power to change rules whenever needed. Use that in a blatant but effective operant conditioning to encourage playing dirty. Early on, reward shenanigans and backstabbing with success. Then punish boring, safe play. Eventually, the players will catch on and you'll be fielding secret notes of death in no time.

That is when you start making them fail. Hey, no one said the GM cannot play dirty as well.

WHEN THEY KEEP
CALLING THE COMPUTER
- PART 4.2

Players who are new to *Paranoia* often make the mistake of having their character contact the Computer directly at every available opportunity. As a *Paranoia* GM, your job is to make these interactions as unhelpful, frustrating and fundamentally counterproductive as possible. Sooner or later, most players learn from their mistakes and avoid contacting Friend Computer unless they have a seriously compelling need to do so. The *Troubleshooters Survival Handbook* even contains an article titled *Why Calling the Computer is a Bad Idea* – fairly unsubtle as hints go, right?

What is a GM to do with a player who, despite a pattern of negative consequences, continues to call the Computer over and over again? although running *Paranoia* means giving players enough rope to hang themselves, sometimes circumstances require that you reclaim possession of the (metaphorical) rope and use it to deliver a merciless (again, metaphorical) flogging. Here are a few examples of how repeated calls to the Computer can go terribly, terribly wrong for a player so you can GM your game in peace.

- **Relax or Else:** *'Citizen, calling often is a sign you are in extreme stress. Please standby as your Cerebral Coretech downloads a Soothing Surroundings playlist that will bypass your organic audio/ image receptors until your stress levels have returned to nominal.'* This Troubleshooter is suddenly rendered effectively blind and deaf as his senses are overwhelmed with a series of 'relaxing' images and sounds. He loses a point of Moxie this round and each subsequent round until he makes a successful Chutzpah + Psychology check to calm himself down, at which point his vision and hearing will return to normal.

- ***Speakerphone:*** Conversations between characters and the Computer are usually conducted privately between a player and the GM. However, the Computer may at any moment choose to make the conversation public. Like, really public: blasting through a nearby intercom at maximum volume. When considering when to make a secret conversation public, let the phrase 'worst possible moment' be your guide.

- **Wrong Number:** '*Thank you for contacting the Treason Self-Confession Hotline. The Computer is experiencing an unusually high volume of reports at this time. Your treason is important to us. All traitors will be eliminated in the order they were reported.*' The character who called the Computer suddenly notices a blinking number in his in-eye display. Other Player Characters also see the number displayed above the Troubleshooter's head. When it reaches zero, the Computer activates a Coretech self-destruct sequence that causes the character's head to explode. Players can make a Mechanics + Bureaucracy roll to attempt to withdraw the 'report' from the system. Any character in proximity to the explosion suffers two wound levels of damage, unless they can dive into cover. Reduce damage by one level per success on a Violence + Athletics roll.

- **Slowplay:** Just because a player sends the Computer a lot of messages does not mean the Computer will respond to them immediately. Or at all. Delay your responses. Respond to overly verbose and distracting messages with terse, noncommittal replies: '*OK.*' '*What?*' '*Thank you.*' '*Acknowledged.*' Maybe players get the message, maybe they do not. Either way, you will waste less time dealing with them.

- **Body Double:** '*Congratulations, citizen! You have been selected to participate in a User Experience Survey. To assure full survey engagement, control of your basic motor functions has been rerouted until completion of this survey.*' The Troubleshooter can still talk but all of their other body functions are now controlled by a randomly (or spitefully!) chosen member of his team. The chosen character is now one mind controlling two bodies simultaneously; he suffers sudden and extreme disorientation, losing a point of Moxie and suffering a NODE -2 penalty to any rolls. The controlled player may attempt a Brains + Alpha Complex roll to try to speed their way through the survey. Successes will shorten the survey, failure resets the survey to the beginning.

When used judiciously, direct communication with the Computer is another way for players to employ sneaky tactics or create entertaining mayhem. However, as GM, if you feel like this communication is slowing down the game or distracting players from actually interacting with each other, feel free to shut it down. Whenever not-fun creeps into your game, it is both your right and privilege to crush it with an iron fist.

PLAYING MORE SERIOUSLY WITHOUT GETTING SERIOUS

- PART 4.3

Most roleplaying games offer escape by presenting their players with a world that they are able to master. *Paranoia*, by contrast, can offer catharsis by presenting its players with a world they will never have any hope of controlling in the least. It is about knowing that you are going down and choosing to have fun on the way.

On the surface, that can seem very serious. You play in a bleak, dystopian setting running out of resources and ruled by an insane tyrant. But below that, the game is full of satire and humour. *Paranoia* has always been the roleplaying game of a darkly humorous future and it works best when it remains true to both the 'darkness' and the 'humour'.

The GM needs to maintain a balance between dark and funny. You don't want to create genuine anxiety or distress for anyone but neither do you want the game to descend immediately into ridiculous slapstick or pastiche. How exactly can the GM do that?

SAFE SPACES IN AN UNSAFE ALPHA COMPLEX

First, make sure everyone playing the game is on the same page about the tone. Even if you know everyone well, it is worth taking a few minutes to address this issue explicitly.

One player might really be looking forward to a few hours immersed in the rules and perils of this dystopian society, while another just wants to shoot everything that moves until someone takes out his last clone. If they both go into your game without understanding what the other is looking for, they are likely to get upset with each other. When players understand what other players want from playing the game, they tend to work together and find an acceptable middle ground where things can be serious but enjoyable.

Similarly, it's important to know if there is anything that would genuinely upset or distress any players. *Paranoia* is a game that embraces violence, mental disorders and betrayal that other RPGs avoid. Players frequently come up with tactics that are shocking, bizarre and cruel ('*the floor is Blue Clearance and I'm only Red? No problem! I kill Infrareds until their blood covers the floor, thereby making it Red Clearance!*' Note: This is not how Security Clearances work). You do not want anyone taking it personally or becoming physically ill!

If you are not entirely sure how your serious your players want the game session to become, establish a 'time-out' mechanism with the group so that anyone can pause the gameplay if they are too uncomfortable with something that's happening. Always remember: The GM is there to help everyone have a good time.

TOPICAL APPLICATIONS AND STICKY WICKETS

Second, you should be careful about using modern-day politics and situations. Like all science fiction, *Paranoia* is at its best when it throws light on the present day by taking things we already experience and extrapolates them to some far-flung (and often ludicrous) endpoint. The more serious the real-world aspect, the more seriousness it will bring to your game – but the more carefully you will need to balance that seriousness with humour.

Take a common theme in **Paranoia**: Authoritarianism. There is no doubt that Alpha Complex is the textbook definition of an evil, inhumane totalitarian state. The GM should definitely satirise this! Find examples of real-world authoritarianism creeping into your lives and build a *Paranoia* mission around that. Just make sure to include humour so it does not feel too serious. Secret police surveillance needs to be balanced with jokes making fun of the secret police.

Some real-world problems are moot in Alpha Complex. Issues involving sexuality, gender and the like are not going to work in *Paranoia* because none of that matters. There is no need to include a scene about gay rights unless you are satirising something as a metaphor for gay rights. If the game's setting avoids a serious topic, so should you.

When it comes to topical and political issues, the best advice is to always punch up. Sure, you can make fun of the drugged Infrared proles; that is often a great vehicle for satirising how society treats the poor and downtrodden and you can use something that serious to have fun in your game. That said, you can better avoid being too serious by mocking the rich and powerful instead. People wince when you mock a pregnant unwed mother because that makes the game too serious; people cheer when you mock a fat, wealthy landlord cheating on his wife.

ON THE SUBJECT OF MASS MURDER

Paranoia has a very casual attitude towards violence. You can build a scene where a thousand Infrared citizens march to their death like lemmings and your players can laugh at it. The third point to being serious but not too serious is to balance your descriptions of violence.

You do not want to make death into a cartoonish thing every time because that saps the seriousness of the tone but you also do not want the real horror of death to come into play. Look at these three GM sentences:

- '*The docbot removes your arm. You are Maimed.*'
- '*The docbot slices through your arm with a chainsaw, leaving you armless, Maimed and wondering why docbots are even a thing.*'
- '*The docbot slices through the skin and muscle tissue, blood shooting up against the walls until the chainsaw hits bone and breaks it. Your lifeless arm hits the floor with a sickening, wet noise. You are Maimed and the intense pain makes you cry and beg for help.*'

The first sentence is acceptable but dull. The third is technically serious but so overly gory that it loses its seriousness to exploitation. In true Goldilocks tradition, the middle sentence is just right because it is descriptive without being needlessly violent.

Apply the same filter to violence on a larger scale such as dealing with a sector's population. Violence in Paranoia is a tool to help make the game fun, so you need to balance between being descriptive with being vague.

WHEN THINGS GO STOOGE-Y

If you have never watched a Three Stooges short, search for one online and give it some of your time. These vaudevillian actors are a perfect example of being very funny but not serious at all. People like and hate the Three Stooges because this type of comedy is an extreme. The farther you go in one direction, the more people you lose.

That is why the GM needs to prevent *Paranoia* game sessions from getting too 'stooge-y' as well as too serious. Of course, this is your game and you should do what works at the table. But consider avoiding zany hijinks that make things too silly. Use them like hot peppers. Adding a few makes for a great change in flavour; adding too much means only a few people really like it. Working within known physics is a great rule.

DON'T BE PERFECT BUT TRY

If you want your *Paranoia* games to be more serious without losing what makes it fun, start by talking to your players about topics or ideas that are too humourless for them. Satirise real-world serious topics so laughter can soften their impact. Strike a middle ground for describing violence and while some silliness is all but inevitable, reign in any extremely foolish scenes. This way, your games can be serious but fun at the same time.

USING BUREAUCRACY
TO CONTROL THE MISSION
- PART 4.4

When running a game of *Paranoia*, the GM has to contend with some of the most unpredictable, dangerous and cantankerous creatures that are not cats: players. No matter how close you are to these people, they tend to run wild once released from the constraints of playing nice. That means the GM will need tools to control players so they do not waste three hours of game time arguing in the briefing room.

For many GMs, that means sending in the troops. Internal Security is an old favourite; send in a few Blue Clearance goons to crack some Troubleshooter skulls and the team suddenly remembers to get moving. But *Paranoia* offers a less glamorous but often more enjoyable means of controlling the mission: Bureaucracy.

ONE FORM TO RULE THEM ALL

Alpha Complex is a bureaucrat's dream. The service group Central Processing Unit (CPU) is rightfully infamous for red tape but every group has its own bureaucratic nightmares. What makes this all worse is how the Computer awards promotions to management roles. It all comes down to trust.

Merit or ability are not as important as how much the Computer can trust the citizen – and this trust typically comes down to bootlicking and undeserved praise for those authorising any promotion. Despite Kenzie-Y having created a recycling system that produced 25% more resources for a starving Alpha Complex, Brandon-Y gets the promotion to Green Clearance because he blindly supported their supervisor and is therefore seen as more trustworthy.

That means people in Alpha Complex management are incompetent, good at shifting blame and paranoid that someone will realise they got promoted far past their own Peter Principle. Paperwork is not generated to be helpful or inform; it is made to protect management. That's why Alpha Complex has dizzying levels of bureaucracy.

THINGS TO DO WITH BUREAUCRACY

Why force your players to apply for permission slips and fill out forms, other than chits and squiggles? Forms have some really useful properties you may want to exploit.

- **They're Immersive:** Handouts and physical props are right there in the player's hands. There is no intermediary between the player and Alpha Complex – no GM, no rules, just the player's shaking hands and the sweat-stained paper. It is just like really being trapped in an underground madhouse run by an insane and murderous Computer who will kill you if you tick the wrong box – and that is fun, right?

- **Paper Death Traps:** Just think of forms as minefields. Fail to fill out a form properly and it is termination time. Seed your forms with all sorts of Catch-22 questions and ambiguous demands.

  > Q27: [QUESTION REDACTED]:
  > Q28. Have you completed this form completely?
  > YES/NO. If NO, explain your failings.

- **A Time for Blame:** Forms are a great place to ask players to backstab each other. Please state which of your teammates is a traitor. Justify your answer. Provide evidence.

- **Delaying Tactics:** If you need a few minutes to think or a quick bathroom break (and experienced GMs know the two are the same thing), then just bombard your players with forms and have them complete the paperwork while you are out of the room. Tell the players that they are not to confer or collude in their answers. When you come back, wait for the snitches and accusations to start.

- **Team Busywork:** Form-filling time is a great opportunity for some one-on-one chats with players. While the rest of the players are entertained with their paperwork, take one player out of the room and into a conveniently located confession booth.
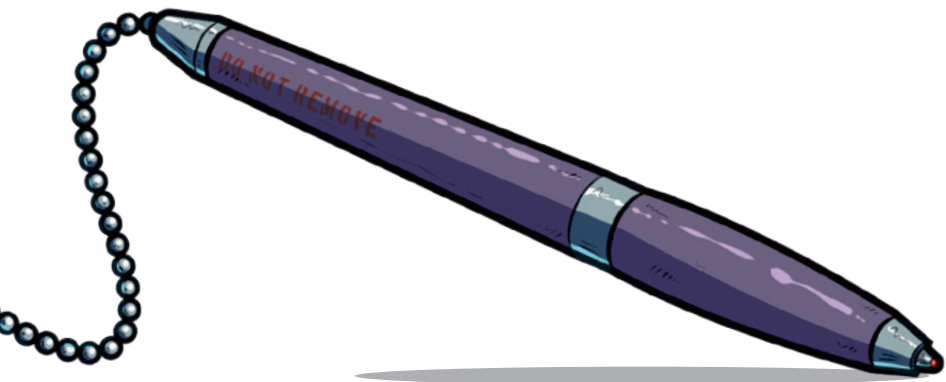
FIG.3: THE MIGHTIEST WEAPON.

RED TAPE (AND OTHER CLEARANCES, TOO)

Here are some specific pieces of paperwork (real and/or digital) that GMs can use to control what's going on.

- **Arrest Warrants:** Does a Troubleshooter want to arrest a citizen (or teammate) guilty of treason? First, why are they not shooting to kill? If you need that character free to scamper around the sector, Friend Computer can politely ask if the Troubleshooter has an official arrest warrant with that citizen's full name, the Troubleshooter's name and a signature from a citizen Yellow Clearance or higher. Arresting someone without a warrant is itself a crime. Have fun reminding the player about that.

- **Clearance Brevets:** It can be fun to throw higher-Clearance areas at the Troubleshooters, especially when they need to be in that space. A Clearance brevet is a temporary and limited Security Clearance upgrade. If you need the team to reach the briefing room, offer some brevets to whatever Clearance they need. Then take 'em away when they want to leave.

- **Interior Renovation Permits:** Troubleshooters are infamous for causing collateral damage when shooting at (and missing) terrorists. Any changes to Alpha Complex's structure (like fragging a cafeteria) requires an Interior Renovation Permit signed by as many citizens needed to make it impossible to get.

- **Mission Alerts:** Many times, a PLC outfitting supervisor or R&D boffin will not help without seeing the mission alert proving these motley Red-Clearance citizens really are Troubleshooters. Did they throw it away after they reached the briefing room? Shame.

- **PLC Vouchers:** Do the players need gear for their mission? Did they get the correct PLC vouchers from their briefing officer clearing them to get said gear? Again, shame.

- **Termination Vouchers:** The classic piece of *Paranoia* bureaucracy! Before a Troubleshooter can legally terminate anyone, they might need a termination voucher giving them authorisation for said termination. Why 'might'? That lets the GM decide whether to require one or not.

- **Travel Visas:** What authoritarian regime worth its general's huge epaulets and medals would allow its citizens to travel freely? You can control the team by requiring travel visas to go from sector to sector, subsector to other subsector or just to leave their dormitory.

NOT JUST PAPERWORK ANYMORE

With a bureaucracy as insipid yet brilliant like this, forms are just one part of the puzzle. You can use red tape to control your players with some non-paperwork options like these.

- **Delays and Supply Problems:** You can limit what hijinks the Troubleshooters get into by limiting the supply of anything they need. That definitely includes equipment from PLC but also includes transportation ('Sorry, the transbot is closed due to irregularly scheduled maintenance'), crowd control ('Break time! Can everyone rioting please wait for 30 minutes!') and even the forms needed to get past the bureaucracy ('Site under construction. Pardon our dust!').

- **Mandates:** These are the laws, codes and regulations that regulate life in Alpha Complex. If the Troubleshooters need to be gently pushed towards or away from something, bring up a mandate that limits their choices. Do the players want their characters going to the Outside when you know that would be un-fun and too distracting? Create a mandate on the fly making that illegal. 'IntSec mandate 500.94/f clearly states Troubleshooters may not visit the Outside because it does not exist.'

- **Security Clearances:** *Paranoia* GMs know the power of this fully armed and operational Security Clearance system. It is a part of the Alpha Complex bureaucracy, so never fear using this to limit how much time your players waste in a mission. 'You want to visit the nearest gun store? Gun*Mart is open but you must be Yellow clearance or higher to shop there.'

WHAT BUREAUCRACY IS NOT MEANT FOR

Yes, yes. Looking at all this red tape is making your mouth water. Your players are doomed! Before throwing a mountain of paperwork at the team, it is worth noting that bureaucracy has its limits.

For example, do not use paperwork all the time. Suddenly realising you have to apply for a travel visa just to start your mission is amusing; needing a travel visa, then a PLC voucher, then an arrest warrant and then a termination voucher? That drives the joke into the ground so it is not amusing anymore. Use bureaucracy in short, controlled bursts so it keeps on the funny side of annoying. One or two forms per mission, tops.

Likewise, if you require paperwork and similar bureaucratic run-arounds, give the players a break and let them be successful once they have completed everything in triplicate. Otherwise, you are not providing difficult tasks as much as you are being a dick.

Believe it or not, you can even use bureaucracy to help players when they get stuck. Is getting that travel visa dragging the mission down? Have the CPU site crash and give players a temporary visa good for immediate travel. After all, the GM should not always use the stick. Give the players the occasional carrot (not literally, that would be weird even for this game) so they never know when you will bring the pain – or the paperwork.

PLEASE PRESENT YOUR RED TAPE PERMIT.

BEING CAPRICIOUS WHILE KEEPING THINGS FUN

- PART 4.5

Being a GM for *Paranoia* is an exercise in restrained cruelty and this game gives you total and absolute control over the game in ways that make GMs for other RPGs weep in envy. It is no secret that a certain body count is to be expected. Otherwise why would players get multiple clones at the start of the campaign? Sometimes, losing a clone is just par for the course. Losing all your clones? Possibly a sub-par experience.

The same is true for bureaucratic messes, IntSec checkpoints and all the ways players keep failing. How do you do it? How do you keep the bodies hitting the floor, the stakes of the adventure high and the *Paranoia* at a fever-pitch without making the whole experience a stress-filled hellride for the players?

FINDING THE FUNNY

Paranoia is a darkly humorous game but you can help players enjoy what is normally frustrating in other RPGs by finding humour in the Catch-22's. Keep in mind: finding the funny does not mean trying very hard for the funny. If you spend a lot of time and energy setting up one big joke, you are liable to miss half a dozen opportunities to be spontaneously hilarious. Worrying about jokes or intentional punch lines can take you out of the moment and make the whole exercise less fun for everyone involved.

Finding the funny is about being in the moment – letting the dots connect themselves until something hilarious happens. For *Paranoia*, this tends to happen naturally. There is no need to try and force comedy; it is a built-in feature of the game. Instead, be willing to improvise and make jokes as situations unfold. You do not have to be a trained improv comedian for this! You just need to be in the moment.

You also have to be careful not to mix jokes with harassment. That is true for any situation but especially true for *Paranoia* because the humour is dark. Killing a Troubleshooter with an out-of-control Cold Fun Van (with extra twinkly music) sounds fun but if that player has already been targeted by the other players repeatedly, they will see it as unfair instead of funny.

As with playing more seriously, it helps to punch up. Use your imperious GM power to make funny things happen to those with power, clout or good luck. Bad stuff happening to a character who has had an otherwise good day is infinitely more amusing than bad stuff happening to a character who is already downtrodden.

LEVEL THE PLAYING FIELD

Every now and again, one player masters *Paranoia* better than the others and manages to keep framing the other Troubleshooters for his treason. Or luck seems to hate one player, making every roll fail spectacularly over and over again. When one person is doing measurably better or worse than the others, this can be perceived as the GM failing at his job. It is time to fiddle with this.

Remember that a *Paranoia* GM can fold, spindle and mutilate the rules liberally and capriciously. Why? Because that fits the *Paranoia* theme. The Computer and its minions do the same in Alpha Complex. You can use this power to level the playing field and ensure everyone is having a good time.

Is Player A unscathed and rolling like mad? Good for him! Now, throw some roadblocks in his way to see how he handles a higher difficulty. Not only can it test his creativity, it helps the other players feel more confident and ready to take his Troubleshooter down. Is Player B leaving the briefing room on his fifth clone? Give him a break and focus your murderous rage on the other Troubleshooters. A good idea is to keep an eye on clone numbers. You should not try to keep them even, but give math a hand in regressing to the mean by having NPCs target Troubleshooters with lower clone numbers.

FIG.4: THE LUCKY K@TBOT.

Do not go too far and painfully homogenise problems and deaths so everyone experiences the same thing. If a player keeps making stupid choices, then the player needs to face the IntSec-related consequences until behavioural conditioning finally comes into play. But remember this is a game and games should be fun.

Keep things moving and keep them dynamic. Keep shuffling who has what luck and how much. Do this even if you have to fudge a little – you get to do that! That is part of the reason you get to go diceless while your players are at the mercy of a bunch of inanimate six-sided decision engines. Your decision-making potential is limitless. Be cruel and unpredictable. Hell, be downright erratic, fickle and arbitrary! Just remember you are responsible for everyone's fun, at least to some degree. That means being temperamental on the surface but crafty and manipulative (in a good way) down below by levelling the playing field.

READ THE TABLE

The other key factor is remembering the difference between heaping cruelty onto a character and heaping cruelty onto a player. Abusing fictional clones is delightful and should be done regularly – that is the *Paranoia* way! But what happens if a player feels unjustly targeted all the time?

As the GM, you need to read the mood of the players at the table (or online). Pay attention to their facial expressions. Are they looking excited or annoyed? Are they furiously writing notes or playing on their phones? Do they just go for safe and dull actions or do they spice things up? Use these data points to alter your game. For example, if one player looks annoyed and is not doing a whole lot, give that Troubleshooter an unexpected boon like a powerful weapon from their Secret Society or actual power over the 'winning' Troubleshooter.

It is impossible to know exactly how capricious and devilish you can get without antagonising players. This changes from person to person, never mind how one person's capacity for handling failure in a game can change from hour-to-hour. However, you can use the awesome power handed to GMs in this game to do more than just screw with the players. Pick your targets carefully, keep things funny and react to how the players are enjoying the game.

DYNAMO FAQ

- PART 4.6

In the *Players Handbook* found in the original box set, the combat rules known as DYNAMO are covered on pg. 37-48. The Dynamic Yet Narrative Action Melee Order system is new, so some players have had difficulty grokking the system. Since they inevitably force the GM to explain things, here are a few pointers on how DYNAMO and combat works in *Paranoia*.

Remember that *Paranoia* GMs can change the rules whenever they get in the way of having fun. In other words, you can stick with these 'official' clarifications or do whatever the hell you want and ignore all this hard work (fine, it was not that hard).

WHO GOES WHEN

Why would a player want to lie about their Action Order number? What's the point of bluffing?

Because going first means your action happens first. If you think Player A is going to shoot your character, you can shoot them first and maybe kill them (or get them to play a needed Action card) by acting before them. If you have no card that lets you go earlier, lying to go earlier is the next best thing. Plus, it is undoubtedly clever and devious.

What happens if two players say they go at the same Action Order number?

The player who speaks the other character's full name (like 'Roy-G-BIV') goes first. Once that combat action is resolved, the other player goes next. Then return to the Action Order numbers and keep counting down. That will teach them not to learn each other's names.

Does the Violence rating affect when you can go? Does Violence 4 go before Violence 1?

Nope. In fact, stat and skill ratings are not used to determine who goes when – with the noticeable exception of Equipment cards that list the Action Order as something like 'Violence +2'. Besides, an attack might not even use the Violence stat. No, really. See below.

What counts as a basic action?

Typically, this means shooting the trusty ol' laser pistol. However, consider the word 'basic'. Any action that is dull, predictable or typical (like a Troubleshooter shooting at someone, oh my, what a strange and unpredictable thing that is) is a basic action that goes at Action Order 0. Since going earlier can literally save your character's life, this is meant to discourage boring play like 'I shoot the terrorist' and encourage using fun cards instead.

If two or more players go at Action Order 0, who goes first?

They all go at the same time. Not literally, of course. But all actions at 0 happen simultaneously. Unlike going earlier, waiting for Action Order 0 means you cannot terminate that traitorous bastard before they can terminate you.

FUN WITH DICE AND CARDS

What happens if a player does not play a card face-down before the GM counts down from five?

Then the player gets to enjoy not doing a damn thing. Normally, you never want to take a player out of the game like this but c'mon! If he cannot pick a card from his hand before time is up, then he deserves to sit on his hands.

Is the Computer Symbol on the Computer Dice a success or a failure?

It counts as a success. If you rolled five dice and got 2, 2, 4, 5 and the Computer Symbol, then you have 2 successes. Facing Friend Computer's sudden and searing attention is bad enough; give the poor sod a success.

Does shooting always mean rolling Violence + Guns?

Not at all. This is completely up to the GM to decide what is appropriate. Shooting quickly from the hip could use Violence + Athletics. Pretending to be peaceful and then shooting the sucker in the face might require Chutzpah + Guns. GMs should watch players for signs they really want to roll Violence + Guns then come up with a semi-plausible reason to use different stats/skills. That teaches players to never get comfy.

Do Equipment Cards get discarded after being used in combat like Action Cards do?

No. Action cards are discarded because the action has been taken. It is literally over, so the card goes bye-bye. Equipment can be used over and over again, so after being used in combat, it goes back in the player's hand.

How often should players get new cards?

That's up to the GM but a good guideline is bringing players back up to 4 Action cards once the scene is over. You want players to have cards so they can mess with each other but you want to make in-combat choices to mean something.

BRINGING THE PAIN

What happens when a character takes a damage level lower than his current level?

You fill out the next highest open wound square. If you are Maimed and a grazing shot gives you a Hurt, then you are deadsies for real.

What happens when a character takes a damage level higher than his unmarked squares?

In other words, what happens if you are totally healthy and suddenly take a Maimed damage level? Then you fill in Hurt, Injured and Maimed. Next time, do not be so treasonously easy to shoot.

How do you know if you caused damage with your hit?

You need to roll at least 1 success more than the difficulty *and* any defence rating or armour level. If the Commie has level 1 armour and you set the difficulty at 1, then a player would need to roll 3 successes to cause damage: 1 success is negated by the armour and 1 more is negated by the difficulty rating, leaving 1 success to cause a single damage level. This makes it harder to damage targets using basic actions. In turn, that encourages players to be creative, play Action cards, use Mutant Powers and all that.

NPCS IN COMBAT

What Action Order number do NPCs get?

Unless otherwise indicated in the mission text, NPCs go whenever the GM says so. Because GMs don't roll for NPCs, their actions are really reactions to what players do. If a player attacks an NPC and screws it up, guess who gets to go right there and then? That said, GMs can also set particular Action Order numbers for specific NPCs based on their strengths, weakness or how fun it would be to have them go before the Troubleshooters.

If the GM doesn't roll dice, how do you know if an NPC hit a Troubleshooter?

That is up to the GM but that does not answer the question, does it? Think of NPC attacks as the price of player failure. If a player tries to shoot a guardbot and gets no successes, guess what? Mr. I Hate Bots just took 1 damage level from that guardbot's built-in laser pistol module. No roll is needed because this is Paranoia.

Can players play Action cards with the reaction symbol to mess with NPC attacks?

Oh yes. This is awesome because it sucks away Action cards, putting their character at a higher risk for combat-related conditions like death.

LOCATION
GM USE INDEX

To help GMs better use locations in Alpha Complex, the Underplex or the Outside, here is a codified, standardised list of how locations can be used in a game. For example, what should a GM do if the players are forgetting about using Moxie? Plug a location with the 'Bleed Moxie' use into the mission. Nothing helps player remember resources like taking them away.

Back on Track: Are the Troubleshooters chasing every shiny object in Alpha Complex? These locations give a gentle (or violent) nudge to get them back on the mission.

Bleed Moxie: Sometimes, players forget about using their Moxie. By taking some away, you remind them how this precious resource needs to be used.

Bleed XP Points: Rich players tend to feel confident thinking about that new promotion. Keep them on edge by taking way some XP Points through mandatory purchases and fines.

Chase Complication: Troubleshooters always seem to be chasing something, so these are minor (or incredibly high) hurdles that make the chase harder.

Find an NPC: The players ask to meet somebody and the GM did not plan on it. This is where that NPC can be found.

Gain New Equipment: Whether it is official (such as a PLC store) or treasonous (like a Free Enterprise swap meet), this is where Troubleshooters can get equipment cards.

Get Help: Sometimes players are rolling like crap and being clueless. The GM can use these locations to help players get back to not sucking.

Mission Briefing/Debriefing: A place to hold the mission briefing or debriefing.

Mission Complication: It is rare but sometimes players are rolling well and being smart. The GM can use these locations as obstacles to make the mission more difficult.

Ruin Equipment: Are the players getting cocky about their shiny new thingies? Send them into these locations and watch the equipment fall apart, get stolen and more.

Secret Society Meeting: A place where Troubleshooters can quietly and surreptitiously meet with their Secret Society to ask for help, pass along info or receive demands from their superiors.

BACK ON TRACK

BLEED MOXIE

BLEED XP POINTS

CHASE COMPLICATION

COMBAT

FIND AN NPC

GAIN NEW EQUIPMENT

GET HELP

MISSION BRIEFING

MISSION COMPLICATION

REGAIN MOXIE

RUIN EQUIPMENT

SECRET SOCIETY MEETING