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GAMEBOOK 18

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YOU are their last hope. Trained in all the martial arts, equipped with a forbidden laser sword, your mission is to seek out the underground resistance and piece together the vital code you need to destroy the enemy. But time is running out and only YOU stand in the way of the Arcadians' complete domination of the galaxy!

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STEVE JACKSON
AND IAN LIVINGSTONE

Rebel Planet 18

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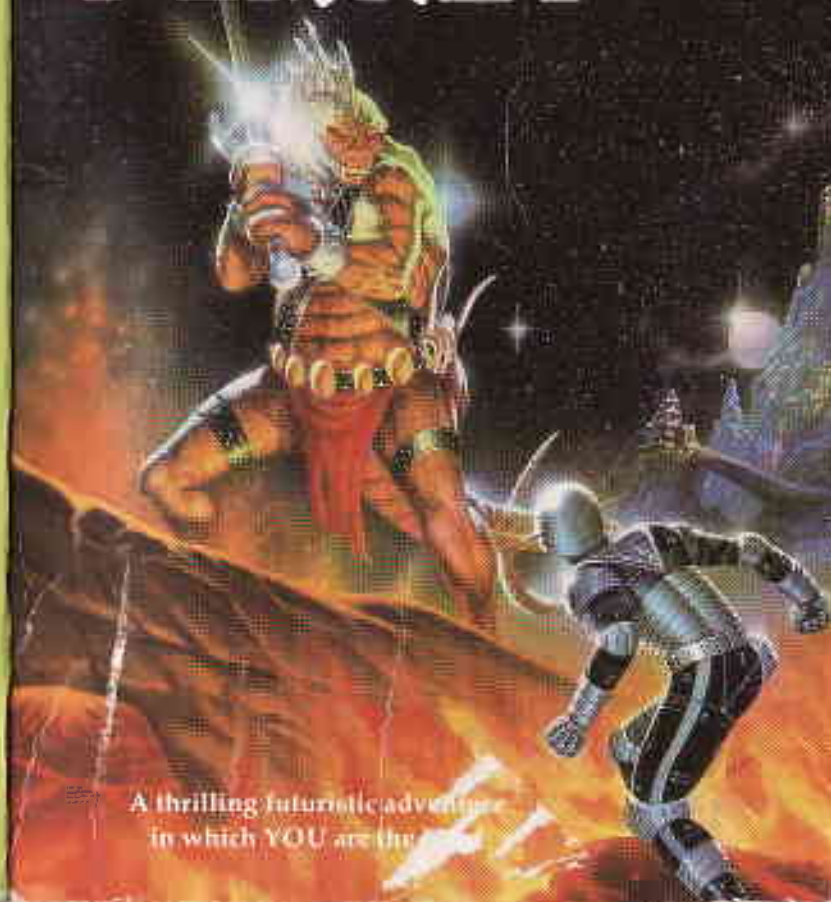
ADVENTURE
GAMEBOOKS

GAMEBOOK 18



STEVE JACKSON
and IAN LIVINGSTONE
PRESENT

REBEL PLANET



A thrilling futuristic adventure
in which YOU are the hero!

PUFFIN BOOKS

REBEL PLANET

As the mighty alien Arcadian Empire tightens its hold on the galaxy, the leaders of the secret Earth organization, SAROS, gather their slender resources into one last daring and foolhardy mission to strike at the heart of the invaders' home planet.

Fully trained in all the martial arts, equipped with a forbidden laser sword (one of the few remaining on Earth), YOU are their last hope. Your mission is to seek out the scattered remnants of the underground resistance on the other occupied planets, using your cover as a travelling merchant, and piece together the vital code you need. Only when you have this information will you be able to strike at the central Arcadian complex, which SAROS believes will break the strange powers of the Arcadians and so loosen their domination of the free worlds.

Two dice, a pencil and an eraser are all you need to embark on this thrilling futuristic adventure, complete with its elaborate combat system and a score sheet to record your gains and losses.

Many dangers lie ahead and your success is by no means certain. Powerful adversaries are ranged against you and often your only choice is to kill or be killed!

Steve Jackson and Ian Livingstone present:

REBEL PLANET



Robin Waterfield

Illustrated by Gary Mayes

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For Julian, for fun

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HISTORY

It is the year 2453. Human colonization of far-flung planets of the galaxy began in 2070 with the first expedition to Tropos, only 6.8 light-years away from Earth. Tropos gradually became a centre in its own right, relieving the pressures caused on Earth by too many people. 'A home from home,' claimed the glossy brochures designed to attract further colonists, but 'more terrestrial than terrestrials' was nearer the mark, as the fashions and habits of the late twenty-first century became fossilized and fell behind changes on Earth. Canny travel agents used to advertise visits to Tropos as 'journeys back in time'.

With the discovery of ziridium on Tropos, and the invention of the alpha-ziridium system, which enables spaceships to keep accelerating rather than simply travelling at the same speed, more distant planets became neighbours. The next planet found to be suitable for humans was Radix. One of the unexpected factors in inhabiting another planet is that any new species must adapt to suit that planet. Radix is a very fertile planet, and the human colonists there soon found that so-called human nature is mainly a product of the planet Earth. Life on Radix was so easy and luxurious that the colonists quickly settled into a way of living that, by Earth's standards, was lazy and corrupt.

There are very few planets in the galaxy that humans can inhabit; even those which have the right atmosphere may be too hot or too cold, or have too much or too little gravity. Eventually Halmuris was discovered, but not before several expeditions had been lost in the abyss of space. Conditions on Halmuris are bleak and bitter: it became mainly a home for scientists and explorers, who were waiting to find and be sent to the *next* planet.

Before long they had found it. The first unmanned flights brought back pictures of a planet obscured by cloud, whose atmosphere, as revealed by spectro-analysis, was a breathable but lighter version of Earth's. In their joy at the thought of getting off Halmuris – though some would remain as a sort of base camp – they gave the new planet the peaceful name of Arcadion. But what did the clouds hide?



Arcadion consists of three land-masses separated by huge expanses of water. Because of the separation of the continents, a different species developed on each land-mass. By 2285, when human spaceships split the clouds and came down to the surface of Arcadion, the three species had been united for a long time. The inventive and intelligent

occupants of the vast horseshoe-shaped continent, which circles half the globe from east to west, had conquered the warlike Northern species and the more artistic Southerners. The Alliance, as it was called, had lasted for centuries.

Their technology, however, was more primitive than Earth's, and space-travel was restricted. They wanted to conquer space just as much as human beings, for they wanted an Empire. So when the few human spaceships landed, the Arcadians soon saw the advantages of alpha-ziridium . . .

The war took only twelve years, and for most of that time the Arcadians were building alpha-ziridium fleets rather than actually fighting. First the outpost on Halmuris was taken by surprise and overrun. Radix, to its eternal shame, gave in without a struggle. The invaders met with stiff resistance from the Tropians, who were eager to keep their traditional way of life; but the Tropians, too, were overwhelmed by the greater numbers and fighting skills of the Arcadians. Earth itself, with its bases on Mercury, Venus and the moon, fell soon afterwards, and the worst fears of the prophets of doom backed by the Terrestrial Ecology Party – who never wanted to leave Earth in the first place – came true: human beings became ruled by a galactic empire.

The Arcadians were badly equipped to control an empire at first, but Arcadians are very adaptable. They built a massive organic computer on Arcadion – binary is natural for the two-fingered Arcadians –

and implanted into the brain of every Arcadian a receiver linked to the central organic complex by empathy, which had long been recognized to be the quickest form of communication. The Arcadians became like a hive or an ant-colony: each individual is a cell of a sprawling, single entity – an entity which can control an empire with merciless efficiency.

Arcadion – a peaceful name, but for 150 years it has been another word for tyranny. The only human word still spitefully allowed is the name of the planet: Esperanto was the common tongue of human beings, but now its use means instant death. Humans are slaves and are only kept alive to serve the aliens – and humans do not live for very long these days. The only Arcadian regret is that the human body cannot be implanted with the empathic receiver – as they discovered after the vivisection and death of hundreds of test-cases. The Arcadians chose to submit their will to the central computer, but human will cannot be wiped out without death. The aliens can keep their power only through cruelty.

But it has not gone unnoticed on Earth that the weakness, as well as the strength, of the Arcadians is that they rely on the computer: they no longer have any will of their own, so they would become zombies if the computer were destroyed. The weakness of a hive is the supreme importance of the queen ant or bee. The weakness of the Empire is the computer queen of Arcadion – and this is where you come in . . .

MISSION BACKGROUND

In times past, the planning and funding of human colonization of other planets was undertaken by SAROS, an international organization promoting 'Search And Research Of Space'. Under the Arcadian Empire, SAROS has had to change: although it seems to be just an astronomical institute, in fact it has been doing all it can to overthrow the Empire. It quickly became clear that a full-scale military attack was out of the question, and that the only hope lay in a solo mission to destroy the central computer.

Preparing for this mission has been a long and patient task, hindered by the fact that radio transmitters are still not allowed, and contact with the underground on other planets was difficult. But two factors make the time right now – or as right as it probably ever will be. First, you are the perfect choice for the mission: you are resourceful, courageous and dedicated to liberation. You have been trained for many months in martial arts, and you have acquired a knowledge of those branches of science that could be at all useful. Finally, your cover is excellent: you will travel as a merchant.

For the second factor is that humans are now allowed to travel in space again, though only as merchants to serve the Arcadians. You will be

taking wheat from Earth to Tropos, ziridium from Tropos to the authorities on Radix, luxury goods from Radix to Halmuris, and you have been instructed to take an important Arcadian from Halmuris to Arcadion. The other significant aspect of the lifting of the ban on space-travel is that SAROS has been able to send spies to gather the information you need for your mission.



The picture that emerged is still incomplete, because vital details were lost through traitors – some humans trying to please their masters in the hope of some crumbs of comfort, or of living for a few extra months. This treachery has its good and its bad side: the good side is that now you know you will not automatically be able to trust every human you meet, because some may be helping the Arcadians; the bad side is that your mission must go ahead now, although the information is incomplete, before the Arcadians get wind of it. But the knowledge that *did* get through is crucial. The building that houses the queen computer on Arcadion can be entered by using a numerical code of nine binary digits; and the underground leaders on each planet may know something to help you discover what the number is. The missing details are who the under-

ground leaders are – you only know codenames, at best – and, of course, what the digits are. That is why your cover has been arranged to allow you to stop on each planet. You must locate the rebel leaders and learn the digits; then you must destroy the computer.



CONTACT WITH ALIENS

The three Arcadian species that you will come across in this adventure are each different to look at. **More important, they have different ways of behaving and thinking, some of which humans find difficult to understand, even after years of contact.** Here is a brief description of each species, taken from the 'SAROS Manual':

All three species are roughly humanoid in appearance: they have two arms and two legs, because evolution beyond a certain limited stage requires manual dexterity, which in turn needs an upright posture. All the species have two fingers on each 'hand' and two toes on each 'foot'.

Northern Arcadians are about three metres tall at the most. They are spindly, with more joints in their arms and legs than humans. Their heads are squat and squarish, but their most distinctive physical feature is a thick, muscular tail, tipped with a vicious spike, which is an extremely useful weapon in battle, and is also used for balance. Northern Arcadians are matter-of-fact, military types, who like nothing so much as a good massacre. They are not very intelligent, which is why they are the easiest Arcadians to understand.

Southern Arcadians are like a roly-poly version of the Northerners – but do not let that fool you: they can fight if they want to. Their chief physical differences from the

Northerners are that they have no tail, they are shorter and squatter, and they have two antennae. The purpose of these antennae is not clear, but the most likely explanation is that they pick up feelings. They use these antennae in a variety of ways, many of which are too subtle for a human to understand: so it is easy to offend them. They tend to be sensitive, anyway. They prefer to talk in a very poetic way, which can be confusing at times, though they seem to understand one another perfectly. However, they have learned to 'talk down' to insensitive humans.

Central Arcadians are the most powerful species, and are the most human to look at: they are usually under two metres tall, and have the same number of joints in their arms and legs as humans. Apart from their small tail, the most obvious difference between Central Arcadians and humans is their elongated head, which tends to jut out at right angles from their shoulders. The head has a pulpy crest of tissue. Physically, they are by far the weakest of the three species, but they make up for this by their skill. In battle, for instance, they are often able to win by distracting their opponent. Their thoughts tend to be very abstract, and they quite often behave in a way that means something to them but is difficult for anyone else to understand: it is as if they did not care whether others can follow such trains of thought. This is just one example of how arrogant they are.



ABILITIES

Your mission involves travelling through the depths of outer space. You must first determine your strengths and weaknesses. For this you will need two dice, and a pencil to record your scores on the *Adventure Sheet* (pp. 28-9). As it is possible that you will not successfully complete your mission on your first attempt, you should write lightly so you can rub out your notes, or you could take photocopies of the *Adventure Sheet* for future use.

Skill, Stamina and Luck

Roll one die. Add 6 to this number and enter the total in the **SKILL** box of the *Adventure Sheet*. Your **SKILL** score reflects your general fighting ability – the higher the score, the better you are.

Roll two dice. Add 12 to the number rolled and enter the total in the **STAMINA** box. Your **STAMINA** score reflects your will to survive, your determination and your overall fitness: the higher your **STAMINA** score, the longer you will be able to survive.

There is also a **LUCK** box. Roll one die, add 6 and enter the total in the **LUCK** box. Your **LUCK** score indicates how naturally lucky a person you are.

For reasons that will be explained below, **SKILL**,

STAMINA and **LUCK** scores keep changing during an adventure. You must keep an accurate record of these scores, so write small in the boxes or have an eraser handy. But never rub out your *Initial* scores. Although you may be awarded additional **SKILL**, **STAMINA** and **LUCK** points, these totals may never exceed your *Initial* scores.

Restoring SKILL

Your **SKILL** score will not change much during an adventure. Occasionally, a page may give instructions to increase or decrease your **SKILL** score.

Restoring STAMINA

Your **STAMINA** score will change a lot during your adventure, as you fight aliens and undertake arduous tasks. As you near your goal, your **STAMINA** level may be dangerously low, in which case battles will be particularly risky, so be careful! The most usual ways of restoring **STAMINA** are rest and food, which you will have to buy: you will have



opportunities for resting and eating during the adventure. Healing of wounds will also be provided for during the adventure, though more rarely; this also restores STAMINA, of course.



Restoring LUCK

Additions to and subtractions from your LUCK score are awarded in the adventure according to circumstances. Your LUCK score will also change quite a bit as you *Test your Luck* (see p. 25).

COMBAT

This adventure involves no combat encounters in space. Under the Empire, humans are not permitted weapons of any kind, and since you are travelling as a merchant anyway, your ship is unarmed. Your journeys between planets will be uneventful as regards external danger – apart from the odd shower of meteors, but the ship's force-field will easily repel those.

Force-fields are effective for spaceships because they work by resistance to speed: any missile powerful enough to penetrate the hull of a spaceship can be stopped by the ship's field. Force-fields cannot help individual beings: a missile slow enough to penetrate a force-field may still be powerful enough to injure a human being or an Arcadian. Besides, the equipment needed to produce an effective force-field is pretty bulky even in this age of advanced miniaturization. There are other problems, too, such as the many obstacles which clutter our environment and interfere with the field, and the shock-waves caused by a field resisting a blast, which can be nearly as harmful as the blast itself, for soft-skinned creatures.

So there are no personal force-fields in the twenty-fifth century, but there are plenty of lethal weapons which have existed for centuries – guns, lasers,

phasers, photon grenades, gravity bombs and so on. Many of these weapons are so lethal that they presented a problem to the Arcadian authorities, who constantly fear and expect rebellion. The problem was that, although humans are not permitted weapons of any sort, if their Arcadian masters carried them the humans could occasionally overpower Arcadians, seize their weapons, and build up a powerful armoury. The solution was obvious: once the Empire was reasonably stable, all lethal weapons were brought back and stored on Arcadion, and all Arcadians were given less powerful weapons: laser swords, electric whiplash swords ('whippies', for short) and so on. In this way, even if the occasional Arcadian did lose his weapon, it would be no serious loss.

You have acquired a laser sword, by devious means. It is quite easy to smuggle the laser sword through checkpoints – so long as you are not too closely searched – since, until it is activated, the sword is no more than a hand-sized hollow metal shaft, with a couple of buttons on it; the complex miniature electronic works are hidden around the inside of the shaft.

So this is your weapon in this adventure. It and your SKILL should be enough to face most of your opponents, since they will be similarly armed. If you are fortunate and make the right decisions, you may acquire some more lethal weapons along the way; on the other hand, you may meet an opponent

whose weapon is much better than yours. Unless otherwise stated in the book, combat will be fought as follows:

Record your opponent's SKILL and STAMINA scores in the first empty *Encounter Box* on the *Adventure Sheet*. The scores for each opponent are given in the book at the time. Then the sequence of combat is:

1. Roll two dice once for the creature. Add its SKILL score. This total is its Attack Strength.
2. Determine your own Attack Strength in the same way, by adding the roll to your SKILL score.
3. If your Attack Strength is higher than that of your opponent, you have wounded it. Proceed to step 4. If its Attack Strength is higher than yours, it has wounded you. Proceed to step 5. If both Attack Strengths are the same, you have avoided each other's blows – start the next Attack Round from step 1 again.
4. You have wounded the alien, so subtract 2 points from its STAMINA score. You may use your LUCK here to do additional damage (see p. 26).
5. Your opponent has wounded you, so subtract 2 points from your own STAMINA score. You may use LUCK at this stage to lessen the damage (see p. 26).
6. Make the appropriate adjustments to your opponent's or your own STAMINA scores (and your LUCK score if you used LUCK).
7. Begin the next Attack Round (repeat steps 1–6). This sequence continues until the STAMINA score of either you or your opponent has been reduced

to zero (which is death). There is no *Escape* option in this adventure.

Unarmed Combat

Since humans are invariably weaponless, unarmed combat has been revived and has been developed to a high degree of expertise. You know all the pressure points and weak spots of the three Arcadian species, as well as those of the humans; and you know just how to use your own body to the greatest effect, while using your opponent's own weight and strength against himself. If you ever lose your laser sword, or if the book instructs you, you will be involved in unarmed combat in this adventure as well. The conduct of unarmed combat is the same as for armed combat, except for the following 'sudden death' rule:

Whenever your Attack Strength is higher than your opponent's, roll one extra die. If you roll 1-5, you reduce your opponent's STAMINA as usual. But if you roll 6, your opponent has been unable to prevent you from finding a pressure point which will either kill him or leave him unconscious. In either case, the fight is immediately over. Note that this rule normally applies only to you: the Arcadians are not so skilled in unarmed combat, not having had the need to become so. If you meet an opponent who is as skilled in unarmed combat as you, and to whom, therefore, the same rule applies, the book will tell you.



Fighting More Than One Opponent

If you are faced with more than one opponent in a particular encounter, the instructions on that page will tell you how to conduct the battle. Sometimes you will treat them as a single opponent; sometimes you will have to fight each one in turn.

LUCK

At various times during your adventure, either in battles or in situations where you could be lucky or unlucky (details of these are given on the pages themselves), you may call on your LUCK to make the outcome more favourable. But beware! Using LUCK is a risky business and if you are *unlucky*, the results could be disastrous.

The procedure for using your LUCK is as follows. Roll two dice. If the number rolled is *equal to or less than* your current LUCK score, you have been Lucky, and the result will go in your favour. If the number rolled is *higher* than your current LUCK score, you have been Unlucky, and will have to pay the penalty.

This procedure is known as *Testing your Luck*. Each time you *Test your Luck*, you must subtract 1 point from your current LUCK score. You will soon realize that the more you rely on your LUCK, the more risky it will become. If you ever run out of LUCK, any time the book tells you to *Test your Luck*, you are automatically Unlucky.

Using LUCK in Battles

In battles, the book will not give you the option of *Testing your Luck*, as it does on other occasions, but the option is there in any battle. The effect of LUCK in battles is as follows:

Suppose in an Attack Round you have just wounded your opponent. You may now *Test your Luck*. If you are Lucky, you have inflicted a more serious injury than normal, and may subtract an extra 2 points from your opponent's STAMINA. However, if you are Unlucky, the injury turns out to be a mere graze and, instead of the normal 2 points of STAMINA to be subtracted from your opponent, you may subtract only 1.

But suppose your opponent has just wounded you. Again, you may *Test your Luck*. If you are Lucky, you have managed to avoid the full force of the blow, and need only subtract 1 point from your STAMINA, instead of the normal 2. If you are Unlucky, you have taken a more serious wound, and must reduce your STAMINA by an extra 1 point.

EQUIPMENT AND MONEY

You will be an undercover agent, so you can carry hardly anything with you: equipment would arouse suspicion. Apart from your money and your weapon, you will have to acquire everything else you may need to complete your mission during your trip, including other weapons. You have an anti-grav pack, in which you can keep up to six of the items you will come across in this adventure, without loss of STAMINA. However, you may be advised, before leaving a planet, to get rid of anything you think you may not be able to smuggle on to the next planet.

SAROS has given you 2,000 credits with which to start your adventure. Used wisely, this should be enough to pay for extra equipment, board and lodging during your mission. You may be able to acquire more during your adventure. What you have and what you spend should be entered in the appropriate box on the *Adventure Sheet*. This money is kept in a money-belt around your waist. If you run out of money, and meet a situation where you need to spend money to continue, you have failed in your mission.

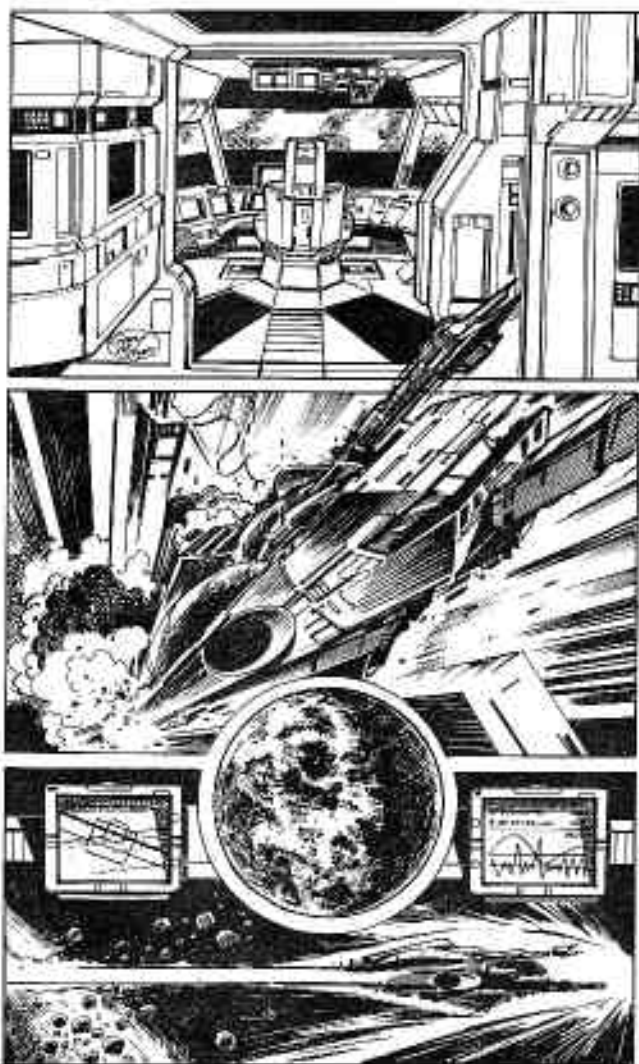
ADVENTURE SHEET

SKILL <i>Initial</i> <i>Skill=</i>	STAMINA <i>Initial</i> <i>Stamina=</i>	LUCK <i>Initial</i> <i>Luck=</i>
CODE CLUES	MONEY	
NOTES and EQUIPMENT COLLECTED		



ENCOUNTER BOXES

<i>Skill=</i> <i>Stamina=</i>	<i>Skill=</i> <i>Stamina=</i>	<i>Skill=</i> <i>Stamina=</i>
<i>Skill=</i> <i>Stamina=</i>	<i>Skill=</i> <i>Stamina=</i>	<i>Skill=</i> <i>Stamina=</i>
<i>Skill=</i> <i>Stamina=</i>	<i>Skill=</i> <i>Stamina=</i>	<i>Skill=</i> <i>Stamina=</i>



1

You settle comfortably into the padded pilot's seat of your spaceship, strap yourself in and examine the instrument panel. This is remarkably simple, consisting mainly of a computer terminal and several screens. The mechanisms of the alpha-ziridium system are hidden deep within the bowels of the craft, and there is no need for you to have anything to do with them: even if something did go wrong, your robot engineers would soon sort it out. The ship's computer has been pre-programmed to take you to Tropos and land there.

Now you ask the computer to check all life-support systems throughout the ship. Within seconds its tinny voice responds: 'Everything is functioning correctly.' You contact base control to tell them you are ready. The ship's main support towers are towed away by massive robo-trucks. You flick the switch which activates the drive-apparatus – and you're off! Within minutes, the ill effects of the first thrust required for take-off die down, as you leave Earth's exosphere and enter the inky blackness of space. The gravidrags are automatically triggered, so that gravity within the ship is kept the same as on Earth, allowing you and your robots to move about freely.

You switch on the rearview screen, to watch Earth getting smaller behind you; white cloud formations swirl, and the sun glints off the northern ice-cap. Though you have often seen this sight before on

trips to Mercury and Venus, it never fails to excite you, and this time you feel homesick as well. Will you ever see Earth again? Your mission is so vital . . . and so dangerous.

Time passes. After a few hours one of the screens flickers into life. The computer is alerting you to the presence of another spacecraft, which is keeping a constant distance away from you and seems to be shadowing you. Will you order the computer to take evasive action (turn to 48), or continue on your way (turn to 398)?



2

Your only chance is to rush the guards at one of the main entrances. You choose the eastern entrance, because there are fewer guards there. Your first assault takes them completely by surprise, since you waited until they were all looking the other way, and you cut down two of them. This leaves you with only one, and he's a fairly small Southerner.

GUARD

SKILL 6

STAMINA 8

If you win in four Attack Rounds, turn to 263; if after four Attack Rounds you haven't killed the guard, turn to 34.

3

Porky's computer is his pride and joy. You will have to offer him something – a personal massage robot, if you have it; otherwise 400 credits will do. If you do not have the robot or the money – or if you do not want to pay him – you will have to fight him in unarmed combat.

PORKY

SKILL 6

STAMINA 10

If you win the fight, or if you paid his price, turn to 119.



4

You slump down to rest. At least you'll get some STAMINA back. You doze off and, when you wake up, you may restore 1 STAMINA point. You wake up very suddenly. What is that rustling sound? Frantically, you peer through the gloom, only to see, to

your horror, innumerable eyes glowing maliciously in your direction. They belong to a Radician insect, whose closest Earth equivalent is a huge spider. You must fight this vile underworld creature. In fact, it is not difficult to defeat, and has only been released to discourage you from staying where you are.

RADICIAN SPIDER SKILL 5 STAMINA 6

When you have killed it, turn to 71.

5

Clearly, the Arcadian is saying in her roundabout way that the Fission Chips is just north of the Temple of the Five Suns, which can be seen from the street, so you can easily find your way. If you have not already done so, you pop into the grocer's shop, spending 20 credits on food which replenishes your STAMINA by 4 points. Then turn to 204.

6

The problem with this is that you have only one mine, and its blast will not knock out all three computers. Which will you choose: the left computer (turn to 203), the right one (turn to 51), or the one against the wall opposite the door (turn to 139)? If you have an alternative, you may prefer to return to 381 and choose again.

7

Will you go on to the main road, although Arcadian patrols are likely to come and investigate the dis-

turbance (turn to 132)? Or will you run back along the side-street to renew your contact with the underground (turn to 303)?

8

There is another passage heading south. Will you take it (turn to 384) or continue straight on (turn to 23)?

9

You feel wretched, having killed two fellow human beings, but what else could you do? You pick up your sword. Will you stop and search the house (turn to 117), or will you leave to try to find the Fission Chips (turn to 132)?

10

If you are carrying a staff with you, turn to 49; otherwise, turn to 147.

11

The argument soon breaks up; someone tells a joke, and they all roar with laughter, the best of friends once more. Their camaraderie makes you feel lonely, being so far from home and burdened with a mission which you can talk to no one about. One of the students notices that you are a bit down in the mouth and comes over to the bench where you have gone to be miserable on your own. She introduces herself as Mehita and asks what's up. You are unprepared for friendliness – even heroes like your-



self get moody – and find yourself wanting to confide in her. Will you do this (turn to 97) or not (turn to 202)?

12

You find 55 credits and some food, but before you have time to search the body any further, the door opens and three more humans appear. Will you fight them (turn to 80), or let them escort you inside (turn to 145)?

13

Roll one die. If the number is even, turn to 140; if it is odd, turn to 67.

14

You are bitten by a Saw-toothed Rat. The teeth of this unpleasant creature are designed to give an excellent grip on its victim – in this case two of your fingers. You only succeed in dislodging the little horror by withdrawing your hand and breaking the creature's back on the rock. Roll one die. If the number is even, turn to 92; if it is odd, turn to 331.



15

Fortunately, the corridor outside is deserted: the students are at their lectures, and no guard passes by to hear the noise. Turn to 66.

16

No Arcadian is going to just hand a sword over to you; the only way you're going to get one off an Arcadian is by means of an ambush. You watch the movements of the guards for a while, and find that your best chance is a remote passage which is patrolled by only one guard at a time. As a guard is walking along it, you creep up behind him. *Test your Luck*. If you are Lucky, turn to 367; if you are Unlucky, turn to 224.

17

Fortunately, the room is sound-proofed – no doubt so that the screams of torture-victims do not disturb the spaceport. You draw your sword and leap at the policeman: you are just in time to prevent him pressing a buzzer to summon the guards. Be careful: he fights dirty!

SECRET POLICEMAN SKILL 7 STAMINA 10

If you win without being wounded twice, turn to 291. But if you are wounded twice, turn to 328.

18

Having no food, your body becomes more vulnerable to the cold, and you can hardly sleep at all for

trying to keep warm. Gain only 1 STAMINA point. In the morning you follow a path heading roughly north-east until it divides. Will you branch right (turn to 296) or left (turn to 171)?

19

His remark was an offer to show you around; to this your reply is an acceptance, so you are lumbered with him. Your disappointment is obvious to his South Arcadian sensitivity, and he is bad tempered with you and somewhat hostile. Nevertheless, the archaeological exhibits are fascinating. It seems that there was a civilization on Radix before the human colonists arrived in the twenty-second century, which utterly destroyed all its major centres early in the twenty-first century in an all-out phacium war. Phacium bombs leave no traces, but a number of objects from scattered outposts survived. Archaeologists have even pieced together evidence that suggests that these earlier Radicians used to send saucer-shaped scouts around the galaxy.

You spend an enjoyable time looking around. When you have finished, will you ask the watchman what is through the other door (turn to 380), or should you now go to the university (turn to 146)?

20

There is no reply. You wait for a bit and then cautiously open the door, but there is nothing and no one in sight down the corridor. Mystified, you return to bed. Turn to 247.

21

This was not a good choice. Its deafening howl distracts you as much as your opponents, so no sooner have you switched it on than you hurl it away to smash in a corner. Cross it off your Equipment List before returning to the scene of combat.

22

You step out into the fields, towards a group of humans who are working about 100 metres away. But you are only halfway there when a whirring noise above you and to your left makes you look up. A small, silver, streamlined craft is heading towards you. You dive into the shrubs as it approaches and, crouching, head for the cover of the middle of the field. But the alien is tracking you: wherever you go, it hovers overhead. Suddenly it sprays flame—but at the shrubs, not at you! Again and again flames shoot out, until you are surrounded by fire. The smoke is dense: you cannot see your enemy. What will you do: stay where you are and pray (turn to 53), or try to break through the circle of fire (turn to 216)?



23

It is too late. The search-party is upon you. Your mission ends here, in the dust and mildew of the cellars.

24

You have managed to get rid of the two North Arcadians in the patrol, but must fight the other two Arcadians simultaneously. Choose which one you are attacking, and conduct a normal Attack Round against him. The other gets a free attack against you: roll for Attack Strengths as usual, but nothing happens unless *his* Attack Strength is higher, in which case he wounds you.

	SKILL	STAMINA
First ARCADIAN	7	8
Second ARCADIAN	6	6

If you win, turn to 381.

25

You are escorted through a maze of underground tunnels back to the hostel, where the guard has been trebled since you were last there. You sleep deeply (restore 2 STAMINA points). The next morning, you return to the spaceport. Turn to 213.



26

This is the wrong reply. Such a worker would be wearing a blue uniform, and carrying a tool-kit. You are taken away for interrogation, from which you will never emerge.

27

The feeling of being followed grows to a certainty as the *same* cab remains behind you all the way back to your hotel. And once you get there, you discover simultaneously that your pursuers are hostile, and that they have a comlink. For you are immediately confronted by a whole squadron of Arcadian police, who cut you down without mercy.

28

'That noise outside was this stranger killing old Corvus,' says one of your escort. This makes the man behind the desk look up. 'That's quite impressive,' he says, callously. 'Corvus was obviously not very important. He was on a job, though, wasn't he?' he asks one of the men, who confirms that he was. Will you ask what's going on (turn to 353), or keep quiet (turn to 321)?

29

After waiting for a while, you decide this is a waste of time - you can always check in later. You go upstairs. The whole of the first floor is a long dormitory, which is remarkable for its filth, gloom and lack of company. Several beds are made up, but



their occupants are out at this time of day. There is one other human, however, who is sitting sadly on a truckle-bed, his body heaving with sobs. Will you go and grab a bed near him, and strike up conversation (turn to 354), or will you settle yourself far away (turn to 60)?

30

You are on the eastern side of the spaceport. There are various paths which you could take. Will you go east (turn to 245), north (turn to 342) or south (turn to 181)?

31

You ask for a microcomputer to be brought up to your room and are told that this will be done simply as part of the service. Turn to 119.

32

He soon comes over and unlocks your fetters; your first move is to imprison him in the same seat. You eat, and rest for a few hours: restore 4 STAMINA points. Then turn to 292.

33

At Customs, you tell the Southern Arcadian duty officer that you are a merchant bound for Radix, and she crosses your name off the register of off-planet humans on Tropos. Then she orders you to hand over your pack. You do so, and are dismayed to find that the pack will be looked through not by this

Southern Arcadian, who is likely to be more easy-going, but by a hatchet-faced Central Arcadian, whose multicoloured crest shows that he belongs to a high military rank. Most of your equipment is harmless enough to pass the inspection, but do you still have either or both of a coil of rope and an infra-red scanner? If you have both, turn to 210; if you have one of these items, turn to 339; if you have neither, turn to 374.

34

The guard has delayed you just long enough for you to be caught by the relief squadron, against whom you stand no chance.



35

'You have it, then,' you say, and hurl the drink in his face. He glowers at you. 'All right,' he says. 'If that's what you want.' A space is cleared on the floor; humans and Arcadians alike crowd round for the spectacle of a brawl. But before you begin this unarmed combat, *Test your Luck*. If you are Lucky, some of the drink – which *was* drugged – went into

your opponent's mouth, and you may reduce his SKILL by 1 point; otherwise fight him with his usual attributes:

BRAWLER

SKILL 7

STAMINA 12

You will find him expert in unarmed combat: the sudden death rule of p. 24 applies to him as well as you. If you win, you have no choice but to leave the club. You are slumping dejectedly in a nearby doorway when rough hands suddenly grab you. Turn to 272.

36

You manage to whip out your sword and bring it down on the machine, before being cut down by his phaser. The last thing you hear is him saying, 'Well, I can always build another one.'

37

To keep up appearances, you buy a drink of the alcoholic mouthwash they sell humans (deduct 10 credits from your *Adventure Sheet*). You notice the doorman going over to a group in the corner and whispering something to a young woman, who flashes a glance at you, and then gets up to leave. Does this strike you as suspicious, so that you follow her (turn to 75), or will you remain where you are for a bit, and then ask the barman where the visiphone booth is (turn to 81)?

38

'Yes, I thought as much,' he replies. 'If you have to



ask *me* all these questions, you can't ask the officials, for some reason, can you? Come with me: I know someone who can help you.' Will you go with him (turn to 399), or leave him and try elsewhere for a sword (turn to 137)?

39

The corridor gradually curves around to the left until you are heading west instead of east. Eventually you come to a junction where you could go north (turn to 277) or straight on (turn to 23).

40

Curiously, there is no immediate sign of the shining object the bird was carrying when you first spotted it. Then you notice two deep fissures in the ledge, into which you could insert your hand. Will you try the left fissure (turn to 14), or the right one (turn to 355)? Alternatively, you could decide that *anything* could be living in such cracks and that it would be best to return to the path without taking any further risks (turn to 147).

41

He takes you to another house in the street, where you are blindfolded and led down some steps. Then you lose your sense of direction, as you are led quite a long way through tunnels that twist and turn, several doorways, and part of the sewage system, to judge by the smell, dankness and weird echoing of your footsteps. The underground on Tropos seems

to be literally that, and to have a system of connecting houses. Then, without warning, a heavy blow descends on the back of your head, and you sink into unconsciousness. Turn to 207.

42

As soon as you touch the treasure, you are caught. In attempting to take some of it, you show that you believe in this illusion, which lowers your defences and allows the computer to trap you. You can feel it in your mind as a second presence, and will never shake it off.

43

Your 'trial' is a farce. The Arcadians are sure something fishy is going on. What would a merchant from Earth be doing in a professor's room on Radix? And why would he have a sword? You are sentenced to death, but the police tell you that the sentence will be commuted if you tell them what you know about the underground on Radix. Will you spill the beans (turn to 345) or not (turn to 368)?



44

'I'm sorry. I don't understand,' you say. 'Oh, you humans. You are as insensitive as *glumphig*' – this is

a variety of Arcadian snail – 'I mean that it is just north of the Temple of the Five Suns, idiot. And I almost forgot: there's 50 per cent HAT, Human Added Tax, on the items you bought.' You don't believe her – she's obviously just making you pay for insulting her – but you cannot afford to cross her any further. Cross the right amount of money off your *Adventure Sheet*, and lose 1 LUCK point too.

It is easy to find your way now, as the temple can be seen from the street. If you have not already done so, you pop into the grocer's shop, spending 20 credits on food which replenishes your STAMINA by 4 points. Then turn to 204.

45

'I don't know what your game is,' says the doorman through the peep-hole, 'but you're not welcome here.' He slams the peep-hole shut. Will you leave the club (turn to 390), or draw your sword and smash the locks (turn to 366)? You can draw your sword only if you still have it, of course.

46

When you come to, you have difficulty focusing on who you are, where you are and what you're doing here anyway. But you can make out the blurred shape of a human bending over you. Then you remember – your mission! 'How long have I been out?' you ask, trying to get up.

'He's coming round, Dorado,' calls the man.

'Coming, Mizar,' a voice replies.

'You've been out for about forty-five minutes,' says the first man, who is evidently Mizar. 'And the Arcadians are almost upon us.'

Forty-five minutes! Then there is no time to lose: you will scarcely make it back to the spaceport in time for your flight! You must send one of the men to defend the pass and buy you enough time to talk to the other and escape. Will you send Dorado away (turn to 175) or Mizar (turn to 255)?

47

Customs is no problem on Radix. They are so delighted to have the ziridium that you are welcomed by the resident Arcadians, as much as any Arcadian is capable of welcoming any human. It seems that your load of ziridium was needed to complete a para-scientific project of theirs. You find that you have two full days – it is now early morning – until you must leave for Halmuris. Once you have registered, you make your way out of the spaceport, which is so highly mechanized that even a terrestrial like yourself feels strange. The inhabitants do not believe in doing any work unless they really have to. There are robots everywhere, some of them sophisticated state-of-the-art models that can almost think for themselves. Moving pavements criss-cross the spaceport, which actually make you impatient, because they move slowly enough to allow stepping from one to another, yet you feel decidedly

springy on this planet, as the gravity is slightly less than on Earth. You soon discover, however, that this does not in fact help you to move any more quickly, since you need some practice to achieve the correct coordination.

The personal monorail system is all you could have hoped for, and you are soon gliding smoothly, but at speed, towards the only major town on the planet, where the underground must be located. On the way you call up on to the screen a list of hotels where humans can stay. Only two names sound attractive, one which has gained three stars from the Radician quality assessors, and one which they haven't bothered to comment on at all. Will you stay at the Zodiac for 375 credits a night (turn to 89), or at Porky's Palace for 50 credits a night (turn to 101)?

48

However much you twist and turn, you cannot shake off your follower. Eventually, you simmer down and return to a direct route for Tropos. The rest of the journey is uneventful; you pass the time eating, sleeping, exercising and playing chess with the computer's lowest logical mode. Your shadow is never too far away to keep an eye on you, and as you approach Tropos, he accelerates to land before you. Turn to 164.

49

If you were bitten by a Saw-toothed Rat, turn to 98; otherwise turn to 232.

50

You quickly find the right key among the watchman's bunch and climb up into a side-street. From here you can lose yourself in the university. Turn to 146.

51

Turn to 177

52

You rush around the corner and are impaled on the swords and tails of the waiting Arcadians. Your mission ends here.

53

God helps those who help themselves – and you have not. The agony is excruciating. Fortunately – if you can call it that – you will asphyxiate before you roast.

54

The crowd is on its feet; the applause is thunderous; antennae flash in approval. As the corpse of the Scabrok is dragged away, leaving a slimy trail of green blood behind it, an alien, whom you recognize as the prison commandant, enters the arena and congratulates you – once he has taken away your sword: 'You have performed well and given pleasure to our people, Earthling,' he says, 'and we will keep our side of the bargain. You may return to your ship.' Turn to 191.



55

Obviously, the device stimulates the imaginative part of the brain, because everything that happens next is like a strange dream.

The episodes which follow are easiest to describe in terms of physical combat, even though they are happening in your mind. The result is the same: if you lose any of the following encounters, you might as well have died physically, because you will be a puppet of the Arcadian computer and will have no mind of your own.

You seem to be wandering in a mansion with many rooms. Out of nowhere, a monster bars your way; the passages behind you disappear, and there is no other way forward except by defeating it. The monster is a Sphinx, the guardian of knowledge.

SPHINX

SKILL 8

STAMINA 8

If you win, turn to 251.



56

You wait five minutes . . . ten minutes. What is going on? The answer arrives too soon – eight Arcadian thugs are advancing towards you, four

from each end of the street. Will you hopelessly draw your sword to defend yourself (turn to 264), hammer on the door Grus went through (turn to 364), or try another house (turn to 121)?



57

You find a secluded part of the perimeter, slip the harness of the small jet pack over your shoulders and press the ignition button. It coughs . . . and fails. But it starts on the second attempt, and lifts you easily over the ten-metre fence, before failing again! You fall heavily to the ground. *Test your Luck!* If you are Lucky, turn to 359; if you are Unlucky, turn to 304.

58

You mutter some feeble excuse and leave the secretary's office. Will you go to the Science Floor, if you haven't already been there (turn to 266), or leave the university (turn to 235)?

59

As you grapple with Musca, the phaser goes off – and wounds him fatally. The mind of the dying Arcadian seems to clear; he looks up at you and says, 'Arsenal . . . 110.' This doesn't mean an awful

lot to you. You are now getting near Arcadion, so turn to 118.

60

It is always difficult, particularly for an active type like yourself, to cope with another person's unhappiness. You make up your bed, so that no one else takes it, and creep out of the room. Lose 1 LUCK point for being hard-hearted. Outside on the street, you must look for the Fission Chips. You know that north heads out of town, so you turn south. Turn to 99.



61

No cables can be seen: if this organic machine needs them, they must be behind the computer consoles somewhere. But you can remove the casing of a computer, if you like, to see what you can find closer to the heart of the machine (turn to 325). Or you can return to 381 and choose again, if you have another choice to make.



62

The corridor bends round to the west, until it joins another corridor, where you may head south, from where you can hear the eerie sound of water dripping in the dust-muffled silence (turn to 154), or north (turn to 23). You'd better be quick: the search-party is right behind you, by the sounds of it.

63

The grenade explodes, destroying the killer robot. You are free to make your way back to your hotel. Turn to 309.

64

He is very thorough, but finds nothing to worry him. You need some time to think how to contact Bellatrix. You go over to the bar and buy a glass of the alcoholic mouthwash which humans are allowed to drink (deduct 10 credits); then you look around for somewhere to sit. Could any of these people be Bellatrix, or at least members of the



underground? You decide to join a group of humans who are sitting in a corner, because they are watching you very closely. Turn to 305.

65

'Free you? Yes, of course. I mean, why not?' he mumbles, but only wanders around the room. Will you tell him to hurry up (turn to 241), or will you be patient (turn to 32)?

66

You soon find a rack of computer disks marked 'University Records'. You are only interested in the two current ones, and discard the rest. Will you look through them now (turn to 174), or take them away with you (turn to 316)?

67

Your search produces nothing except some very strange looks. Eventually you slump in a doorway to rest. Time is getting on; you will have to return to the hostel soon. Just as you are getting up to go, the door behind you opens and rough hands grab you. Turn to 156.

68

Your inquisitors exchange significant glances – or so you assume from what you can make out behind the lamp. 'The trial is over,' says Bellatrix. 'Anyone who would so readily kill another being, with no evidence of guilt, goes against our code of honour. We

do not think you are a traitor but, as the interim human government on Tropos, we take it upon ourselves to keep you here. There is no point to your mission if its success is gained by amoral people like yourself. You can work for us, if you like, and we will educate you.' You have failed in your mission. By the time you have convinced Bellatrix of your worth, the opportunity will have slipped away.

69

The butt of his phaser connects squarely with your head. When you come to, deduct 2 STAMINA points, and turn to 116.



70

'What?' you say in surprise. 'Are you trying to trick me? Cornices are high on a building, not in the foundations.' 'Of course, of course,' says the Arcadian. 'Must be the booze.' But you're sure she was trying to expose your cover. She goes on to tell you that the demolished buildings have been destroyed by a robot, called the 'Street Fighter', which the police use against enemies of Arcadion - at least, that's what you think she means by 'lone wolves baying at the moon'! The drink perhaps makes her

say more than she should, because she seems to disapprove of using the killer robot, especially when the enemies are only students. This gives you the clue you were waiting for, and you soon leave for the university. When you arrive, will you plunge straight in (turn to 146), or wait around outside for a while (turn to 178)?



71

You move on down the corridor. The gloom becomes less and less, and you search the place thoroughly as you walk. But there are no escape-routes. Eventually you reach a sturdy door, with a large grille. Will you try to barge the door down (turn to 360), or wait to see what may happen (turn to 301)?



72

'All right,' Grus says eventually, overriding Indus's protests. He lets you go and sprints over to get the sword. 'No funny business now,' he says. 'Remember, we have the sword. Out you go.' As you are shoved out of the door, you hear Indus on the visiphone, telling the police where you are. You leave quickly and return to the main road. Until you find another weapon, all your battles must be conducted according to the rules for unarmed combat. Turn to 132.



73

You eat your food and go to sleep; restore 4 STAMINA points. In the morning you follow a path heading roughly north-east, until it divides. Will you branch right (turn to 296) or left (turn to 171)?



74

You ring Professor Zacharias at work – no reply. But you find his home number in the directory and ring him there. He has heard about the theft of the disks, and you identify yourself by showing him the print-out of his file. He is satisfied that you are who you say you are, and you make an appointment for eleven o'clock the next morning, in his room at the university. Gain 1 LUCK point and turn to 134.



75

Before the doorman has a chance to return to his post, you are out of the door and following the woman. You are just in time to see her disappearing round a corner; but by the time you get there, she has vanished. You search around for a bit, with no success. Will you now return to the club (turn to 45), or continue searching (turn to 13)?



76

There is really not a lot you can achieve here. Will you wait for a bit anyway (turn to 244), go down to the Science Floor if you haven't already been there (turn to 266), or leave the university (turn to 235)?

77

Porky is out on the steps, sunning himself and admiring his jewels; he is adorned with rings, bracelets and a pair of ear-rings. You sit down and chat with him, exchanging views about conditions on Earth and on Radix. He tells you that in some ways life on Radix has not been altered by the Empire, because the economy has been fixed so that humans can live in the style to which they were accustomed. Nevertheless, of course, there is some resentment at the lack of freedom, which is supported fairly openly by the students and staff of the university. They are not very successful, however, since they are concerned with abstract freedom, while the ordinary people of Radix just want an end to having to work for the Arcadians, and a return to the system where robots did all the work for humans. As it is, both humans and robots serve Arcadians, for the most part. While you talk to Porky, you find yourself changing your opinion of the Radician humans: the corruption and sloth for which they are famed throughout the galaxy is just a weird sign of their devotion to an ideal of self-sufficiency. You realize that human nature does indeed adapt itself to circumstances on different

planets, and that therefore humans born and bred on other planets can be almost as alien as Arcadians or other species. The discipline of Tropos and the devotion of Radix are the result of living on those planets.

Your conversation with Porky has been most worthwhile, and should enable you not to misjudge people you come across on this planet. Gain 1 LUCK point. You decide that your best bet is to visit the university next, so you take your leave. The monorail takes you near the main entrance. Will you plunge straight in (turn to 146), or wait around outside for a while (turn to 178)?

78

Your way to the spaceship is barred by two guards. Your heart leaps in dismay and fear, but it turns out that they are just waiting for your 'passenger' to embark. You see two Central Arcadians cross the field and enter your spaceship; neither of them returns. It looks as though you have two passengers, not one. Then the guards allow you on board.

On the way to Arcadion, you may restore half as much STAMINA as your current score, rounding odd numbers down, and remembering not to exceed your *Initial* score. Remember also to restore the SKILL point you lost for the high gravity of Halmuris. The two Arcadians keep pretty much to themselves during the voyage, but one night you are awoken by a rattling at your cabin door. Will you ask

who it is, without unlocking the door (turn to 20), or throw open the door (turn to 350)?

79

You quickly position this so that its powerful beam will distract your opponents. It will last five Attack Rounds before being knocked over and smashed (cross it off your Equipment List), but you may reduce your first opponent's SKILL by 1 point for six Attack Rounds, since the after-effects are just as distracting as the strobe itself. Now return to the scene of combat and resolve the fight.

80

Unfortunately, one of them has a sword, and you are no match for them all. You are beaten and cut to the ground.

81

The visiphone booth is behind a screen, which is decorated with a moving hologram of Arcadians at work in an office. You always find it reassuring when aliens behave just like humans – even Arcadians want to ring home sometimes and claim they're working late at the office! Did you try to catch a taxi here from the spaceport? If so, turn to 362; if not, turn to 311.

82

The door crashes into him and sends his phaser flying across the room – to near Musca! You and the other Arcadian draw your swords simultaneously.

ARCADIAN SKILL 7 STAMINA 8

If you win, turn to 261.

83

A couple of Arcadian guards look you up and down, refer to the giant screen and check the picture in their miniature visiscreens – then they start coming towards you, barking instructions into their communicators. You have had it.

84

You turn away, only to find your way barred by the black marketeer's man. 'Just before you go,' says the oily voice of the black marketeer behind you, 'tell me what you are up to. I may want to be cut in.' This treachery makes you angry. But anger lends speed to your reactions: you cut down the man at the door, before he has time to do more than twitch, and spin to face the black marketeer. He moves fast for a heavy man.

BLACK MARKETEEER SKILL 6 STAMINA 10

During the fight, a crate is knocked over and falls into the air-conditioning unit, which sparks and then catches fire. By the time the fight is over, the fire is blazing. If you win, turn to 112.

85

He unlocks the door and you both go down some stairs into the dusty cellars, which are full of objects in packing-cases, show-cases, or just loose. You look around the first cellar for a while, and then stifle an excited cry. There, in a show-case marked 'Purpose Unknown – Possibly Religious Artefacts', is something which you with your training in weaponry recognize as a primitive baryon grenade – and it looks undamaged! You must have it. But the watchman, whom you have insulted, is on the look-out for anything suspicious, and picks up with his antennae that something is going on. He whips out his sword and slashes your arm. Lose 2 STAMINA and 1 SKILL point and turn to 215.

86

You toss the grenade and duck back down the stairs to avoid the blast. When you climb back up, there is little sign of the patrol – or the doors, for that matter. Turn to 381.

87

The door has no handle on the inside. You have no choice but to press one of the buttons on the desk. Turn to 276.

88

You have to backtrack quite a way to find a passage through the cliffs towards the building. But you manage to circle round to the building without

being detected. You watch for some time, but see no guards, so you boldly enter. The station is almost deserted; there are no humans in sight, and it is easy to avoid being spotted by the few Arcadians. You search around for a while, but find nothing. All this time has been wasted, because if you are to get back to the spaceport in time for your flight, you will have to leave *now*. You have failed to contact the underground leader here and learn the final three digits of the code.

89

On the way to the hotel, you notice something odd about the city: in some streets, whole houses have been demolished, even though the surrounding buildings are still standing. It is as if a localized earthquake had struck. You soon arrive at the hotel, which is extremely posh and luxurious. You check in for one night (deduct 375 credits). While you are enjoying a private sauna, the expense begins to seem worth it. Restore 1 STAMINA point. Eventually, feeling refreshed, you wander downstairs to see what edible delights might be on offer, and to give yourself time to think about how to contact the underground. You can either eat in the bar, where



the cost is covered by the cost of your room (turn to 115), or, for an extra 40 credits, you can dine in the restaurant (turn to 138).



90

You talk gently to Musca, trying to persuade him to hand over the phaser, but he has become childish, and stubbornly refuses. Will you try to grab it from him (turn to 59), or continue the gentler approach (turn to 130)?

91

'How much?' they ask. 'Five hundred credits,' you reply. 'Not enough,' they say, licking their lips. Will you tell them that is all you have got (turn to 223), or offer them more (turn to 148)?

92

It is your fighting arm that has been injured. Reduce your STAMINA by 2 points, and your SKILL by 1. If you have not yet done so, you may try the other crack by turning to 355; if you decide that enough is enough, and return to the path below to continue your journey, turn to 10.



93

This group consists of rather friendly – or perhaps just drunk – Southern Arcadians. You introduce yourself humbly as a traveller from Earth and express curiosity about the number of demolished houses in the city. But they avoid the question and turn the conversation round to news from Earth. This is frustrating, but you go along with it. As they give you more drinks, you feel bolder and bolder, until you pretend to have some knowledge of the building trade, and reintroduce the topic of the demolished buildings. 'Well, personally, I blame the cornices we use in our foundations,' says one of the Arcadians. 'Do you use cornices in your foundations on Earth?' Will you answer 'yes' (turn to 248) or 'no' (turn to 70)?



94

You laugh at the absurdity of it: you have been offered knowledge, wealth and power, any of which the computer can surely give, and have resisted them all. As your laughter grows, the imaginary world dissolves, and you are back in the

Arcadian's cabin, strapped to the seat, with the now useless electrodes attached to your skull.

You glance over at the Arcadian. Your victory has done something to him: he is gazing around the room, as if searching for something he has lost. As his eyes meet yours, a flicker of recognition crosses his face and is gone. This is a delicate situation: he may be close to total incompetence, but you are still imprisoned in your seat. Will you order him to free you (turn to 65), or wait for a passing robot (turn to 278)?

95

You turn away, disappointed (lose 1 LUCK point). What can you do now? You slump in a nearby doorway. After a few minutes, you realize that you can only go back to the hostel and try again tomorrow. Just as you get up to go, however, the door behind you opens and rough hands grab you. Will you put up a fight (turn to 156), or are you too depressed to bother (turn to 272)?



96

The black marketeer is well pleased with your work: you have made him a tidy profit. You decide that it

is safe to ask about a sword. 'No problem,' he says. 'I managed to get hold of a batch a couple of weeks ago. Because you have worked for me, I'll let you have it for only 200 credits.' He sends his man – the only other person in the room now – to get it. When you have it safely in your hands, you pay him and turn to go. Turn to 84.

97

You tell her that you have heard the university encourages revolutionary ideas, and that you need to get in touch with someone who knows about this. 'Is that all?' she laughs. 'Listen, there are very, very few students who would spy for the Arcadians. Even those who aren't actively involved in demonstrations or anything aren't unsympathetic. We're students – that's what it's all about. The only students you have to watch out for are members of the Black Eye group. I think you should go and have a chat with old Professor Zacharias in the Arts Faculty upstairs. Tell him Mehita sent you. Take a note of his room number, 239; otherwise the floor's like a maze and you'll never find him.' Mehita's cheerfulness lifts your spirits, and you may add 1 LUCK point. But will you go upstairs as she suggests (turn to 258), or will you decide it is safer to leave the university (turn to 235)?

98

Test your Luck. If you are Lucky, you fall down the last bit of the cliff for 2 STAMINA points of bruises, and you break the end off the staff; but you keep the rest with you, having risked so much to bring it down. Then turn to 147 to continue your journey. If you are Unlucky, you fall from a great height and are smashed on the path below.

99

As you walk along, you notice that the city is laid out very regularly on a square grid pattern. The hostel is at the north end of North 23 – East 5 Street, and the next block south starts at the top of North 22 – East 5 Street. The buildings are all very alike, except for the Temple of the Five Suns, which towers above the rest of the city and is a famous landmark; it is the centre of the Imperial religion on Tropos – the five suns being the suns of the planets of the Empire.

After wandering along the main roads for quite a way, heading generally south and east, you realize that this is getting you nowhere fast. There is hardly likely to be a signpost saying, 'Fission Chips – third block on the left – rebels and spies welcome!' You are also getting tired and hungry: reduce your STAMINA by 2 points. You decide you had better ask the way in a shop, but there are only two small shops around: the rest are automated hypermarkets. Will you ask at the grocer's (turn to 152) or the hardware shop (turn to 382)?

100

As you go further into the cave, you notice a smell of sulphur, or something like it. It is not too strong, however, and you take it as a good sign. If there is a slight vent to the turbulent volcanic interior of the planet, then the cave should stay above freezing all night. You find a reasonably comfortable spot and settle down. If you have some food, turn to 73; otherwise turn to 18.

101

On the way to the hotel, you notice something odd about the city: in some streets, whole houses have been demolished, even though the surrounding houses are still standing. It is as if a localized earthquake had struck. You soon arrive at the hotel. Porky, who is sitting on the steps outside, has certainly earned his nickname – he is very fat. You check into your room for one night (deduct 50 credits), shower, change and eat a snack. Restore 2 STAMINA points. Now you feel ready to tackle the problems facing you. You decide to start by questioning Porky. Will you ask him about Radix in general (turn to 77), or ask him to explain the phenomenon of the demolished houses (turn to 306)?

102

The humans in blue uniforms are the engineering and technical staff. You approach one with your question, and he tells you that the agricultural



station is about ten kilometres to the north-east of the spaceport, over rough and undeveloped ground. He says that if you have a pass, the shuttle helicopter is efficient; otherwise it is a difficult journey on foot. Will you ask him how to get a pass (turn to 38), or will you leave him and try elsewhere for a sword (turn to 137)?

103

You chat for a while about the weather, and gradually bring the conversation round to politics and less innocent topics. But these attempts to draw the others out fall on deaf, or perhaps cautious, ears. One of them, a young woman, gets up to leave. On the way out, she whispers something to the doorman, who goes over to the barman. Will you follow her (turn to 75), or stay put (turn to 280)?

104

He is not expecting this; the door crashes into him and sends his phaser flying under the sensorama console. You both draw your swords simultaneously.

ARCADIAN

SKILL 7

STAMINA 8

If you win, turn to 315.



105

'At the risk of making you suspicious of me,' you say, 'I must ask you for proof that you are the underground. My mission is so important that I cannot tell you about it unless I know who you are.'

'I can tell you only this,' replies Bellatrix. 'We follow a strict code of honour, because without it we are no better than Arcadians.' You can tell from her tone that she's off on one of her favourite topics. She goes on for quite a while, but her 'code' boils down to two points: that liberation is possible, and that no one – not even an Arcadian – is guilty without evidence. You don't quite follow the more abstract parts of her speech, but she is a fine speaker and you can see how she might be the leader of a group of tough men. More to the point, her passion is unmistakably genuine and, since you already know that the underground on Tropos has a strict code, you are convinced that you are in the right place. Turn to 168.



106

The crowd goes wild with delighted approval. But you scarcely have time to draw breath before the gateway gapes again, and a Scabrok appears. It goes on six legs, each of which is tipped with long claws; its tough hide is covered with short, spiky hair. If you know the Scabrok's weakness, turn to the relevant reference. Otherwise, just fight it.

SCABROK

SKILL 8

STAMINA 14

If you win, turn to 54.

107

The Arcadian is unprepared for such an assault. On this planet they are not used to coping with violent rebels, so he is unarmed. Being armed, you may add 1 SKILL point for this fight only; you can use the rules for unarmed combat, if you prefer.

ARCADIAN

SECRETARY

SKILL 7

STAMINA 8

If you win, *Test your Luck*. If you are Lucky, turn to 15; if you are Unlucky, turn to 150.

108

You follow the winding path for a couple of kilometres. Suddenly, your attention is caught by a shadow on the path. It's not that the shadow is particularly odd in itself – it's that there is nothing around to cast it! And it is moving towards you!

When it is about a metre away, it stops. To your

amazement, a shaft of light emerges from the ground where the shadow is. Within the shaft is a form of some kind, which is constantly changing. If this is science, it is beyond human or Arcadian knowledge. You appear to be in the presence of some unknown force. It does not *seem* hostile, but being alien it is difficult to judge. Will you run away from this encounter (turn to 120), or wait and see what happens (turn to 236)?

109

When you get there, there is no sign of the Adolpho. Could the grocer have been misleading you? Or have you made a mistake? At any rate, curfew is not far off. You have to take a chance and ask an Arcadian policeman the way. There are plenty around, and you approach a group of three. 'Excuse me, sir.' 'What do you want, *punk*?' 'Can you tell me the way to the Adolpho videorama?' 'Of course: due south for a block. But it was shut down for showing subversive movies, with human heroes. Here – let *me* give you a show: you can see some stars.' He whacks you on the head with the shaft of his sword (deduct 2 STAMINA points). You reel away, followed by the harsh laughter of the policemen. Turn to 204.

110

Now you are inside an arsenal, which stretches away underground for many metres. It would be an understatement to say that you could start a revolu-

tion with this lot – you could annihilate the galaxy! But your requirements are not so extreme. You have time to take any *two* of the following: a sealed tube of elmonite explosive, a limpet mine, a photon grenade, a hand-phaser, and an infra-red scanner. Note down what you take, and turn to 348.

111

You have interpreted his remark correctly as an offer to show you around, which you want to refuse. The archaeological exhibits are fascinating. It seems that there was a civilization on Radix before the human colonists arrived in the twenty-second century, which utterly destroyed all its major centres early in the twenty-first century in an all-out phacium war. Phacium bombs leave no traces, but a number of objects from scattered outposts survived. Archaeologists have even pieced together evidence that suggests that these earlier Radicians used to send saucer-shaped scouts around the galaxy.

You spend an enjoyable time looking around. When you have finished, will you ask the watchman what is through the other door (turn to 356), or do you feel that you have spent enough time on this and that now you should go to the university (turn to 146)?



112

The fire is preventing you from making what could have been a very profitable search. You have time to grab only one object. Roll one die. If the number is even, turn to 122; if it is odd, turn to 253.

113

You succeed in getting an arm free, while at the same time landing a kick on Indus's instep. The fight is on. This is unarmed combat, so follow those rules, and you must fight both of them at the same time. That means that you must choose each Attack Round who you are attacking and conduct a normal Attack Round against him. You must also roll each time for your other opponent, but nothing will happen unless his Attack Strength is higher than yours, in which case he will injure you: you cannot injure him under any circumstances, until you choose to attack him.

	SKILL	STAMINA
GRUS	5	8
INDUS	6	8

If you win, turn to 9.

114

Your path winds through a rocky gorge, which narrows until there is only room for one person to squeeze between the two cliffs. Then, laid out in front of you on a plain, is the agricultural station. There are fields of experimental shrubs being tested

for survival in this harsh climate, which are being tended by human workers; and beyond the fields is the station itself, a building insulated within a thermodome. Will you back into the rocks and make your way round to the building (turn to 88), or approach some of the humans in the fields, who appear to be unguarded (turn to 22)?

115

The bar is very crowded. It is obviously a popular meeting-place, and today there is a reception on as well, apparently for a South Arcadian wedding. Several of the guests are already a bit the worse for drink. You get a drink and some food (gain 3 STAMINA points if you have not dined already), and then drift around the room, eavesdropping on conversations to see if anyone here might be of use to you. You hear what's on at the sensorama, and several versions of what the bride's mother said to the in-laws, but you also hear snatches of two conversations which could be interesting. Which group will you join: the one discussing the possibility of human rebellion (turn to 289), or the one discussing the rebuilding programme in the city (turn to 93)?

116

You realize that your only chance is to go along with this vile experiment. Your scientific training tells you that there is a weakness in the device: if you have enough will-power to resist the brainwashing,



since you will be linked directly to the Arcadian's brain you may be able to turn the device against him. It's risky, but it's your only hope. Because the Arcadian knows no other existence except as part of the colony or ant-heap, this possibility has not occurred to him. He reckons that what is true for him – what he calls the 'glory' of working for the computer – must be true for everyone else too. Turn to 300.

117

They obviously used the house as a place to stash their stolen goods. You decide not to stay long, but you soon uncover 500 credits, a ziridium-plated bracelet, and an infra-red scanner. You may take any of these items and then leave. Turn to 132.

118

When you arrive at the spaceport of the capital city of Arcadion, you dare not take the phaser, in case of being searched. You quickly get through the spaceport officials, on the pretence of taking this opportunity to see around 'the glorious centre of our illustrious Empire', as you put it. You calculate that you have a lead of about half an hour, while the two Arcadians are missed and discovered, and the authorities guess where you have gone; so you must not spend too long getting to the computer building. Turn to 185.

119

It doesn't take long to find the information you are looking for. A certain Professor Zacharias in the history department of the Arts Faculty is on record as possibly being the rebel leader on Radix. You make a print-out of this information. If you killed Porky to get this information, turn to 209; otherwise, turn to 74.

120

You head across the countryside to your right, hoping to rejoin the other branch of the path. But after a short while, you have to stop and rest: the going is extremely difficult. And there is the shaft of light beside you! This time it speaks: 'Earthling, where *zplaran?*' At least, that's what the last word sounds like. The voice is strangely metallic and hollow; it certainly doesn't come from any living being that you can imagine. Perhaps it is a robot of some kind. If it is, then you could attack it. Is this what you choose to do (turn to 179), or will you try to talk back to it, as it inches ever closer to you (turn to 195)?



121

There is no time to move further down the street – you will have to try the house opposite. You have hardly started your urgent pounding when the door swings open. 'Quickly!' hisses a human voice. 'This door will only hold 'em off for a few minutes.' He shuts and bolts the aneph-wood door, and takes you into a room in the back of the house. The Arcadians are already splitting the door with their weapons; but your new-found friend seems strangely confident. 'Just watch this,' he says. As the door gives way, he detonates a mine, which was buried under the floorboards. When the smoke begins to clear and the debris has settled down, you clamber over the bodies into the street. One Arcadian is limping away; the others are all dead. 'Very successful,' says the man, 'but the last of my explosives. I hope you're worth it. Now come with me. Don't worry about those scum opposite – Grus and his friend – we'll deal with them. We set up this house to keep an eye on them.' Will you go with him as he says (turn to 41), or say that you must go after the escaping Arcadian (turn to 283)?

122

The object you grabbed was a pair of wire-cutters. The fire is bound to attract unwelcome attention. You decide to leave the spaceport immediately. Turn to 336.

123

You follow the passage as it curves round to the north. Eventually you come to a junction where you may head west (turn to 8) or east (turn to 39).

124

On your way back, you run into a North Arcadian. 'Halt!' he cries. 'This area is prohibited for humans.' You rush into the attack, but reduce your SKILL by 1 point for this fight for being unarmed.

NORTH ARCADIAN SKILL 6 STAMINA 8

The Arcadian has room to swing his tail. Every Attack Round, whatever the result of the dice rolls, roll an extra die: on 5 or 6, the Arcadian has succeeded in swiping you with his tail, and you must reduce your STAMINA by 2 points. If you win, you may take his sword, but you will have to leave the spaceport immediately, since the hunt will now be on. Turn to 151.

125

The doorman reappears by your side. 'Now, will you do as you're told and beat it?' he hisses. 'You've shown how good you are with a sword and all that, but the club will be closed down now, thanks to you.' The sound of a patrol approaching at the double can already be heard. Will you insist on staying, perhaps to pretend you were an innocent bystander (turn to 184), or leave (turn to 252)?



126

Central Arcadians are well known for their arrogance. 'Your puny threats don't worry me, human,' he replies. 'I can pilot this ship as well as you. But you have more pluck than most of your kind. Instead of killing you now, I will use you in an experiment: a courageous guinea-pig would be interesting. I myself have developed a device which is more reliable than the empathic receiver and can be used on humans. I am taking poor Musca back for interrogation, and then he will be the first Arcadian to undergo the new process. You have earned the honour of being the first human.' He locks Musca in your cabin and frogmarches you back to his room. Will you attempt to escape (turn to 340) or not (turn to 387)?

127

You scrape your leg against a packing-case and cut it badly on a projecting nail. Lose 1 STAMINA point. The passage leads into another cellar, with one exit straight ahead and another in the southern wall. Will you go straight ahead (turn to 333) or south (turn to 221)?

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128

Will you risk using the jet pack, despite its lack of fuel, to propel you over the fence? If so, turn to 57; if not, turn to 2.

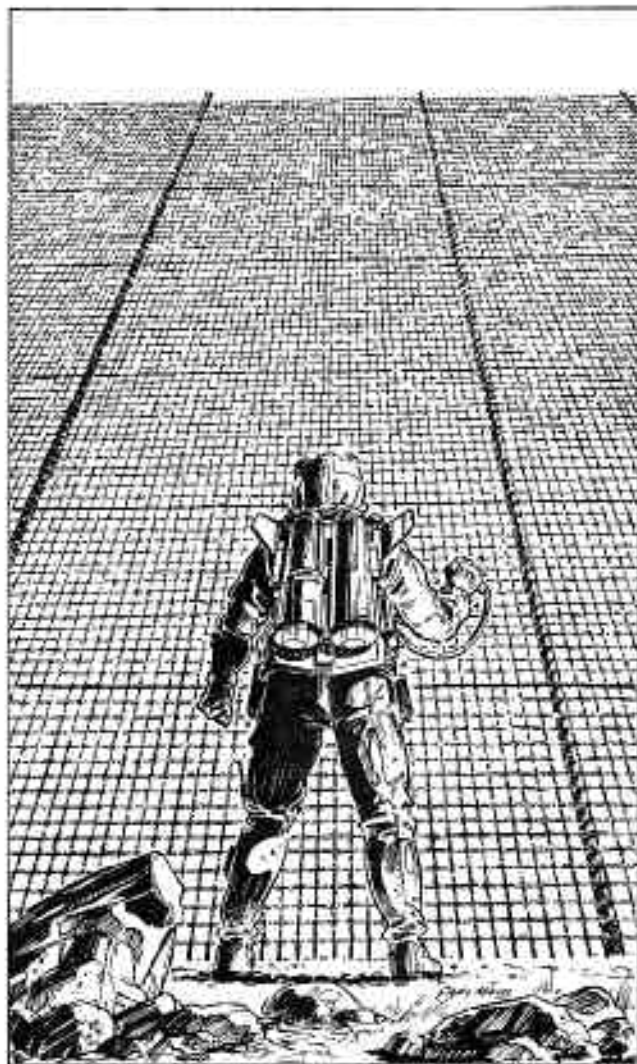
129

'You lie!' shouts the policeman. 'You know full well that there are no space-pirates these days. We rule space with an iron fist; no pirate dare show so much as a tail-jet. You must have something to hide - let's find out what.' He presses a button on the desk: guards pour in and pin you to the wall. You are helpless to prevent them from searching you and finding your laser sword. 'So,' sneers the policeman, 'you desire only to serve, eh? I wonder if this sword works . . .'

Not only have you failed in your mission, but the chances are, with Arcadian techniques of torture, that you will be forced to confess what you know about SAROS. You have let down the whole of mankind.

130

At last he hands the phaser over, and you can begin to question him. But it soon becomes clear that you



are going to get nowhere. If you have a mind-probe, you can use that (turn to 153); otherwise you give up and turn to 118.

131

Now what will you do? You already know that there is no escape from the passage behind you, and ahead there is only the arena. You still have to win the two fights in the arena before the aliens will let you go. What a waste of valuable STAMINA. Turn to 313.



132

You lose yourself in the crowds on the main street. You really must find your way to the Fission Chips soon, or it will be curfew. Also, you are getting very hungry (deduct 2 STAMINA points). You decide to go into a grocer's shop to buy some food and perhaps ask the way as well: it is one of the few small shops around; the rest are vast automated hypermarkets. Turn to 152.

133

When you get your free attack on the Scabrok, you fail to wound it particularly badly, and cause it only



2 STAMINA points of damage. So you fight the beast as follows:

SCABROK

SKILL 8

STAMINA 12

If you win, turn to 54.

134

Gain 4 STAMINA points for a fine dinner and a good night's rest. If you have an appointment to keep in the morning, turn to 376; otherwise, turn to 317.

135

The dead Throttlebush still provides excellent shelter, for this night, at any rate. Do you have any food? If so, you may eat it and restore 2 STAMINA points, and then 2 more for the night's rest. If you do not, restore only 2 points for your sleep. In the morning you follow a path heading roughly north-east, until it divides. Will you branch right (turn to 171) or left (turn to 108)?





136

After a while, the man's sobs die down, and he lies back on his bed, staring vacantly at the mouldy ceiling. Suddenly there is a commotion downstairs. You jump up, just as one of the guards from outside the hostel runs into the room brandishing a whippy. 'The receptionist has been murdered,' he shouts. 'Which one of you dogs did it? Not that it matters – ten human lives for every Arcadian, and you two will be first.'

He approaches your companion, who has remained lying on the bed as if he didn't care about death or didn't believe he would die. You cannot stand still and let a fellow human die. You pull out your sword and leap into the attack.

GUARD

SKILL 6

STAMINA 8

Every other Attack Round, roll one die. If you roll 5 or 6, the guard has managed to get a hit on you with his tail, whatever the result of that Attack Round otherwise, and you must deduct 2 STAMINA points. If you win, turn to 268.

137

You decide that your best bet is to get a sword from an Arcadian. Turn to 16.

138

You have a fantastic meal (cross 40 credits off your *Adventure Sheet*). The Radicians, who enjoy the good things in life, have perfected the art of cooking food

which is pleasing to both the eye and the taste-buds, and also highly nutritious. You may restore 3 STAMINA points. The waiters in the restaurant are all human, apart from the imperious head waiter, who watches everything with an eagle eye. One of the waiters comes over to inquire whether you would like anything else. He talks most peculiarly: 'Another meal course, sir, or some parkin?' You tell him you've had plenty, and get up to leave. Will you go to the bar (turn to 115), or do you have an appointment to keep (turn to 194)?

139

Turn to 177.

140

Your suspicious behaviour – poking around here and there, knocking on doors and asking questions – has been noticed by an Arcadian patrol. Their leader, a burly brute of a Northern Arcadian, calls on you to halt. You make a run for it. *Test your Luck*. If you are Lucky, turn to 233; if you are Unlucky, turn to 330.

141

By clearing your mind, you become calm and fearless, which prepares you for the coming test. You may gain 1 SKILL point while this mental battle lasts, even if that takes you over your *Initial* score. Turn to 55.

142

You find yourself in a cellar with further exits in the eastern and western walls. Will you turn back (turn to 221), west (turn to 324) or east (turn to 333)?

143

You fall on to one of the spikes of the plant, which pierces your leg. Deduct 2 STAMINA points, and hobble on into the cave. Turn to 100.



144

'Pirates!' scoffs the policeman. 'I am continually astonished by the stupidity of you humans. We control space; no pirate dare appear. You are thinking of the dark age before the foundation of the Empire and the establishment of peace. But there are worse crimes than stupidity. You can go – but I'll be watching you!' You realize that he is right; you have been stupid, and have jeopardized your mission already. Turn to 370.

145

Inside, you are led past stacks of crates and boxes up to a heavy-jowled human, who is sitting behind a

desk. 'What is going on here?' he demands, with scarcely a glance up from his papers. If you killed a human on the way here, turn to 28; otherwise turn to 187.

146

The university, which is only for humans, is a small affair these days, occupying a single large building on the outskirts of the city. Arcadian guards are everywhere, since they have to make their presence felt in this hotbed of possible rebellion. Will you go to the Science Floor (turn to 266) or to the Arts Floor (turn to 258)?

147

In a short while, your path is joined by another to the left. Will you continue straight on (turn to 114), or take this branch (turn to 108)?

148

You've fallen for the oldest con trick in the book, and have just signed your own death warrant. As soon as you let them know that you are in a position to bargain, they realize that you have a lot of money on you. With one swift move, Indus follows up a jab to the solar plexus with a rabbit punch on the neck. While you are dazed and winded, Grus gets your sword . . . Your adventure is over.

149

This is a very handsome, very finely crafted piece of equipment – but of no use whatsoever under the present circumstances. If you have an alternative, return to 381 and choose again; if you have no alternative, you have failed.

150

An Arcadian guard happens to be passing down the corridor outside. He stops to investigate the commotion, and bursts into the room just as you are finishing off the secretary. Now you will have to fight him, too. He's an ugly specimen: his face is disfigured by a long scar running from eye to mouth.

GUARD

SKILL 8

STAMINA 10

If you win, turn to 66.

151

Test your Luck. If you are Lucky, turn to 336; if you are Unlucky, turn to 249.





152

As you enter the shop, your hunger really gets the better of you and, to the astonishment of the human grocer, you purchase 20 credits' worth of fruit and nuts and gobble them down on the spot. 'Must be some new terrestrial fad,' you hear the grocer mutter to himself, but he is pleased to see a human spending money on such luxuries. Bread and *oom*, a porridge made from Tropician beans, is staple diet for humans. 'Ah, that's better,' you declare (restore 4 STAMINA points). Will you now ask him the way to the Fission Chips (turn to 335) or to the Adolpho videorama (turn to 260)?

153

You know that using the mind-probe will almost certainly destroy what's left of his mind, but you feel you have no choice. After clearing through a morass of jumbled information, you find something useful: one of the Arcadian arsenals is located in the basement of the computer building and has an entry-code of 110. Gain 1 LUCK point and turn to 118, as you are nearing Arcadion.

154

You find yourself in a wash-room – and it has a hatch out on to the street! The hatch is locked, however, and the search-party is right behind you. Roll one die. If the number is even, turn to 166; if it is odd, turn to 50.

155

'The bitter sea,' you reply.

'I know none of the digits,' he begins, and your heart sinks. 'All I know is that the whole sequence of digits is a palindrome - it is the same written forwards or backwards.'

Gain 1 LUCK point. This should be enough for you to complete the code. He also gives you some food, a grey uniform which you could use for getting back into the spaceport, and enough quandar-root lotion to heal 4 STAMINA points of injuries. You thank him over your shoulder as you race off. Turn to 163.



156

There are too many to overcome - and they're human! You succeed only in reducing your STAMINA by 2 points before being knocked out. Turn to 207.

157

Your opponent has no weapon either, so this is unarmed combat.

HALMURIAN

SKILL 6

STAMINA 8

If you win, you may search the body (turn to 12) or leave (turn to 124).

158

If you are at Porky's Palace, turn to 3; if you are at the Zodiac, turn to 31.

159

The room beyond the Dragon is piled high with treasure, including the fabled Minarong crystal with its all-healing powers. Maybe some of this imaginary treasure will help you in the imaginary world you are in. Will you take some (turn to 42) or not (turn to 391)?

160

Test your Luck. If you are Lucky, he merely confiscates the items (cross them off your Equipment List), but lets you through - turn to 374. If you are Unlucky, he hauls you away for intense interrogation, from which you will eventually emerge with your body broken and your memory erased.

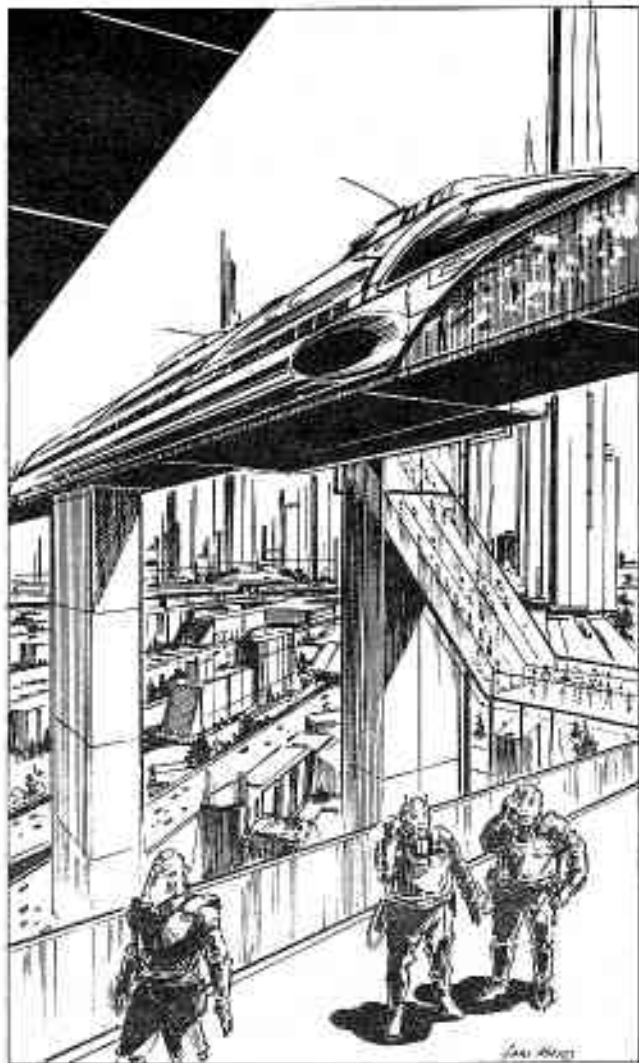


161

The air in the centre, where the trunk is, is not far off stifling, but at least it is warm. But what is this? The tendrils, having lured you to their core, are pressing around you in a solid mass, apart from the few that are snaking forward to catch your arms and legs. This plant is perfectly adapted to the Halmurian environment: its warmth keeps it alive and also attracts other creatures, which then become its prey. You will have to earn your night's rest by fighting this Throttlebush. It has **STAMINA 14**, but no **SKILL** to speak of; so, depending how much **LUCK** you use, you have at least seven Attack Rounds in which to defeat it, by hacking away at its nerve-centre, the trunk. Roll two dice for each Attack Round. If the number rolled is 1-6, the Throttlebush has reduced your **STAMINA** by 2 points; if it is 7-12, you have reduced its **STAMINA** by 2 points. If you win, turn to **135**.

162

You get off and jump on to the escalator to street level. Looking up behind you, you can see two Arcadians, still coming after you, and talking into their comlinks. Once on the street, you duck down the first side-street you come to. *Test your Luck*. If you are Lucky, turn to **183**; if you are Unlucky, turn to **373**.



163

Your journey back to the spaceport is uneventful, but tiring in this high gravity. You would lose STAMINA if it were not for the food that Dorado gave you. Will you use the grey uniform as a disguise for getting back into the spaceport (turn to 344), or would you prefer to use wire-cutters, if you have them (turn to 302)?

164

When you have disembarked, you register your visit to Tropos, as all off-planet humans are required to. Then you enter Customs, under the keen eyes not just of the Customs officer, but also of a squad of soldiers. They do not give you a body-search, however, since they rely on a metal-detector. But your sword has been chemically treated to avoid such detection, and your money-belt has no metal in it. You breathe a sigh of relief and pass through Customs, but you are immediately surrounded by the soldiers, who march you off to a room in the spaceport. Sitting behind a desk is a Central Arcadian who, though he wears civilian clothes, somehow has such an air of cruel authority that he can only belong to the Secret Police. You notice that the desk has two buttons on it, but you do not know what they are for. The policeman dismisses the guards to wait outside, and barks out his question: 'Why did you attempt to escape your escort?' Will you try to bluff your way out of the situation (turn to 246), or draw your sword and fight it out (turn to 17)?

165

One of the Arcadian guards follows you from the spaceship. By the time you are in the deserted parts of the spaceport, his suspicions are thoroughly aroused, and he stops you and demands to search your pack, which is full of contraband. You will have to fight him. Reduce your SKILL by 1 point for this fight for being unarmed.

GUARD

SKILL 6

STAMINA 8

If you win, you ditch the items from your pack: you have no further use for the black marketeer, because you can take the guard's sword. But you will have to leave the spaceport immediately, because the hunt will be on. Turn to 336.

166

You fumble with the watchman's bunch of keys and fail to find the right one. You are cut down where you stand.



167

You tell the Arcadian that you know what's up with Musca (who is by now gibbering quietly in a corner of the room), and point out that he cannot kill you, just in case he needs a pilot on this trip. You add that you will make sure that this damaging information gets out to other humans. So you have thrown down the gauntlet. What will his reaction be? Turn to 126.



168

You take the plunge: surely, they must be the underground. You tell them everything about your mission, and even drop the names of one or two people back on Earth who they might know of, to make your story more plausible. Once you have finished, the three humans huddle together. This is a good sign: if they were traitors, they would have finished with you by now. At last, they separate. Bellatrix speaks again: 'Very good. You seem to know more about this mission than any Arcadian spy would know. There is just one last thing we want you to do. The barman at the Fission Chips is a double agent – return there and kill him.' Do you agree (turn to 68) or not (turn to 274)?

169

The door to the basement is ten-centimetre reinforced laser-proof criton. No way are you going to get through that! But there is a small panel similar to the one you encountered on the outside of this building. If you know the code, turn to the paragraph whose decimal number looks the same as this binary number. Otherwise you return to the computer room (turn to 381).

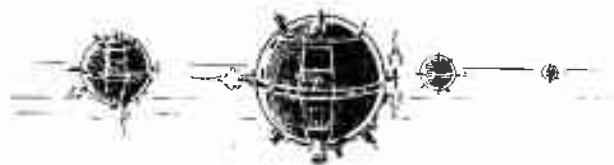
170

The lecture theatre is fairly packed. Professor Zacharias seems to be popular, but you cannot see why. His subject is history, and he drones on about Arcadian-human relations in the twenty-fourth century. You find yourself drifting off to sleep . . . You wake up with a start when your shoulder is jogged by a janitor who is cleaning the room – which is otherwise deserted! You race back to Professor Zacharias's room, only to find a message on the door: 'Called away on urgent business. Back tomorrow, 11 a.m.' You turn away, cursing your dozeiness. Lose 1 LUCK point, but restore 2 STAMINA points for the rest. Leave the university by turning to 235.

171

You walk on for about an hour, and then stop to rest and shelter from the heat: gain 1 STAMINA point. While gazing idly into the sky, you notice a large bird coming into land on the rock-face above you.

What strikes you in particular is that the bird is carrying something which flashes as it catches the sunlight. Do you want to investigate this further (turn to 383), or carry on with your journey (turn to 147)?



172

After several further more or less polite attempts to wake him up, you decide to go round to the back of the reception counter so that you can nudge him awake. As you walk round, something glinting on the floor catches your eye, and you stoop to pick it up. It is a large button, from a jacket, on which there is a curious design of an eagle clutching a scroll in its talons. Then, from your crouched position, you notice something else – a pool of blood under the Arcadian's chair. He's been murdered! You pocket the button, realizing that it could be a clue, and start to move back. But in your haste, you trip over a robo-mop, which lets out a protesting whine and brings the two guards rushing in from outside.

'He's dead!' you gasp. 'But it was . . . it wasn't . . . I mean . . .'

'Murderer!' says one of the guards. 'We've caught you red-handed!' They advance on you, whippies at the ready. They are clearly not going to listen to reason – you will have to fight them. From your position behind the reception counter, they can only approach you one at a time, and there is no room for them to use their spiked tails.

	SKILL	STAMINA
First GUARD	6	8
Second GUARD	7	8

During the fight another human comes downstairs. If you win, turn to 268.

173

Of the humans on the base, some are wearing grey uniforms, some blue. You want to ask where the agricultural station is. Will you ask someone in grey (turn to 310) or in blue (turn to 102)?

174

After a while you hit the jackpot. A section of the file is devoted to 'Activists – Potential and Actual'. You are so engrossed in the details that you do not hear the approaching guards until it is too late.

175

'Now, Mizar,' you say, authoritatively, 'I must go. But first tell me what you know about the digits of the Arcadian computer.'



'What on Halmuris are you talking about?' says Mizar, as the Arcadians overwhelm Dorado and pour into the clearing. Whether or not you escape this immediate danger, you have failed in your mission.

176

A smooth voice from the computer says: 'So sorry. Taxis are not allowed in the city. Please keep Tropos free of pollution. As you are terrestrial, I will take you to the hostel.' Turn to 196, but subtract 1 LUCK point first.

177

You dash outside to wait for the explosion – and come face to face with a platoon of North Arcadians, spiked tails restlessly swinging from side to side. Curiously, they sense that you are expecting something, so they do not immediately rush in for the kill, but wait to see what will happen. The explosion seems to take for ever in coming – but there it is! Then the Arcadians close in – you must have done something wrong.

178

The buildings, even here on the outskirts of the city, are impressive. The architects have taken full advantage of the low gravity of the planet, and vast towers and arches soar gracefully into the sky. The colour of the local stone is very pale blue, but different coloured synthetic materials are also used

and look very attractive. Near the university is the archaeology museum, which you decide to visit, having heard that it is rather interesting.

The museum consists of a single large room, with show-cases around the walls and two rows of exhibits down the centre of the room. There is a closed door at the other end of the room. At the entrance, there is an armed South Arcadian watchman, who calls you over, but it seems he only wants to pass the time of day.

'A ziridium mine in the desert,' he says. 'Yes, I'd noticed that there aren't many visitors,' you reply, correctly. He nods, as if his next remark follows logically: 'As it is written in the *Book of the Five Suns*, "Contact costs nothing; if there is cost it is not pure contact."'

Will you reply, 'No thanks, I'll browse around myself' (turn to 111), or 'It's nice to see someone taking his job seriously' (turn to 19)?

179

'So? Earthling, in me all forms. This one for you.' The shimmering cloud within the shaft of light takes on a horrifying appearance, which is so alien that you can hardly believe it really exists. You seem to see a creature with four arms sprouting from a body; each hand is armed with a scimitar, axe, club or scythe; her hair stands up like living fire and is adorned with a tiara of shrunken heads. A cobra

winds itself around her hips. 'Now, unbeliever,' this image seems to say, in a voice which is surprisingly quiet, but laden with power, 'I am Kali, bringer of life through death. For you must die before you can live again.' Hallucination or not, you must defend yourself against this powerful being.

SHAPE-CHANGER SKILL 10 STAMINA 14

If you win, the thing reverts to its form as a shaft of light, which then disappears back into a shadow and speeds away. You haven't the faintest idea what has been going on. Turn to 114.



180

You press the button and wait, heart in throat. You don't have to wait long. Guards pour into the room to answer the call. They don't need to ask you what has been going on: your own dishevelled state and the mangled corpse of the policeman tell their story all too clearly. You draw your sword in desperation, but are overwhelmed by sheer force of numbers. You have failed in your mission.

181

You walk for half an hour in a southerly direction, searching in increasing desperation for some shelter from the freezing night. But all in vain. The sudden drop in temperature catches you still out in the open, and you fall, as if poleaxed, to the ground.

182

You pass the time pleasantly, eating (deduct 20 credits and gain 2 STAMINA points) and chatting with students. They are fascinated to know that you are from Earth, which they regard as a mixture of paradise and a stone-age settlement. You have a struggle to set them right on both scores. Just as you are about to leave, a student, with a badge portraying a large black eye, gets up and begins to make a speech. Before he has got very far, the place is in uproar: a mini-riot erupts. It is not too serious, but it delays you. You race back to Professor Zacharias's room, only to find a message on the door: 'Called away on urgent business. Back tomorrow, 11 a.m.' You turn away, cursing your ill fortune (lose 1 LUCK point), and leave the university (turn to 235).



183

You lose yourself in the shadows, hardly daring to breathe – and your pursuers pass by on the main moving pavement. You follow the twists and turns of the side-streets, always keeping the overhead monorail in sight to guide you in the right direction for your hotel. Turn to 285.



184

'I'm sorry, friend,' says the doorman. 'You leave me no choice.' Without further ado, and before you can react, he delivers a killing punch to your windpipe. Hopefully, he will have saved the rebel operation on Tropos, but you will never know.

185

There are very few humans on Arcadion, and you have no time to waste. You approach the first human you meet and ask him the way to the computer building. He tells you the way with some enthusiasm, as if he was proud to help a stranger find the centre of the Empire. If you go straight to the computer building, turn to 219. If you need to know where an arsenal is and, bearing in mind that you will probably meet no other humans, you want to ask this person where it is, turn to 284.

186

You are walking along a dusty corridor. The statue of a grotesque ancient god looms out of the darkness, scaring you witless for a moment. Lose 1 LUCK point. There is a passage off to the south (turn to 384), or you can continue straight on (turn to 254).

187

Will you ask if he can supply you with a pass for the shuttle service to the agricultural station (turn to 385) or with a sword (turn to 286)?



188

You clear your throat – no response. You say, 'Oy! Excuse me!' – no response. Will you now wait (turn to 29) or will you keep trying to attract his attention (turn to 172)?



189

The man thanks you and offers you some food, which you gratefully accept. Gain 3 STAMINA points. While you are eating, he explains that he used to work at the nearby agricultural station but was caught stealing food to supplement his meagre rations; now he'll never be able to go back. You tell him that within a few days he may find himself free of his masters; then you ask if he knows anything about the underground. He does not, but he tells you that at this time of day there are no humans in the station itself: they are all out in the fields. He directs you to the agricultural station. Gain 1 LUCK point, and turn to 114.





190

You run through the twisting streets and lanes, but wherever you run, the robot follows, adjusting its speed to yours exactly, and staying out of range of the destructive thumps which it sends out at irregular intervals. You realize that you will only exhaust yourself to no purpose if you continue to run. You must stand and fight.

STREET FIGHTER SKILL 9 STAMINA 16

Its attacks will increase in effectiveness as the buildings around get weaker. Its first successful Attack Round will cause you 2 STAMINA points of injury, the next 3, the next 4, and so on, as larger and larger pieces of masonry strike you. (You can use LUCK in the usual way to reduce the injuries by 1 point each time.) If you carry on the fight as normal and win, turn to 309. But does the robot have a weakness? Roll two dice. If the number rolled is greater than your SKILL, turn to 227; if the number rolled is less than or equal to your SKILL, turn to 282.

191

En route for Halmuris, you may restore your STAMINA by half as much again as your current STAMINA score, rounding odd numbers down, and remembering that you cannot exceed your Initial score. You review the problems you face: you have no equipment or weapon, though you still have your money, and there is a spare anti-grav pack on board your ship. Halmuris is a bleak planet: the

terrain is wild and mountainous, and some of the mountains are active volcanoes. It is a planet which is still going through the last violent stages of creation. It is very hot in the daytime, and fatally freezing at night, when the hot, blueish sun sinks below the horizon and the three moons become visible. The moons cause vast tides on the planet. If you have to spend a night out on Halmuris, you would be well advised to choose somewhere warm and far away from water! The inhabitants live in small settlements, which were originally scientific research establishments, and are clustered quite close together, with the spaceport, on the high plateau region in the south of the planet – this is to avoid the huge tides which ravage the lower-lying areas, which are punctuated by sudden inhospitable crags.

The computer feeds you all these data, and also informs you that the alien inhabitants are mostly Central Arcadians, who naturally took over the scientific facilities of the planet. All you know about the underground leader is that he or she is an assistant at the agricultural research settlement.

When you land on Halmuris, you find that your limbs feel heavy. The higher gravity of this planet means that for the duration of your stay here, you must lose 1 SKILL point. This makes finding a weapon even more vital. There are none of the Customs and immigration hassles that you expected. Instead, you are simply ordered to remain

in the spaceport area until your ship is unloaded and your passenger is ready to embark late the next day. It is now mid-afternoon, with four hours to go until sunset. Will you first investigate the possibility of getting hold of a sword (turn to 273) or of learning the whereabouts of the agricultural station (turn to 173)?

192

This action is very noble of you – but even nobility is misplaced sometimes. You are marched away to the Arcadian police headquarters. Before you die in agony, you will reveal all – the codenames, your mission, your connection with SAROS. You have failed utterly.

193

You narrowly miss impaling yourself on one of the vicious-looking spikes of the plant. You pick yourself up and enter the gloom of the cave. Turn to 100.

194

You take the monorail to the public park and find the waiter at the main entrance. 'We've been expecting you,' he says. 'Earth sent another "merchant" to warn us of your arrival. I don't know all the details of your mission, except that you have to meet our leader. I don't know who this is – we work on the basis that each person has contact only with his immediate superior – but I think you could start at the university.' You thank him, and may add 1 LUCK

point. You head for the university. There is a monorail drop station just outside. Will you plunge straight in (turn to 146), or wait around outside for a while (turn to 178)?

195

You pause to think. It occurs to you that it need not necessarily be a robot: the metallic tone of the voice could come from some language translation device. What is this *zplaran* it's asking about? It can speak enough Arcadian to cover everyday objects, it seems. If you have a strange staff or a mind-probe, you could see if one of these is what it wants. Will you try the staff (turn to 267) or the probe (turn to 226)? If you have neither of these, or choose not to give them up, turn to 179.



196

The hostel is a semi-derelict, flea-ridden building – and Tropician fleas have to be seen to be believed! Two Northern Arcadian guards stand by the door, and inside a scruffy Southerner is sitting in a chair, leaning back against the wall, apparently asleep. What an odd set-up! No robot receptionist or computerized check-in. And outside everything is just as old-fashioned. There are no personal or public

overhead monorail systems; the buildings are mostly late twenty-first century and low-lying – and the pollution! To think they haven't yet got around to dealing with it! A sign on the wall says: 'Remember – no vehicles in town. Offenders will be prosecuted.' A typically primitive solution to a primitive problem.

Will you wait for the receptionist to notice you (turn to 29), or draw his attention to your presence (turn to 188)?



197

The man in grey looks at you with terror and scuttles off down a passage, out of sight. Will you ask someone in blue instead (turn to 217), or try to get one off an Arcadian (turn to 16)?





198

You have time to grab *one* of the following, if you have it in your pack and want it. Otherwise, return to the scene of combat.

A can of engine oil

Turn to 256

A hand-klaxon

Turn to 21

A benelo-phosphate strobe

Turn to 79

199

You are acutely conscious of the pounding of Arcadian feet, as you get rid of the last few strands of wire and struggle to get through. But in your haste you have not made a hole that is quite large enough, and you get thoroughly tangled up - an easy target. Your mission ends here.

200

To your horror, you realize that there is a massive identikit hologram of you in the spaceport, with the caption: 'ENEMY OF THE EMPIRE'. It is not an exact likeness, however; the Arcadian who escaped can only have caught a glimpse of you from a distance. *Test your Luck*. If you are Lucky, turn to 318; if you are Unlucky, turn to 83.

201

He pockets the 500 credits (cross them off your *Adventure Sheet*), and seems prepared to do as you suggest. But in fact you have insulted his Radician sense of duty. Turn to 85.

202

You look at Mehita. She is not much younger than you, but your experiences are worlds apart. You feel you cannot talk to her about anything serious. You mumble some excuse and leave. Will you go to the Arts Floor, if you haven't already been there (turn to 258), or leave the university (turn to 235)?

203

Turn to 177.



204

The Fission Chips is in the basement of the former Adolpho videorama. A neon sign, with many bulbs missing, still advertises the last feature, a classic science-fiction comedy from the twentieth century, called 'Star Trek'. You go down the steps which lead to the entrance to the club, and knock on the door. A human face appears at a peep-hole. 'What do you want?' it says aggressively. 'To get in the club, of course,' you reply. 'Who recommended us to you, stranger?' asks the doorman, emphasizing the last word. What will you reply:

'SAROS'?

Turn to 287

'Bellatrix'?

Turn to 240

'The Grand Vizier of Tropos'?

Turn to 45

'No one - I'm from Earth'?

Turn to 326

205

You have fallen for the final trap the machine was offering - power over itself, and therefore over the whole Arcadian race. The computer is subtler than you: you have lowered your defences and are now its slave for ever.

206

The guard is not expecting the attack, so you get in one free assault. Since you are unarmed, roll one die. If you roll 6, you incapacitate the guard immediately. If not, you will have to fight him as follows.

GUARD

SKILL 7

STAMINA 8

If you defeat him, you may take his sword. Turn to 131.



207

You slowly climb back to consciousness. The first thing you are aware of is a splitting headache (deduct 2 STAMINA points – 3 if you have not eaten today). The second thing is that even when you open your eyes, it's still pitch-black. Once you have realized that you are not blind, but that wherever you are is in darkness, you clamber to your feet. Immediately, a bright light stabs your eyeballs; you instinctively cover your face with your arm. Behind the light you can just make out three human shapes, two standing on either side of the third, who is seated at the table.



A woman, who is apparently the one seated, addresses you: 'You seem to know something of our business. That could mean one of two things: either you are an Arcadian spy, or you are one of us from Earth. If the latter is the case, I apologize for the rough treatment you have received from us, but you will understand why this was necessary. Now, explain yourself.'

'I'm looking for Bellatrix,' you begin.

'So you know my codename,' she says. 'That in itself doesn't prove a thing: we may have been infiltrated.'

This is a tricky situation: they are not convinced that you are from SAROS, but are you entirely sure that they are rebels? Will you try to convince them that you are who you say you are (turn to 168), or ask for proof of their identity (turn to 105)?

208

It is surprisingly easy to push your way through the foliage: the tendrils seem to part and then close behind you. This makes you feel uneasy. Will you dash out before you have got too far (turn to 327), or press on to the centre (turn to 161)?

209

You cannot stay in Porky's Palace, but you can easily find another cheap hotel for 75 credits. You must deduct 2 LUCK points for what amounts to the murder of a fellow human. Then turn to 74.

210

You tell him that the rope is for rock-climbing on Halmuris, and that the scanner is for checking your ship's heating system, but he does not quite believe you: the presence of *two* unlikely items in your pack has aroused his suspicions. Roll one die. On 1-2, turn to 396; on 3-6, turn to 160.

211

However much you struggle, you cannot get free. But the fact that they are thieves gives you an idea. 'Look,' you say, 'you already have my sword, which is a rare and valuable weapon these days. Nobody's going to be any the wiser if you just let me go.' They exchange greedy glances, but don't reply immediately. Will you offer them some money as well (turn to 91), or wait a bit (turn to 72)?

212

'What? Oh, yes,' he says; then a spasm of pain passes over his face. 'Who are you? What am I doing here? You're *human*! Guards!' This is one confused Arcadian. No guards arrive, of course, but his shout brings the other Arcadian into the corridor – and he is carrying a phaser!

'What's going on here, Musca?' he demands of the first Arcadian, but there is no reply. 'Your friend has a headache. I'll get the medical robot,' you say eventually.

He takes the first Arcadian, Musca, back to his room, and you notice that he doesn't put his phaser away. Curiouser and curiouser: phasers are only issued in extreme circumstances. Could the confused Arcadian actually be under guard? In the morning, will you try to find out more (turn to 290), or will you bide your time (turn to 247)?



213

When you arrive at the spaceport, you find that there are a great many Arcadian guards mingling with the crowds. If you let an Arcadian escape in Grus's street, turn to 200; if not, turn to 318.

214

You had imagined a human secretary, but find a burly South Arcadian. Of course: the Arcadians would want to keep an eye on the files. He looks at you in surprise: you do not exactly look like an ordinary student. 'Can I help you?' he asks, but his antennae are waving alarmingly. Will you fight him so that you can investigate the files (turn to 107), or consider that they are probably not worth the bother (turn to 58)?

215

Resolve your fight.

WATCHMAN

SKILL 7

STAMINA 8

If you win, you can take the grenade. Turn to 320.

216

Eyes streaming, and choking in the smoke, you race, sometimes leaping, sometimes zigzagging between burning bushes. *Test your Luck*. If you are Lucky, turn to 323; if you are Unlucky, turn to 389.

217

You pick your man carefully, choosing someone who looks tough and self-sufficient. At last he leaves the group he was with, and makes off across a lobby. You catch him up after a few metres, and come straight to the point: 'Whatever you do, don't show surprise on your face,' you say. 'I need a sword. Can you help me?' He looks you up and down, and then says, 'No, I can't. But I know who can, if anyone can. Come with me.' Will you go with him (turn to 399), or leave him and try elsewhere for a sword (turn to 137)?

218

'You're all saying the same thing, really,' you say. The students look at you in disgust. You should know better than to butt in on a group of students: they are arguing because they are friends, not because they disagree with each other. They give you the cold shoulder, and you decide to go up to the Arts Floor, if you haven't been there already (turn to 258); otherwise you leave the university (turn to 235).

219

You are nearing the end of your mission. You have reached the outside of the long, low building where the queen computer is housed – but you know that an Arcadian patrol is not far behind. On the wall by the entrance is a panel consisting of a liquid crystal display and two buttons, marked 1 and 0. This is

what your whole adventure so far has been aiming at – do you have the correct code? You will have to enter the code for the door to open. Convert the binary number to decimal, and turn to the paragraph with that number. If the paragraph makes no sense, you have not entered the correct code, and will be caught by the Arcadian patrol. If you do not know how to convert binary to decimal, here is a table:

DECIMAL	256	128	64	32	16	8	4	2	1
BINARY									

Enter your binary number in the spaces provided. Each time you enter 1, that decimal number is relevant; you can ignore each space which contains 0. Add together all the relevant decimal numbers: the total is the decimal equivalent of the binary number.

220

The guards let you through without further delay. Once inside the spaceport buildings, you shed your disguise and make your way to your spaceship. Turn to 78.



221

You find yourself in a cellar with further exits in the eastern and western walls. Will you turn east (turn to 186) or west (turn to 324)?

222

Turn to 400.



223

'All right,' Grus says eventually. He releases you and sprints over to get the sword. 'No funny business now – I've got the sword.' You hand over the 500 credits from your money-belt, disguising the fact that you have more by pretending to search for the last 100-credit note and by looking depressed about the transaction. Cross the 500 credits off your *Adventure Sheet*. As Grus shoves you out of the door at sword-point, you hear Indus on the visiphone, telling the police where you are. You leave quickly and return to the main road. Until you find another weapon, all your battles must be conducted according to the rules for unarmed combat. Turn to 132.



224

Some sixth sense alerts the guard to your approach, and he wheels round to face you. For this fight, reduce your SKILL by 1 point, because you are unarmed.

ARCADIAN GUARD SKILL 6 STAMINA 10

If you win, you may take his sword, but you will have to leave the spaceport immediately. Turn to 336.

225

Suddenly, a miracle occurs. Humans pour out of nearby buildings, hurl bricks and tiles from the roofs and rush in behind the Arcadians. Though few of them are armed with more than clubs, they make short work of the Arcadians. You join in the fight and do your share, losing only 2 STAMINA points of injury, but restoring 1 LUCK point for your escape.

Afterwards, panting and in pain, but grinning from ear to ear, you thank your saviours. Some of them have already melted away, and others are knocking in the door of Grus's house. It turns out that you have been followed ever since the affair at the spaceport. 'Anyone the Arcadians want to hurt is a potential friend of ours,' explains one, who appears to be the leader. 'But now we must take you to see Bellatrix – we want to know more about you.' 'But that's who I want to meet,' you exclaim. 'We'll see,' is the laconic reply.

Rough hands blindfold you. You are taken into one of the nearby houses, down some steps, and then you get confused: you are led through tunnels that twist and turn, several doorways, and part of the sewage system, to judge by the smell, dankness and weird echoing of your footsteps. The underground on Tropos seems to be literally that, and to have a system of connecting houses. Then, without warning, there is a heavy blow on the back of your head, and you sink into unconsciousness. Turn to 207.

226

'Is this what you want?' you ask, offering the mind-probe. In response, the shimmering seems to grow more intense, and a sudden blast of heat makes you drop the probe and stand back. The probe melts on the ground. If you have the staff, you can try this (turn to 267); if you don't want to, or you don't have it, turn to 179.

227

If the robot does have a weakness, you cannot think of it – there's no time and too much pressure. Return to 190 and fight it normally.



228

The shock-wave of the ziridium blast knocks you unconscious. Deduct 2 STAMINA points and turn to 46.

229

'Suspicious, aren't you?' says Grus. 'Is that the thanks I get? All right, you can come in.' The door is opened by another man, who looks furtively both ways down the side-street before ushering you in and locking the door behind you.

You are shown into a sparsely furnished room. Everything looks harmless enough, but your trained suspicions are suddenly aroused. Just then, Grus shouts, 'Grab him! But watch out – he's armed!' Before you can react, Grus and the other man pin you to the wall and take away your sword, which they throw across the room, so that all their hands are free to keep you where you are.

'Set you up nicely, didn't I?' snarls Grus. 'Though in a way I'm sorry. Me and my buddy Indus here, we're thieves. Got caught by the alien scum.' He spits the word out. 'So now they use us as spies – it's either that or they kill us. I reckon we'll have repaid our debt with this one, Indus.'

You struggle to get free. Roll a die. On 1-3, turn to 211; on 4-6, turn to 113.

230

The Arcadian, whose name turns out to be Musca, is obviously in a confused state; he changes from being friendly to being suspicious at a moment's notice. By cautious probing, you gradually discover that something has gone wrong with the empathic receiver in his brain, which links him to the Arcadian computer. He has held several positions of authority on Halmuris and Arcadion; you guess that the constant decision-making that these jobs involved has begun to free his will from the enslaving grip of the computer. The side-effects include blinding headaches, and a sense of confusion and guilt. If you tread carefully, you have obviously stumbled across what could be a valuable source of information. Gain 1 LUCK point. But before you can ask any further questions, there is a knock at the door, and the voice of the other Arcadian is heard: 'Do you by any chance have my friend in there?' His pleasant tone puts you on your guard. Will you admit that Musca is with you (turn to 361) or not (turn to 379)?

231

The guard pauses by the door to the arena. 'The two beasts you have to face,' he tells you, 'are first a Laphodorm and then a Scabrok. Both are bred specially for the games. The Laphodorm is a new breed, and I know nothing about it. But the Scabrok, though powerful, has one weakness; it is easily

distracted. It won't fall for this trick twice, but you can distract it once and get in a free attack.' Before you can thank him and ask his reasons for telling you this, he opens the door and urges you through, having given you a sword for the contest. Gain 1 LUCK point for the guard's information. If you survive to fight the Scabrok, turn to 262 (remember this number) when you are instructed to do so. Now turn to 313.

232

Test your Luck. If you are Lucky, you make it down the cliff without difficulty. If you are Unlucky, you fall down the last bit and sustain 2 STAMINA points of bruises. Then turn to 147 to continue the journey.



233

You dodge and weave through the pedestrians and up and down alleyways. You manage to escape the patrol, but at a cost of 1 STAMINA point. Eventually, when all seems safe, you slump down in a doorway. After a while, you realize that you can only go back to the hostel and try again tomorrow, so you start to get up. But at that moment, the door behind you opens, and rough hands grab hold of you. Will you attempt to put up a fight (turn to 156), or are you too weak and depressed to bother (turn to 272)?

234

One of the remaining Arcadians is a Northerner, so for every Attack Round that he is alive, roll an extra die: on 5 or 6 he hits you with his tail, causing 2 STAMINA points of injury, whatever the result of that Attack Round otherwise. You will have to fight these two simultaneously, so choose which one you are attacking, and conduct a normal Attack Round against him. The other gets a free attack against you: roll for Attack Strengths as usual, but nothing happens unless *his* Attack Strength is higher, in which case he wounds you.

	SKILL	STAMINA
NORTH ARCADIAN	6	8
Second ARCADIAN	6	6

If you win, turn to 381.

235

You decide to go back to your hotel. If you had a spot of bother with the Chief of Police at the Zodiac earlier today, you have decided to go to Porky's Palace instead. On the monorail ride, you have the impression that you are being followed. There is a cab behind you, but then there always is on an efficient monorail system. Will you pull into the next drop station and get off (turn to 162), or will you carry on to your hotel, thinking you'll be as safe there as anywhere (turn to 27)?



236

It speaks: 'Earthling, where *zplaran?*' At least, that's what the last word sounds like. The voice is strangely metallic and hollow; it certainly does not come from any living being that you can imagine. Perhaps it is a robot of some kind. If it is, then you could attack it. Is this what you choose to do (turn to 179), or will you try to talk back to it, as it inches ever closer to you (turn to 195)?

237

'I don't know what it's like on Earth,' says one of your companions, 'but here on Tropos it's considered bad manners not to drink with *friends*.' There is a decidedly unpleasant tone to his voice. Will you respond to the insult (turn to 35), or meekly drink up (turn to 322)?



238

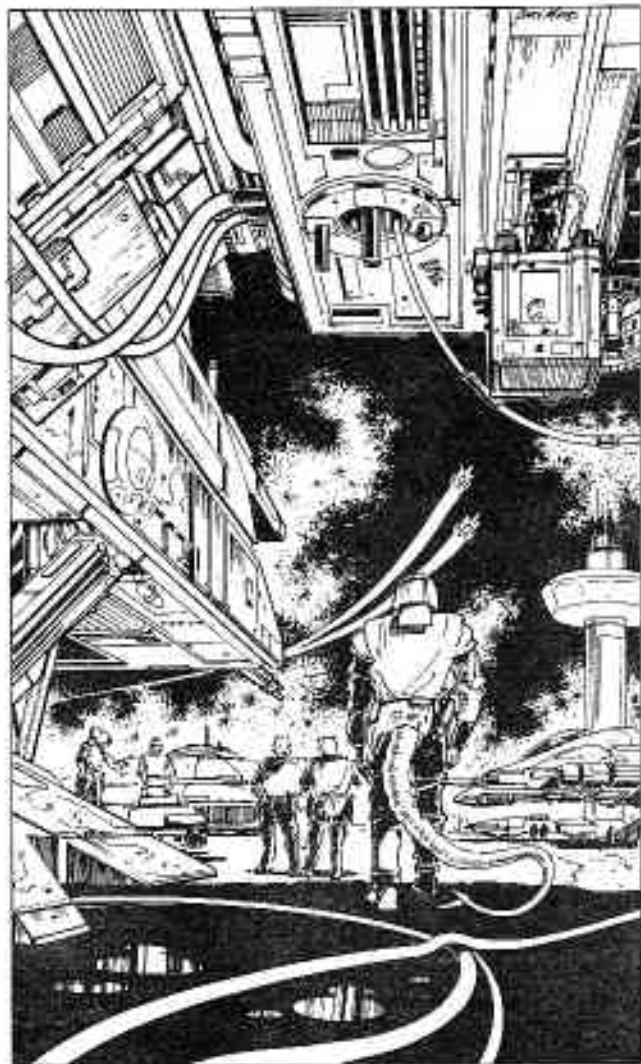
The 'job' turns out to be stealing some of the luxury goods from your own cargo. This confirms your suspicion that you are dealing with a black marketer. The first journey is easy, since the Arcadian guards find nothing odd in your visiting your own spaceship. But you have to make three more journeys before the black marketer is satisfied. *Test your Luck* three times. If at any time you are Unlucky, turn to 165; otherwise turn to 96.

239

You knock on the door of Professor Zacharias's office. 'Come in,' he calls. When you enter, you find him just getting ready to leave for a lecture. 'I'm in a hurry,' he says. 'What do you want?' You tell him that Mehita suggested you visit him. He looks at you intently for a moment. 'Did she? Did she indeed?' he muses. 'I have great faith in Mehita's feelings about people. Look, there's no time now. Come and see me after my lecture, in one hour.' Will you pass the time by attending his lecture (turn to 170), or have a cup of coffee in the students' union (turn to 182)?

240

'Who? Get lost,' says the doorman. Will you do as he says (turn to 95), or attempt to smash the locks with your sword (turn to 366)? You can smash the locks only if you still have your sword, of course.





241

You have pushed him too far, and he goes into total physical collapse. You have no choice now but to wait for a robot to come by. Turn to 278.

242

By the time you get close to the fleeing Arcadian, he has turned into the main road and met up with a patrol of his fellow Northern Arcadians. *Test your Luck*. If you are Lucky, turn to 132; if you are Unlucky, turn to 52.

243

You edge around the boulder and then spring out, sword at the ready. It seems that the Arcadian has come to some decision, because his whippy is raised above the cowering human's head. The look of surprise on the Arcadian's face when you appear is almost comical. But now he will turn his attention to you.

CENTRAL ARCADIAN SKILL 7 STAMINA 8

He is not particularly strong, but he's agile and cunning. The first time he wounds you, roll an extra die. On a roll of 4-6, he hurls some dust in your eyes, and you must lose 1 SKILL point for the next two Attack Rounds. But you only give him this one opportunity: the rest of the fight will be as normal. If you win, turn to 189.

244

After a while, the corridors quieten down, as most of the students go off to lectures. Then one student approaches the notice-board and, rather furtively, pins up a poster. You just have time to see that it announces some kind of demonstration, when the young man is thrown to the floor by two others, and his poster is ripped from the wall. The two louts then proceed to beat him up. You're not going to stand for that kind of behaviour. You will fight both the louts simultaneously in unarmed combat. Each Attack Round, choose which of them you will fight, and conduct a normal Attack Round against him. Against the other, roll for Attack Strengths as usual, but even if your Attack Strength is higher, you do not hurt him: you are preoccupied with his companion. If his Attack Strength is higher, however, he hurts you.

	SKILL	STAMINA
First LOU	6	8
Second LOU	5	6

This is not a fight to the death. If your STAMINA is

reduced to 4, the fight is over and your opponents run away. You, for your part, take care to knock them out, not kill them, since they are only students: the 'sudden death' rule of unarmed combat, or reduction of your opponents' STAMINA to zero, will count for unconsciousness rather than death. After the fight, turn to 337.

245

You know that your first priority is to find somewhere sheltered to spend the night. You are following a path through rough terrain, with a valley sloping down to your left and rocky outcrops up the hill to your right. After a while, you come across two caves to your right, which look as though they are deep enough to give you shelter. The right-hand one is approached by a smooth gully which wends its way to the valley below; the left-hand one is higher up, and its entrance is partially hidden by a spiky, cactus-like plant. Will you enter the right-hand cave (turn to 371) or the left-hand one (turn to 294)?

246

'Your eminence,' you grovel, 'I . . . er . . . I had no idea that the other spaceship was piloted by one of my glorious masters. My desire is only to serve: I thought it might be a pirate, and my concern was for the safety of my cargo.' Test your Luck to see if the Arcadian believes you. If you are Lucky, turn to 144; if you are Unlucky, turn to 129.

247

The two Arcadians remain out of sight for the rest of the journey. When you land on Arcadion, they are whisked off, and you are ordered to remain on your ship while it is being refuelled for the return journey. There is no chance of escape. You have failed.

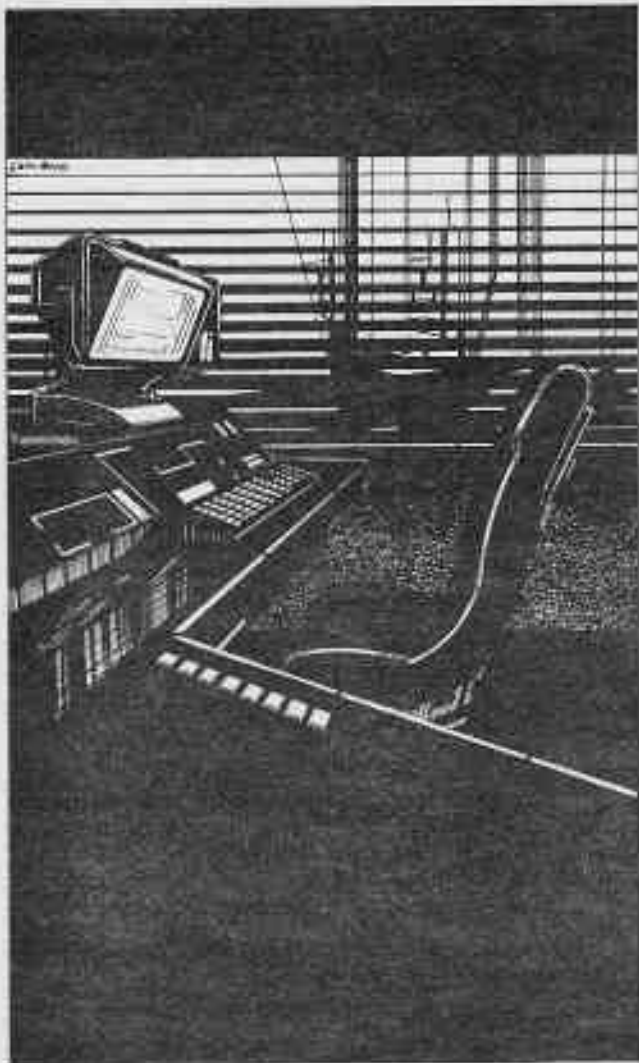


248

Your bluff has been well and truly exposed. 'Hal' exclaims your questioner. 'You're as bent as a trans-dimensional rainbow.' You decide that this is neither the time nor the place to ask what these mysterious South Arcadian words might mean, and you leave, in considerable embarrassment. Lose 1 LUCK point and, for your next fight only, 1 SKILL point for tipsiness. You make your way over to the other group, who are still discussing the possibility of human rebellion. Turn to 289.

249

You get hopelessly lost, and more and more exhausted, as the heavy gravity of Halmuris takes its toll. Reduce your STAMINA by 1 point. Eventually, you find yourself in the administrative part of the building, where you are promptly arrested and



taken to an office where a Central Arcadian is working at a pile of papers. However, you manage to persuade him that you are innocently lost, and he gives you directions. Turn to 336.

250

The guards easily overwhelm you. Perhaps next time you will be less easily fooled and therefore less likely to be betrayed.

251

The room beyond the Sphinx is dark, but a large computer screen is resting on a table, and its greenish light, as information scrolls across its surface, is a source of faint illumination. Will you look at the screen (turn to 319), or carry on (turn to 375)?

252

You leap up the steps and are immediately spotted by an Arcadian patrol, who give chase. *Test your Luck*. If you are Lucky, turn to 233; if you are Unlucky, turn to 330.

253

The object you grabbed was a jet pack, but it feels so light that it may have no fuel left in it. You take it anyway. The fire is bound to attract unwelcome attention. You decide to leave the spaceport as soon as possible. Turn to 336.

254

There is another passage branching off to the south. Will you take it (turn to 62) or continue straight on (turn to 39)?

255

'Dorado,' you say, 'I must go. But first tell me what you know about the digits of the Arcadian computer.'

'Identify yourself,' he says in reply. 'What's the password?' You will now either know what to do, or you will get nothing more out of Dorado, however much you protest that you cannot know his password, having only just arrived on the planet. You have failed.

256

You can use this to make your opponents' approach slippery and hazardous, by quickly opening the can and spilling the oil towards them. (Cross it off your Equipment List.) This will reduce your first opponent's SKILL by 2 points; by the time you meet your second opponent, however, the fight has been carried away from the slippery area. But the oil also slows down your opponents, so that you have time to grab another item from your pack, if you want to. Do you choose the hand-klaxon (turn to 21) or the strobe (turn to 79)? If you choose neither, return now to resolve your fight.

257

The passage leads into another cellar, with one exit straight ahead, and another in the northern wall. Will you go straight ahead (turn to 186) or north (turn to 142)?

258

Do you have an introduction to anyone here? If so, turn to the paragraph which has the same number as the room you need; otherwise turn to 76.



259

The pall of smoke provides excellent cover until you are quite near the rocks. Then you are spotted, and the silver craft races in pursuit. But the drifting smoke causes it to misjudge the distance and, as you squeeze into cover, it smashes into the rock-face above you and explodes. *Test your Luck.* If you are Lucky, turn to 228; if you are Unlucky, turn to 288.

260

'Why on Tropos do you want to get to that old place?' asks the man suspiciously. 'Been derelict for years. If you want a good time, some entertainment,

I can tell you where to go.' You thank him, but tell him that you have arranged to meet a friend outside the Adolpho. He tells you that the Adolpho is not far away, on North 20-East 7 Street. 'And where are we now?' you ask. 'Halfway up North 18-East 9 Street,' comes the reply. There is no time to lose; you must get on with your mission. Will you go north for one and a half blocks, then west for two blocks (turn to 204), or north for two and a half blocks, then west for two blocks (turn to 109)?



261

Musca is in a highly nervous state – and is playing dangerously with the phaser. Will you rush him and try to wrest it from him (turn to 59), or speak to him (turn to 90)?

262

Good: you have remembered the Scabrok's weakness. At some point during the fight, you will be able to distract its attention, perhaps by throwing

sand across its field of vision. *Test your Luck.* If you are Lucky, turn to 341; if you are Unlucky, turn to 133.

263

More Arcadian guards are on their way, but you make it through the gate, and they do not set out after you. At first you wonder why, but then you realize that they are leaving the freezing night to do their work for them. There are various paths that you could take. Will you go east (turn to 245), north (turn to 342) or south (turn to 181)?

264

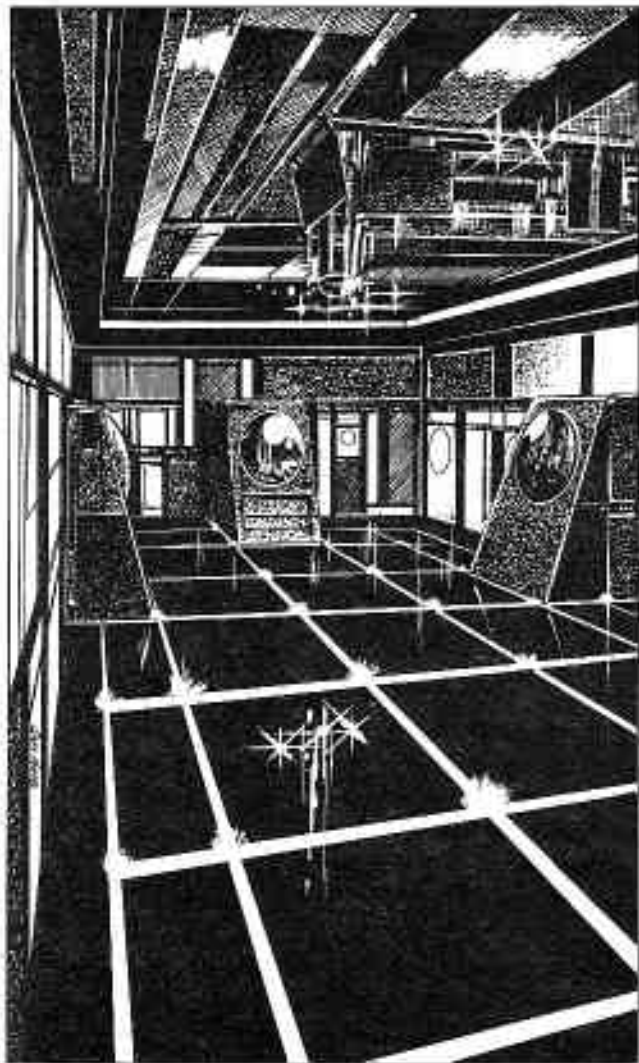
The situation looks desperate, but you are determined to die like a hero, fighting against tyranny and perhaps inspiring future humans. Did you get beaten up at the spaceport? If so, turn to 225; if not, turn to 250.

265

Test your Luck. If you are Lucky, turn to 69; if you are Unlucky, turn to 36.

266

You join a group of students who are hanging around a drink-dispensing machine on the Science Floor, and are having a heated scientific discussion. Will you chip into the conversation (turn to 218), or keep quiet (turn to 11)?



267

'This *zplaran*?' you ask, finding yourself speaking the same pidgin Arcadian as the weird thing. '*Zplaran*,' replies the thing, in a voice which sounds decidedly unfriendly to you, but is apparently not. The staff is whisked out of your hand into the shaft of light, where it hangs, suspended by goodness knows what. Both the changing form and the shaft of light proceed to vibrate very rapidly, but in eerie silence. If the staff is broken, turn to 179; otherwise turn to 308.

268

'Bravo!' cries the man, as you switch off your sword. 'But now we'd better get out of here. Come with me.' Will you tell him you'd rather be left alone (turn to 314), or will you go with him (turn to 394)?

269

You enter a room full of dully glistening machinery. A voice speaks from all around: 'Human, this is the computer speaking. You have done well to get this far. As you see, I am at your mercy: you can program me to your heart's content.' Will you attempt to program the computer (turn to 205), or will you leave this room too (turn to 94)?

270

There is no point in fighting him – there are too many people around. Will you offer him 500 credits (turn to 201) or a ziridium-plated bracelet, if you

have one (turn to 365)? If you cannot afford this, or think that it is not worth bribing him, you leave for the university (turn to 146).

271

The phaser cuts down two members of the patrol, but then jams, presumably because it has not been used for a long time. You hurl it away in disgust. You will have to draw your sword to fight the remaining two. Roll one die. If the number is even, turn to 234; if it is odd, turn to 24.

272

Your captors are human. They blindfold you and lead you down into the cellar, where, to your surprise, a draught indicates the presence of a corridor. But that is your last impression for a while—a heavy blow to your head knocks you unconscious. Turn to 207.

273

Of the humans on the base, some are wearing grey uniforms, some blue. Will you ask someone in grey (turn to 197) or in blue (turn to 217)? Or will you try to get a sword off an Arcadian (turn to 16)?

274

'Why are you hesitating?' asks Bellatrix. Will you say that you know he's not a double agent (turn to 307), or that you need more proof (turn to 343)?

275

Lose 1 LUCK point for failing to help a fellow human. Turn to 114.



276

The buttons are so close together that you cannot tell which one the policeman was reaching for when you attacked him. Will you try the left-hand button (turn to 180) or the right-hand one (turn to 386)?

277

The passage leads you into a cellar with no other exit. You stop only to raid a show-case of some irresistible Earth coins, dating from the First Soviet-Brazilian Alliance. Then you turn back and head east along the corridor you were in before (turn to 346).





278

You have to wait some time until a robot comes to deliver the Arcadian's meal. Meanwhile, the Arcadian has just sat slumped on the floor. You order the robot to release you. 'Why, certainly, boss,' it replies. 'Anythin' you say.' There are times when you find a robot's programmed chirpiness out of place! It releases you, however, and you put the Arcadian in your place. But your long wait has weakened you even further, and the rest and food which you now take restores only 2 STAMINA points. Then turn to 292.

279

You make it through the wire and sprint for cover. You are just in time – a patrol reaches the gap in the wire just as you dive behind a tree. But they do not set out after you: they think that the freezing night will do its deadly work. They may be right. You are on the east side of the spaceport, and there are various paths. Will you go east (turn to 245), north (turn to 342) or south (turn to 181)?

280

The barman comes over to you with a drink. 'Your drink, sir,' he says. 'But I didn't order a drink,' you protest. 'Your drink, sir,' he repeats, firmly. Will you refuse the drink, thinking it may be drugged (turn to 237), or accept it (turn to 322)?

281

Test your Luck. If you are Lucky, turn to 104; if you are Unlucky, turn to 82.

282

Of course! The aerial! It must be a means of detecting structural weaknesses in buildings. That is why the robot only thumps irregularly – when it senses that a building is weak enough to crack. However, there is no point in simply stopping by a firm building, because you would have to stay there and would be easy prey for the police when they arrive. You must return to 190 and fight the machine; because of the light gravity on this planet, every time you have a successful Attack Round against the machine, you may either deduct 2 STAMINA points as a result of a normal blow, or you may leap into the air and swipe at the aerial, causing loss of 1 SKILL point for the machine.



283

'No, there's no time for that,' calls your friend. 'I know what you're thinking – that he might have seen your face; but soon the whole area will be swarming with the swine.' Will you persist, preferring to take this risk rather than that of being

identified to the authorities (turn to 378), or will you wait now to see what your friend does next (turn to 41)?

284

So near, and yet so far. He is obviously pro-Arcadian. He promptly summons the local police to arrest you.



285

You are getting quite close to your hotel, when you see ahead something large moving towards you. You wait until you can see it clearly. Oh, no! The glinting body of a robot killer is trundling towards you on hidden wheels. It is just like a metal cylinder, with only one feature breaking the pitiless monotony of its structure – an aerial on top. It has no humanoid features: no arms, no legs, no face – nothing that looks familiar or that you can understand. You haven't the faintest idea of how it will attack or, therefore, how you should defend yourself against it. You know that your blows will have some effect on the soft metal of this planet, but it

looks as though it has been built to withstand many such attacks: you need some way to shorten the fight.

The robot's first attack comes without warning. A gigantic thump strikes the ground, sending you tumbling, and making roof-tiles and small bits of masonry hurtle down from the buildings all around you. You have no idea how the robot causes the thump, but, if you have been told about the 'Street Fighter', you know that it has been aptly named. If you have a baryon grenade, turn to 388; if not, turn to 190.



286

'Yes, I can sell you a sword,' he replies. 'It'll cost you 1,000 credits.' Do you have enough money? If you do, and you are prepared to pay this exorbitant price, do so and then turn to 84. If you cannot or will not pay him, you will have to do a job for him instead (turn to 238).



287

'Never heard the name before,' says the doorman. 'Get lost, creep.' Will you do as he says (turn to 95), or attempt to smash the locks with your sword (turn to 366)? You can only smash the locks if you still have your sword, of course.



288

You are showered with fragments of the exploding craft. Deduct 4 STAMINA points and, if you are still alive, turn to 46.



289

The Arcadians are amazed at your cheek in butting into their conversation. One particularly loud-mouthed North Arcadian turns out to be the Chief of Police. He says he can prove his point: even if humans did rebel, they would easily be defeated, since they are the weaker species. 'Come outside with me,' he says. 'Won't be long,' he boasts to the others.

His meaning is unmistakable: he is challenging you to an unarmed duel. You follow him and his drunkenly laughing witness to a deserted area where the hotel rubbish units are. His friend, giggling, slips down in a stupor against a wall. In this fight, you dare not produce your sword, so follow the rules for unarmed combat; but he can use his tail. Every Attack Round, on a roll of 5 or 6 with an extra die, he will inflict 2 STAMINA points of injury on you, whatever the result of that Attack Round otherwise.

POLICE CHIEF

SKILL 8

STAMINA 10

If you win, turn to 329



290

In the morning, you knock on the door of the Arcadians' quarters, with the pretext of inquiring after Musca's health. The other Arcadian answers your knock, opens the door a fraction and tells you to go away. Will you do as he says, and await another opportunity (turn to 247), or kick in the door (turn to 281)?

291

You switch off your sword and hide it again. But now what will you do? There are guards outside the door. Will you open the door and try to bluff your way past the guards (turn to 87), or will you investigate the buttons on the desk (turn to 276)?

292

It takes time and cautious questioning, but from the two Arcadians, who are now no threat to you, you learn three crucial pieces of information: that some of the weapons which the Empire brought back to preserve its own safety are stored in an arsenal in the basement of the computer building on Arcadion; that the code for entering this arsenal is 110; and that the computer consists of three main parts, all of which must be destroyed to guarantee elimination of the machine. Gain 2 LUCK points. You are now approaching Arcadion, so turn to 118.



293

As the door shuts behind you, horror grips your guts. Bright light springs out from hidden lamps and reveals that you are in a room of distorting mirrors. Even the door behind you is mirrored. A laser beam shoots out from one side and bounces off a mirror at an unpredictable angle. In an instant you are surrounded by laser beams, forming a crazy random pattern of burning light. One blasts your leg from its socket; another takes three fingers of your left hand. Then another strikes, and another . . .

294

As you approach the mouth of the cave, you stumble on a loose rock. *Test your Luck.* If you are Lucky, turn to 193; if you are Unlucky, turn to 143.

295

'Come on, fellow humans,' you cry, hoping for a response. 'Now is the time to free yourselves!' Ten humans range themselves by your side. You

are still outnumbered, however, since the raiding Arcadians are joined by the ones in the club; and none of your companions has a sword. During the fight, you have to take on four Arcadians, one at a time. If you are unarmed, reduce your SKILL by 1 point for this encounter. Fight your opponents in this order:

	SKILL	STAMINA
First ARCADIAN	8	12
Second ARCADIAN	7	8
Third ARCADIAN	7	6
Fourth ARCADIAN	6	6

Do you have anything in your pack to help you in this fight? If you think you do, remember this reference (295), to which you will have to return, but meanwhile turn to 198. If by some miracle you survive, will you take up from where you were so rudely interrupted by going over to the visiphone booth (turn to 311), or will you leave the club, feeling that you have drawn too much attention to yourself already (turn to 252)?



296

After walking for quite a while, the path passes through an area which is sprinkled with large boulders. You can hear voices – one Arcadian, one human – coming from behind one of the boulders. It seems that a Central Arcadian has a human at his mercy and, in a manner typical of his kind, has paused to think about all the possibilities open to him. The human, meanwhile, is pleading with the Arcadian to stop theorizing and get on with it. Will you skirt this area to avoid confrontation (turn to 275), or try to rescue the man (turn to 243)?



297

Well done! The door slides open easily and lets you into an ante-chamber before sliding shut again behind you. Only then do the next doors open – and

there are four more sets of doors; this is to keep the building as free as possible from dust. Once inside, you can see the computer room ahead, but there are also some steps down to a basement. Will you go straight to the computer room (turn to 381), or down to the basement first (turn to 169)?



298

You leap down on to the ledge, away from the nest, so as to have a secure landing. Your precipitous arrival awakens the bird, which instinctively attacks you.

ROCKBUZZARD

SKILL 6

STAMINA 8

If you win without being wounded by its beak or talons, turn to 40. However, if you are wounded once, this means that the bird has got past your flashing sword, and its weight will knock you off the ledge to die on the path below.

299

Once you are out of the spaceport you have no problems finding a hover-taxi. You climb in and instruct the microcomputer to take you south into town. You notice that a camera has been fixed in the taxi – there has been no attempt to disguise it. Presumably it transmits everything it sees to the Arcadian police headquarters, and presumably there is a listening device as well. It is a good thing that they cannot read minds, because your thoughts are racing. You know three things about the underground leader on Tropos: the codename Bellatrix; that he or she can be located through a club called the Fission Chips, which is in the city you are heading for; and that Bellatrix rules the rebels strictly, with a code of honour that all must obey. That's quite a lot to be going on – it's more than you know about the rebels on other planets – and should make your task on Tropos relatively easy, if you act sensibly.

The other thing occupying your mind is that most of the Arcadians on Tropos seem to be members of the warlike Northern species. The presence of so many of these natural fighters could make your mission on Tropos more hazardous. Why have so many of them been posted here? Are they closing in on the rebels? Do the Arcadians know that the Fission Chips is more than it seems? There are many unanswered questions, but you turn your mind to the task at hand. There are still six hours to go before curfew. Will you instruct the taxi to take you straight



to the Fission Chips (turn to 176), or to the hostel at which off-planet humans have to stay (turn to 196)?

300

The experiment begins. Electrodes attached to the Arcadian's skull are connected to those attached to yours via the devilish device. You are strapped to your seat with wrist-fetters. How will you prepare your mind for what follows? Will you clear it (turn to 141), or follow your own trains of thoughts and memories to provide a barrier against the Arcadian imposing his own ideas (turn to 357)?

301

You wait for hours. As dusk descends, a grinning alien face appears at the high grille. 'So,' he says, 'you have chosen to try your skill at our gladiatorial games. This is the door into the arena. Now you must spend the night here; in the morning the games will be assembled.' Gain 1 LUCK point for choosing the right door, and turn to 349.

302

You have to use the same method for getting back in, even though you know that it will set off the alarm. You choose a spot well away from any guard-post, and you are hidden among the outbuildings by the time a patrol comes to investigate the break. You make your way innocently to your spaceship. Turn to 78.

303

The man has gone by the time you get back (lose 1 LUCK point). Clearly, he thought it unhealthy to hang around – and rightly, because an Arcadian patrol is on its way and has only been delayed by the body of the compatriot of theirs who you have just cut down. You walk casually out of the other end of the street and into the busy main road. Turn to 132.

304

You break a leg. You can either wait for night, or call for help. Either way, your mission is over.

305

No sooner have you sat down than you notice that one of them, a young woman, is wearing a jacket whose buttons have a curious design of an eagle clutching a scroll – and that one button is missing. Do you have the missing button? If so, turn to 347; otherwise, turn to 103.



306

Porky is a bit cautious about answering; he says it's best not to inquire too closely into some events on Radix. But he mutters something about a killing machine called the 'Street Fighter', and how the authorities have got paranoid enough recently to use it even to break up student demonstrations. That's all you can get out of him. It looks as though the university might be a good starting-point. The monorail takes you near the main entrance. Will you plunge straight in (turn to 146), or wait around outside for a while (turn to 178)?

307

Why did you say that? There's no way you can *know* any such thing. From the point of view of your inquisitors, you would be so sure that they are wrong about the barman only if you were an Arcadian agent yourself, with inside knowledge about other agents. A bad mistake – and a fatal one.

308

'Now I have power,' says the being. 'Enough for even my voice-box to function correctly.' A wheezing noise follows, which you think might be a laugh. 'I can grant you one favour with this power, then I must return to my galaxy. This is to repay you for rescuing the *zplaran* from the darkness where I cannot go.' Will you ask it to restore some of your STAMINA (turn to 363), or if by any chance it knows the whereabouts of the man you are seeking (turn to 377)?



- 309

You reach the haven of your hotel. If it is Porky's Palace and you have not been here before, pay 50 credits for the night. If you need to find a computer, turn to 158; otherwise turn to 134.

310

The humans in grey uniforms are the cleaning and catering staff. You approach one with your question, and he tells you that the agricultural station is about ten kilometres to the north-east of the spaceport. You decide that your next priority is a sword. Will you ask the same man about this (turn to 197), try someone in blue (turn to 217), or attempt to get one off an Arcadian (turn to 16)?

311

The door of the booth hisses shut behind you. 'Now what?' you wonder. Maybe you could ring up an old school friend who settled on Tropos; maybe this is a trap; maybe . . . What was that click? A hatch has opened up in the ceiling! Oh, no - gas! A thick cloud soon envelops you. As you collapse, you hear yourself coughing, but it seems to come from far away. Then the floor beneath you drops away, and you tumble down a chute, but never feel yourself reach the bottom. Turn to 207.



312

The problem with this is that you have only the one grenade, and its blast will knock out only one of the computers. Will you choose the one against the wall opposite the door (turn to 139), the one against the wall to the left (turn to 203), or the one against the wall to the right (turn to 51)? Alternatively, you may return to 381 and choose again, if you have another choice to make.

313

You have no choice; you enter the arena. The door swings shut behind you. You are overwhelmed by the dazzling sunlight, the roar of the crowd and the strange smell of the pale blue Radician sand on the ground. You assess your predicament: high barriers surround the arena; the ground is covered with sand. This is it, then. You will have no help apart from yourself.

A sudden hush fills the arena. A door on the other side opens and out comes the most hideous beast you have ever seen or imagined – a Laphodorm, bred for grotesqueness as well as fighting ability. It is covered in red scales; it has a retractable neck, like a tortoise; its head is like a lion's, roughly, but the tongues which dart from its slavering jaws remind you more of a multitude of snakes. Resolve your battle:

LAPHODORM

SKILL 7

STAMINA 12

If you win, turn to 106.



314

'Have it your way,' he says, scowling. 'But since you are armed, I assume that you have some particular reason for being on Tropos. You refuse my help – but you may need help some time.' You thank him, but leave alone. Out on the street, you must get away as quickly as possible, and find the Fission Chips. You know that north heads out of town, so you turn south (turn to 99).

315

Musca remained surprisingly calm throughout the fight, but starts to grovel rather embarrassingly in front of you when you have won. You take advantage of the situation and order him to tell you what he knows about the computer on Arcadion. In a halting voice, he tells you that he knows nothing, but that the dead Arcadian knew more. However, you do find out that one of the Arcadian arsenals is in the basement of the computer building, and that its entry-code is 110. Gain 1 LUCK point. You are now nearing Arcadion itself; turn to 118.

316

The two disks count as a single item in your pack. If you already have the limit of six items, you must shed one to accommodate the disks. Now you must find a computer. You leave the university before your crime is discovered. Turn to 235.

317

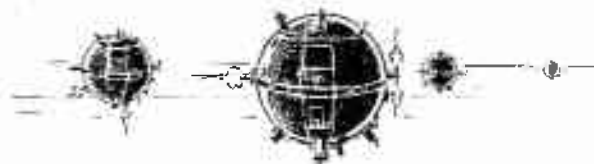
You spend the whole day searching fruitlessly around the city, and even try the university again, but you find no clues. You have failed in your mission.

318

The patrolling Arcadians scarcely give you a second glance. Before you reach Customs, the next checkpoint, do you want to get rid of any of your equipment? If so, you find a safe spot in the human's washroom to do so. Whether or not you dumped any equipment, turn to 33.

319

As you look into the screen, it spells out a single message: 'Curiosity can kill the cat.' It is true. The computer has offered you knowledge, and you have fallen for the trap. Your defences are down, and the Arcadian computer has taken over your mind. Your mission is over.



320

In your dusty and dishevelled state, you judge it unwise to return to the main museum. Perhaps there is a way out of these cellars. You search the body of the watchman and take his bundle of keys. Before you can search the body any further, however, the watchman's comlink beeps and an Arcadian voice comes through, asking where he is. Now the search will be on!

The cellar you are in has two corridors leading off its east wall. Behind you is the staircase up to the main museum. Will you take the left-hand passage (turn to 127) or the right-hand one (turn to 257)?

321

'Well, then,' he continues, 'we need someone to take Corvus's place, don't we? You have a choice,' he says to you. 'You can either carry out a little job for us, or die.' Will you fight your captors (turn to 80) or do as the man suggests (turn to 238)?

322

You swig it down – but it *is* drugged. When you first arrived on Tropos, did you try to catch a taxi straight to the club? If so, turn to 372; otherwise, turn to 207.



323

Miraculously, your speed carries you through the danger relatively unharmed. But your exertions, scratches and burns cost you 2 STAMINA points. The alien craft was unable to track you through the smoke, and is now some way off. Will you sprint for the building (turn to 338) or the rocks (turn to 259)?

324

You find yourself back in the first cellar, where you killed the watchman. The search-party is waiting for you. Your mission is over.

325

Whatever method you have used for removing the casing, your death will follow soon, as the liquid helium you have released floods over the floor, and freezes your feet before it evaporates. With all feeling gone in your feet, you fall over, snapping them off at the ankles.

326

The doorman looks at you carefully, then shuts the peep-hole. After a moment, you hear bolts being shot on the other side of the door, and you are let in. Membership of the club costs 250 credits. While the doorman is making out your membership card, you survey the scene. The clientele is mixed human and Arcadian, but there are only a few Arcadians, and they are mostly Southerners. The Arcadian section is very comfortable, with padded seats, real wooden

tables and waiter service. The human section is cheaply equipped with stained and scarred formo-plas furniture. The air is thick with the smell of alcohol and the smoke of glazium, a mild legal drug. One or two of the Arcadians, however, are showing how they are superior to the law, by openly smoking tobacco.

The doorman interrupts your observation by handing you the membership card and saying, 'Just one more thing, sir - a security precaution. I'm sure you'll understand. Our Arcadian clients insist on it.' He buzzes a metal detector swiftly over your body, which tells him nothing, of course; and there is nothing too suspicious in your pack. Then he begins to frisk you. If you no longer have your sword, this does not alarm you (turn to 64). If you do still have your sword, will you say that you have changed your mind and leave the club (turn to 390), or will you submit to the search (turn to 358)?

327

Unfortunately, no further opportunities present themselves, and you perish in the freezing cold as night draws in.

328

In your weakened state, you are unable to prevent the policeman diving for the desk and pressing the buzzer. Guards pour in, too many for you to fight. They cut you down in an instant.



329

The North Arcadian's friend is struggling to get to his feet; you quickly knock him out. Then you search the Police Chief's pockets and find 750 credits, which you take, and his notebook. This is full of day-to-day police business, but one item catches your attention: 'Check on Z. at university.' This could be your starting-point. It is too dangerous to go back into the hotel, so you set out for the university immediately. The monorail drops you near the university. Will you plunge straight in (turn to 146), or wait around outside for a bit (turn to 178)?

330

However much you dodge and weave through the pedestrians and alleyways, the patrol draws inexorably closer. At last, a helpful passer-by trips you up, and before you can get up, five assorted laser swords and whippies slash down on your unprotected head and back. You have failed - and no one is to blame but yourself.

331

It is not your sword-hand that has been injured. Reduce your STAMINA by 2 points for the agony. If you have not yet done so, you can explore the other crack by turning to 355; if you think that it is time to continue your journey, turn to 10.

332

There is nothing you can do with a laser sword, unless you can get to the bowels of the computers, by removing the casing. Is this what you choose to do (turn to 325)? If you have an alternative, you could return to 381 and choose again.

333

You are walking along a dusty passage. Cobwebs brush your face; the red eyes and streamlined form of some Radician rodent show up briefly in the dim light. Some way along, another passage branches off to the north. Will you continue straight ahead (turn to 346), or turn north (turn to 277)?

334

Will you fight the man (turn to 157), or run away (turn to 124)?

335

'Never heard of it,' replies the man, 'but you could try the hardware shop next door.' You thank him politely. You had better go to the hardware shop. Turn to 382.

336

You return to the main part of the spaceport, to get your bearings. The freezing night is not far off. How will you get off the base? It is surrounded by a high perimeter wire fence, and both its main entrances, to the west and east, are guarded. If you have a jet pack, turn to 128; if you have a pair of wire-cutters, turn to 393; if you have neither of these, turn to 2.

337

The young man you rescued takes you to the students' bar and buys you some drink and food (restore 3 STAMINA points). You join some friends of his at a table. 'Hey, you lot!' exclaims the young man. 'This Earthling here just gave a couple of Black Eyes black eyes!' When the inevitable questions have died down, you ask who the Black Eyes are, and learn that they are a pro-Arcadian political group. The students are planning a demonstration against the personal files that the University Secretary keeps about every member of the university, but the Black Eyes agree with the system. Eventually, you take your leave. Will you go to the Science Floor, if you haven't been there already (turn to 266), the University Secretary's office (turn to 214), or will you leave the university (turn to 235)?

338

About halfway there, the cover of smoke ends. You are immediately spotted and cut down.

339

You manage to persuade him that the item is harmless. Turn to 374.

340

You turn to grapple with him, but the butt of his phaser connects squarely with your temple, and you crash to the floor. 'Such a pity,' he says. 'I was looking forward to our little experiment.' Then he blasts you out of existence.

341

When you distract the Scabrok, you manage to hit a particularly vulnerable spot, and injure the monster in such a way that you reduce its SKILL by 1 point and its STAMINA by 2 points. In other words you can fight it as follows:

SCABROK	SKILL 7	STAMINA 12
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If you win, turn to 54.

342

You know that your first priority is to find somewhere sheltered to spend the night. After a while you come across a tree – or perhaps it is a large bush, or even a leaf-covered stone. All you can see is dense foliage, moving gently, as if in a breeze, and reaching to the ground from about three metres up. You walk round it: it is the same on all sides. If you could penetrate it, it is so dense that it would

provide shelter: that is how it stays alive in the sub-zero temperatures, presumably. Will you try to get inside (turn to 208), or do you mistrust this mysteriously moving plant and carry on (turn to 327)?

343

'Ah! A sense of justice. That tips the balance in his favour, don't you think?' Bellatrix asks the other two. They agree. Besides, as one of the men points out, you know so little about your inquisitors that even if you were a spy, the information you could pass on would cause only a temporary halt to the rebel operation.

'All right,' says Bellatrix. 'I'll tell you what I know. It's not much after all your efforts, I'm afraid. Rumour has it that the Northern Arcadians made up a marching-song to help them remember a sequence of three of the digits. I don't know what they are, however, or where this sequence comes in the whole series of digits; but here's the song, for what it's worth:

*Oh! Mortal combat is such joy:
No messing about, no subtle ploy.
Empire of Arcadion! Empire of Arcadion!
Onward, ever onward!
Open pitched battles make me high:
Never mind the odds – let's do or die!
Evermore Arcadion! Empire of Arcadion!*



That's all you can get from Bellatrix, so the information from the other two planets is absolutely crucial. All your equipment is returned to you: you are pleased by their generosity and trust in replacing your sword, if you had lost it. Restore 2 LUCK points for the information and equipment. They also have a vial of quandar-root lotion, which will heal 4 STAMINA points of wounds, but you have to buy the vial from them for 50 credits and use it immediately. Do so if you want, then turn to 25.

344

You walk boldly up to the eastern entrance in your disguise. The guards call you to halt, and ask what you have been doing off the base, and where you came from. You explain that you left by the western entrance. Will you say that you have been attending to a broken-down helicopter (turn to 26), or taking provisions out to a patrol (turn to 220)?

345

After racking your conscience, you decide that your mission is more important than any single cell of the underground, and that you can tell them enough to keep them happy without giving *everything* away. You do so. The following day, having checked your information, the commandant returns. 'All right, Earthling,' he says. 'Your sentence is commuted from certain death to probable death.' He laughs mockingly and takes you under guard to a room which has two doors leading from it.

'One of these doors leads to instant death; the other leads to a gladiatorial ring. Such fights are one of our amusements. We often send criminals through one or the other of the doors.' The guards are watching you closely, and you realize that they will kill you if you show the slightest resistance. 'If you . . . er . . . partake of our contest and defeat the two beasts we will send against you, we will escort you back to your spaceship. After the information you have given us, it would be better for you not to fall into the hands of your fellow humans, don't you think? Now, make your choice – which door?'

Will you go through the right-hand door (turn to 293) or the left-hand one (turn to 397)?

346

The corridor, which is lined with packing-cases and other museum objects, gradually curves around to the right, until you are heading west instead of east. There is a passage heading south (turn to 62), or you can continue straight ahead (turn to 8).



347

She is fascinated by the story of how you found the button, but points out that that does not necessarily prove that you are not an Arcadian spy, sent to discover the killer of the receptionist at the hostel. She thinks for a bit. 'All right,' she says eventually. 'This is what you do. I'm going to leave. Five minutes after I've done so, you enter the visiphone booth over there. Then we'll see . . .'

It all sounds a bit suspect to you, but you really have no choice. You cannot follow her, since her muscle-bound friends are surrounding you. After a while, one of them says, out of the corner of this mouth, 'OK, go!' Turn to 81.

348

As you leave the arsenal, the door hisses shut behind you, and a mechanical voice says: 'The entry-code is now changed. The new code will be circulated to authorized personnel.' That's a security device you hadn't expected; there'll be no returning to the arsenal, then.

Your next problem is that because of the size of the arsenal, it took quite a time to find the items you needed, and you emerge from the stairs to be confronted by an Arcadian patrol. You can use against them nothing that you may have taken from the arsenal except a photon grenade and a hand-phaser. If you use the grenade, turn to 86; if you use the phaser, turn to 271; if you have neither of these, you are dead.

349

In the morning you wake up only slightly refreshed from a sleep troubled with nightmares. You are woken by a guard, who gives you a bowl of slops. 'We don't want you *too* weak for the games,' he says. You may restore 3 STAMINA points for the rest and food. When the guard returns, will you attack him (turn to 206), or let him lead you away (turn to 231)?

350

Framed in the doorway is one of the Arcadians, who looks startled. 'I . . . I have a headache,' he says. 'At least, I think that's why I'm here, but . . .' He trails off. Will you tell him that the medical robot will bring some interferon to his cabin (turn to 212), or invite him in (turn to 230)?

351

You manage to catch up with the fleeing Arcadian before he reaches the main thoroughfare. In his weakened state, he shouldn't be difficult to dispatch.

ARCADIAN THUG SKILL 5 STAMINA 6

If you win, turn to 7.

352

The grenade fails to explode. Turn to 190.

353

The man behind the desk says wearily, 'Teach him not to interrupt.' A sharp jab to your kidneys reduces your STAMINA by 2 points. When you can stand again, turn to 321.

354

'Cheer up!' you say heartily, as you dump yourself on to the bed, whose springs respond with alarming bongs. 'It may never happen.'

'It already has,' moans the man.

'What do you mean? Where are you from?' you ask.

'Oh, I'm from Tropos. I'm only staying here because those murdering swine have made me homeless. They suspect me of being a rebel, you see. My wife . . . my children . . .' He breaks down again and sobs, with his face buried in his hands.

Will you stay with him to try to calm him down (turn to 136), or will you quietly leave him be in his grief (turn to 60)?



355

The crack is deep and narrow, and you cannot reach too far. The strength of the bird, which you already knew from your fight with it, is further proved by the size of the objects you find – smaller things have presumably fallen into the inaccessible depths of the fissure. Apart from some useless chunks of metal and a broken spy missile, you find a staff with seven strips of different metals coiled around its wooden stem, a casket containing 180 credits, and a mind-probe. The probe will fit into your anti-grav pack, and you put the money in your money-belt, but if you take the staff, it will make your descent down the cliff more risky, since you will have to carry it by hand. Even more alarming is the fact that a faint power seems to be suggesting that you take the staff. You cannot tell whether the power is good or evil, but you are able to resist it, if you want to. Note down on your Equipment List what you take. Will you now explore the other fissure (turn to 14), or climb back down to the path to continue your journey (turn to 10)?



356

He tells you that it leads to the cellars where the museum stores all the artefacts it has no room to display, and he offers to show you around. Will you accept (turn to 392), or go to the university (turn to 146)?

357

This does not work: it gives the Arcadian easy access to your thought processes, which he can then use for his own purposes. Turn to 55.

358

He is very thorough, and soon finds your sword. He does not remove it, however, but talks in a low voice, as if to himself, while pretending to frisk you further: 'Interesting, very interesting. A sword treated to avoid metal-detection. No Arcadian spy would need such precautions. I think you've probably come to the right place. Wait by the bar for a few minutes, and then make your way to the visiphone booth.' Turn to 37.



359

Your fall only winds you. Discard the now useless piece of equipment, and turn to 30.

360

The door withstands your best efforts. You rub your shoulder ruefully, and must deduct 1 STAMINA point. Now you have no alternative but to wait. Turn to 301.

361

You smile at Musca, as if to say, 'It's all right', and unlock the door to the other Arcadian, who is carrying a phaser! Musca must be important, if a phaser has been issued from the arsenal to guard him. You are now committed to a bold and risky course of action. You will have to get rid of Musca's 'friend', but against a phaser you stand no chance in direct combat. Will you tell the other Arcadian that you know everything (turn to 167), or let him take Musca away for the time being (turn to 290)?



362

Before you can do anything else, the door to the club bursts open and a dozen Northern Arcadians burst in, led by a grim-faced Central Arcadian. In a flash, you suspect that you have led them here, by mentioning the club in a bugged taxi. 'Watch out! Raid!' shrieks the doorman, the last word ending on a gurgle as a laser sword cauterizes his lungs. Immediately the bar is in turmoil; those who are not frozen to their seats are rushing around yelling. What will you do? It could be you they are after, so will you give yourself up, hoping to save the underground operation in the club (turn to 192)? Or will you fight (turn to 295)?



363

It touches you lightly with the staff and you feel invigorated. Whether this is science or superstition, you may restore 4 STAMINA points, and turn to 114.

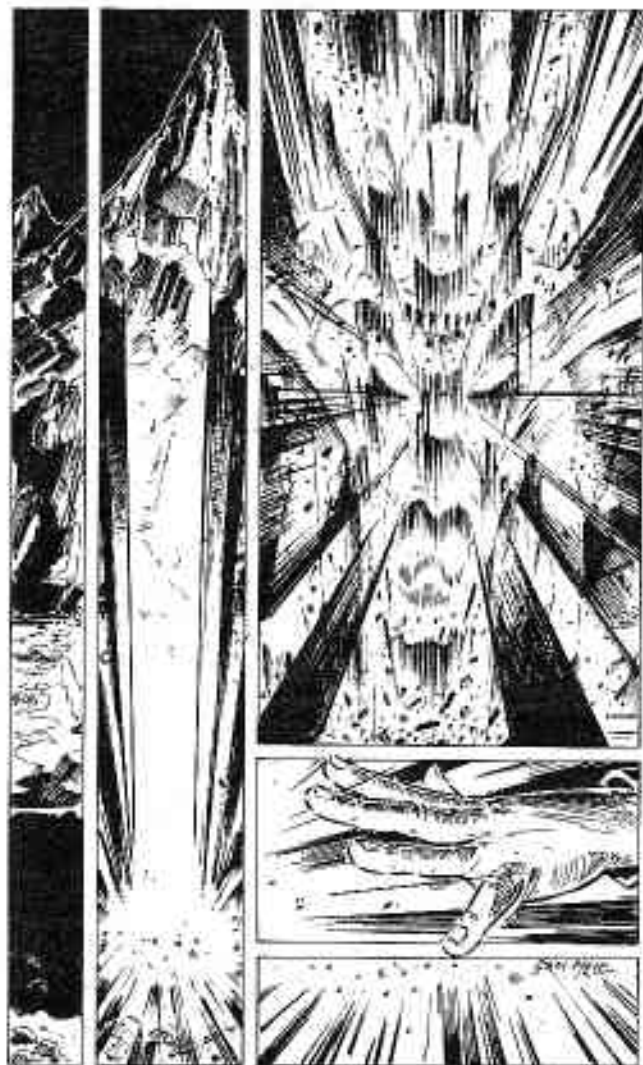


364

A mocking laugh is the only response. The traitor! He must have warned the authorities by visiphone. There is no time now to try another house. You will have to defend yourself. Turn to 264.

365

His eyes widen when he sees the bracelet – this is a rare treasure indeed. He looks around furtively and pockets it (cross it off your *Adventure Sheet*). Greed has overcome his sense of duty. Turn to 392.





366

A few swift strokes gain you entry into the club. 'For SAROS's sake, you shouldn't have done that,' whispers the doorman. 'We cannot put our operation at risk by openly defending such foolish action.' He scarpers to make way for the onrush of several Arcadians, who had been sitting quietly in the club until you so rashly drew attention to yourself. You will have to fight them all, but because you are backed against a wall at the top of the short flight of stairs inside the club, you can fight them one at a time, in this order:

	SKILL	STAMINA
NORTHERN ARCADIAN	8	12
First SOUTHERN ARCADIAN	6	10
Second SOUTHERN ARCADIAN	7	8
Drunk SOUTHERN ARCADIAN	4	8

Do you have anything in your pack to help you in this fight? If you think you do, remember this number (366), to which you will have to return, but meanwhile turn to 198. If you win, turn to 125.



367

The guard does not notice your approach, and you get in a numbing blow on his sword-arm. You may now fight him without reducing your SKILL for being unarmed.

	SKILL	STAMINA
ARCADIAN GUARD	6	10

If you win, you may take his sword, but you will have to leave the spaceport immediately. Turn to 336.





368

You keep on insisting that you know nothing. Sentence is carried out in the manner which is traditional throughout the galaxy, at dawn the next day. Your adventure ends here.

369

There is little that a phaser can do, unless you can get into the bowels of the machines. Will you fire the phaser at the casing (turn to 325)? If you have an alternative, you may return to 381 and choose again.



370

The secret policeman presses one of the buttons on the desk, which summons the guards. 'It's all right,' says the policeman. 'He's so moronic, he must be harmless. Rough him up a little, but let him go: he's

got important goods to transport to Radix tomorrow.' The guards take you away and amuse themselves with a few well-aimed punches and kicks, much to the pleasure or dismay – depending on their race – of the crowds who fill the spaceport. You dare not react: that would give the whole game away. Five minutes later, having reduced your STAMINA by 2 points, you stumble out of the spaceport. Turn to 299.



371

The smoothness of the floor and walls should have alerted you to the danger. As you explore deep into the cave to get as far away as possible from the frost outside, a sudden roar fills your ears. It is too dark to see, but your last impression is of a wall of freezing water bearing down on you.



372

The last thing you hear, before lapsing into unconsciousness, is a frantic cry: 'Watch out! Raid!' The crash of a door burst asunder and the following hubbub make multicoloured flashes in your mind, then all is black – and you will never emerge from this blackness. During the raid on the club – a raid which you caused – an Arcadian sword pierces your neck.



373

Your pursuers were close enough behind you to see where you went. You back into a doorway, where you can fight them one at a time.

	SKILL	STAMINA
First ARCADIAN	7	8
Second ARCADIAN	6	6

If you win, you continue on foot towards your hotel. Turn to 285.

374

Without further ado, you board your spaceship, which is loaded up and ready to go. You instruct the

computer to switch to its pre-programmed route from Tropos to Radix. There are no problems on blast-off, and you relax for the first time for hours, as Tropos dwindles on your rearview screen. But what lies ahead of you on Radix? Both advantages and disadvantages, as far as you can see. On the one hand, Tropos is such a backward planet, both culturally and technologically, that you are likely to feel more at home on Radix; on the other hand, you don't know even the codename of the underground leader on Radix, and it is now more crucial than ever that you learn what he or she has to tell you. Moreover, you know that Southerners are the most dominant Arcadian species on Radix, attracted there by the corruption and freedom. This too has its good and its bad points: Southern Arcadians can be more tolerant than the others, but they are more difficult to communicate with.

During your journey to Radix, you may restore half as many STAMINA points as your current STAMINA score, rounding odd numbers *down*, and remembering that you cannot exceed your *Initial* score. Turn to 47.





375

You pass, as in a dream, through countless corridors and rooms. Time seems to have no meaning, but eventually you confront a second beast, a Dragon – the living Dragon Comet which guards the richest mineral planet in the universe, according to old space legends. Again, you will have to fight it to continue.

DRAGON COMET

SKILL 8

STAMINA 12

If you win, turn to 159.

376

Promptly at eleven o'clock, you knock on Professor Zacharias's door – but there is no reply. You wait for several minutes, but he doesn't turn up. A passing student tells you why: he has been arrested, as the leader of the underground on Radix! The arrest took place about half an hour ago. He knew you were coming: maybe he had time to leave you a clue, in case you were the agent from Earth that he was expecting. You go into the room to see. It is very untidy; there are manuscripts and history books everywhere – academics still use books, since it is easier to find particular passages for reference on a page than on a screen. You concentrate on the desk. Look at the picture opposite to see whether you can find a clue to the digits you need to know.

You are suddenly interrupted by the entry of several North Arcadian guards. You too are arrested on the spot, for being in a known dissident's room. All your equipment, including your sword, is stripped from you, but they do not find your slim money-belt. Turn to 43.



377

'Yes, I know,' it replies. 'Nobody notices shadows in shadowy places, so I hear things which are denied to others. His name is Dorado, and he is working in the fields. I was by his side, though he didn't know it, when he sent you the password.'

'Password? What password?' you exclaim. 'No password got through to Earth. I detect the hand of treachery!'

The alien being is fading fast, but, as it goes, it calls out, 'The bitter sea . . .' Gain 2 LUCK points for this



vital information. If you meet Dorado, he will ask you for this password: you should then subtract 100 from the paragraph number where you are at the time to find the next, correct paragraph. Remember this. Now, turn to 114.

378

If your STAMINA is 12 or over, turn to 351; if it is under 12, turn to 242.

379

You should have realized that his friendly tone was not for your benefit, but for Musca's. As you already know, in his confused state, Musca sees anyone who appears friendly as a friend. The other Arcadian has now taken on this role, and you, by denying him entry, have become Musca's enemy. He calls out to the other Arcadian, who blasts open your door with a phaser. You will have plenty of time in an Arcadian cell to wonder why he was issued with a phaser and where you went wrong.





380

He tells you that it leads to the cellars where the museum stores all the objects that it has no room to display, but that it is closed to the public. Will you try to persuade him to open it up for you (turn to 270), or will you leave for the university (turn to 146)?



381

There is nothing to prevent you entering the computer room, but you know you will have to work fast once you're in there. The first door is locked, but can be broken easily; then there is the usual sequence of doors to protect the computers from dust - then you are inside.

The gleaming, sterile surfaces of the several component computers are set against the walls of quite a small room. To think that so much power could be contained in so little space! But there is no time for such reflections - how will you go about sabotaging the organic monstrosity? Three of the component computers are larger than the others, and they are placed in the centre of each wall (the fourth wall has the door through which you have just come). So they look like the ones you ought to concentrate on. You also notice that all the computers are covered with a casing, which you assume to be some means of regulating their surrounding temperature. Which of the following will you use?

Wire-cutters

Photon grenade

Elmonite

Limpet mine

Laser sword

Infra-red scanner

Phaser

Turn to 61

Turn to 312

Turn to 395

Turn to 6

Turn to 332

Turn to 149

Turn to 369



382

The hardware shop is tended by a cheerful South Arcadian. You decide that you had better buy something, so that your request for directions will seem less abrupt. You find the items in the shop really old-fashioned – hardware shops on Earth now stock only robots – and you cannot even imagine a use for some of them. You may buy any of the following (remembering, if necessary, the limit of six items in your pack): a benelo-phosphate strobe, which produces an extremely bright wide beam in short bursts (70 credits); and hand-klaxon (50 credits); a coil of nylon rope (50 credits); a can of engine oil (20 credits); or an automated personal massage and manicure robot (650 credits). As you hand over your money, the Arcadian's antennae wave and flash, presumably in pleasure. You put your purchases in your anti-grav pack and ask her the way to the Fission Chips.

Her reply is mysterious: 'Each is a source of growth and life; together their consciousness pervades the galaxy. The club that you seek is never eclipsed on its southern side.' This is typical of Southern Arcadian communication, though she's probably trying to make it easy for you. If you know what she's talking about, you will be able to guess what paragraph to turn to. Otherwise, turn to 44.



383

The cliff should not be difficult to climb: the freezing cold has broken it up into larger and smaller ledges, which will afford handholds and stepping-places. After about twenty minutes you can hear the bird near by, and you circle round, so that you can approach it from above.

The nest is on a fairly wide ledge. The bird itself is a Halmurian Rockbuzzard, whose fluffy appearance belies its dangerous nature. It looks like a large ball of soft feathers: as protection against the cold, it has developed the habit of burying its head and neck within its copious body feathers, until it looks like nothing so much as a large, cuddly hedgehog, with a tail and folded wings.

If you jump on to the ledge, you will have to fight it. Is this what you choose to do (turn to 298), or does its size and the precariousness of your situation make you change your mind, and return to the path (turn to 147)?



384

You can hear the eerie sound of water dripping somewhere ahead of you in the dust-muffled silence. There is a further passage branching off east. Will you take it (turn to 123), or continue straight on (turn to 154)?

385

'Yes, I can get you a pass,' he replies, 'but it'll take a day.' You don't have that much time. Lose 1 LUCK point, and ask for a sword instead. Turn to 286.



386

You press the button and wait, heart in mouth. To your relief, a secret doorway slides open and reveals a short corridor leading straight out of the spaceport. This must be used for getting rid of bodies secretly. Turn to 299.



387

In his cabin, he cannot resist explaining his invention to you, while he unpacks the equipment. 'It's really very simple in theory,' he says. 'Any Arcadian is linked to and is part of the central computer. By running electrical impulses from an Arcadian's brain, through this device I have invented, to a human's brain, I can open up for the human the glories of working for the computer, and wipe out his or her human will for ever. It's even painless, for both the Arcadian transformer and the human subject.' You realize that he is talking about some kind of ultra-sophisticated brainwashing device. For a moment, fear seizes you. Will you try to smash the machine, for your own sake and that of others (turn to 265), or will you allow the experiment to continue (turn to 116)?



388

You toss the ancient grenade towards the mechanical monster. *Test your Luck*. If you are Lucky, turn to 63; if you are Unlucky, turn to 352.



389

You trip and fall into a burning bush. Screaming with pain, your clothes on fire, you dash through the rest of the perimeter of fire and fall to the ground, rolling over and over until the flames are out. You have suffered 4 STAMINA points of injury. The alien craft was unable to track you through the smoke, and is now some way off. Will you sprint for the building (turn to 338) or the rocks (turn to 259)?

390

You go back to the hostel and spend a restless night: the fleas and the snores of your dormitory companions prevent you from sleeping. In the morning you return to the Fission Chips, only to find a smoking ruin where the Adolpho once stood in all its mock Venusian glory. A passer-by tells you that there was a heavy Arcadian raid on the premises last night. You have failed to make contact with Bellatrix. Your mission has failed: return to Earth to start again.

391

The next danger you meet comes from a creature which can only be described as a conscious black hole: its method of attack is to attach itself to you like a leech and try to extract your energy.

VAMPIRE LEECH SKILL 8 STAMINA 10

If you win, turn to 269.



392

He unlocks the door and you both go down some stairs into the dusty cellars, which are full of objects in packing-cases, show-cases, or just loose. You look around the first cellar for a while, and then stifle an excited cry. There, in a show-case marked 'Purpose Unknown - Possibly Religious Artefacts', is something which you with your training in weaponry recognize as a primitive baryon grenade - and it looks undamaged! You must have it, even though it means fighting the friendly watchman. Turn to 215.

393

You decide to try these wire-cutters, which, like all such implements nowadays, simply dissolve the wire at contact. But as soon as you touch the perimeter fence with the tool, an alarm siren goes off deafeningly. You may have time to get through before a patrol comes to investigate. Roll two dice. If the number rolled is less than your current SKILL score, turn to 279; if the number is greater than or equal to your current SKILL score, turn to 199.

394

You turn south out of the hostel. As you are walking along, you realize that you will have to ask *someone* the way to the Fission Chips, and it might as well be this man, who has introduced himself as Grus. 'I'm hungry,' you say, 'and a friend back on Earth said that a club called the Fission Chips was worth visiting. Can you tell me where it is, by any chance?'

Grus looks at you curiously. 'Yes, I can get you there,' he replies. 'It's in the basement of the old Adolpho videorama. But your friend must have strange tastes if he recommended the food there - or the company. Never mind, I'll take you there.'



You notice that the city is laid out very regularly on a square grid pattern. The hostel is at the north end of North 23 - East 5 Street, and the next block south starts at the top of North 22 - East 5 Street. The buildings are all very alike, except for the Temple of the Five Suns, which towers above the rest of the city and is a famous landmark; it is the centre of the

Imperial religion on Tropos – the five suns being the suns of the planets in the Empire.

You are led five blocks south and four east. Eventually, Grus takes you down a side-street. 'Wait here,' he says. 'I have to see someone – someone who can get us into the Fission Chips. Not long now.' He knocks on a door. Will you insist on entering the house with him (turn to 229), or will you stay out in the side-street (turn to 56)?



395

Elmonite is a sensitive and powerful explosive, which is automatically detonated by contact with the air. You know that from the time you break the seal of the cylinder, you have three minutes before the explosion. Will you break the elmonite into three pieces, one for each main computer (turn to 222), or will you consider that if you break it up it



may not do enough damage, and pack it all against a single computer? If so, will it be the computer against the wall opposite the door (turn to 139), the computer to the right (turn to 51), or the left-hand one (turn to 203)? If you have an alternative, you may prefer to return to 381 and choose again.

396

He doesn't classify you as a rebel, but he confiscates one of the items (you choose which to cross off your Equipment List). Then he lets you pass through to 374.



397

You open the door, shivering with anticipation – or is it trepidation? It leads to a dark, gloomy corridor. The guard allows you one last despairing glance

back into the well-lit room, before shoving you through the entrance and slamming the door.

Darkness descends, but it is not total. Somewhere far ahead there is a source of light. You clutch at straws: surely this is a hopeful sign? Surely they wouldn't bother with light if this was the passage of doom? Then a little voice inside you interrupts your wishful thinking: oh, yes, they would – they need to see to clear the bodies away . . .

Time passes; so far, so good. You're still alive. But then you've only moved a few centimetres from the door! Perhaps you should just stay here, where at least you haven't been killed yet. Is that what you choose to do (turn to 4), or will you continue down the corridor (turn to 71)?



398

Quite right: your escort must be an Arcadian, and you do not want to draw attention to yourself. You pass the journey pleasantly enough in eating, sleeping, exercising and playing chess with the com-

puter. When you land on Tropos, you find that you are due to take off again tomorrow for Radix. The Arcadian guards at Customs search your anti-grav pack but find no more than your clothes, because they don't search your body: they rely on the metal-detectors to do their job, but your laser sword has been treated with a chemical which prevents it activating the detectors, and your money-belt contains no metal. Once you have registered, as all non-Tropian humans must on arrival, you leave the spaceport. Turn to 299.



399

You follow him down countless passageways, up and down flights of stairs, and finally across rooftops, until you come to a secluded air-conditioning control room on top of the western part of the spaceport buildings. This is all very mysterious. Will you allow your companion to knock on the door (turn to 145), or will you put an end to this risky business (turn to 334)?

You quickly leave the building in case the explosion should harm you as well. But right outside is a platoon of Northern Arcadians, spiked tails restlessly swinging from side to side. Just as they move in for the kill, however, the *crump* of a muffled explosion sounds from the building behind you. Immediately, the Arcadians' faces go vacant; they look around, heads lolling. *You've done it!* The Arcadian Empire is finished. The computer queen of the colony is destroyed, and with it went the will of its workers.



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