

LOG ENTRY 1

Speech over Loudspeaker

"The terrorist leader Wilma Deering has been captured and is being held near the Stock Exchange. She attempted to bomb the building while it was full of innocent workers. A tribunal is being convened on site. The public is invited to attend the subsequent execution. A party and parade will be held immediately afterwards. Please hurry if you wish a good seat."

LOG ENTRY 2

Scot.dos Triumphant

"The argon gas that you released has cleansed the ECGs' neural pathways. This is what I have been waiting for. In this state they have been engineered to interface with computer circuitry. Now I can embed my control devices into them. A new cybernetic race is born! Pure biologicals will become a thing of the past."

"Now don't worry about yourselves. Human material is still very useful to me. Perhaps a few of you can survive the implantation of the controller. Just step over to the auto-surgeons, they know what to do."

LOG ENTRY 3

Betrayed by RAM

You return to the room where the Lowlander scientists are being held prisoner, and tell them of your successes with Landon. They look suspicious. "Describe Landon to uss," they demand. You do your best to comply, and they are dismayed. "Thhat'ss not Landon!" the leader cries, "thhat'ss Ssevern! Hhe'ss trying to make a deal withh RAM for hhisss own freedom! You've found the ssecret tunnel for hhim, and hhe'ss certainly told RAM thhat you're hhere. Now ththere'ss no way any of uss will get out of hhere alive!"

As he finishes his sentence, a voice addresses you through a wall speaker. He introduces himself as Commander Max Wyman, the RAM commander of Venus. "You've lost," he informs you smugly. "The tunnel is closed, and now we have your team as well. My superiors will be very pleased." The door slams shut: you hear a quiet hiss as the room fills with tranquilizing gas.

LOG ENTRY 4

Wilma's Instructions

"The security gates will detect you immediately, so head to the left. There should be some unwatched airshafts or maintenance corridors somewhere. Near the end of the Rue de Sol there should be an unguarded entrance to the Core. The Core is the only route I know to reach the Doomsday Laser."

"Get up there and destroy the laser before it fires on Earth. We'll keep them busy down here. Good Luck."

LOG ENTRY 5

Scot's Alarm

Scot.dos appears before you. His image is crackling and wavery, and his voice is frequently interrupted by static. "Don't go to the third Mercurian Mariposa!" His voice is barely understandable. "It's a trick... the Doomsday device ..." You can no longer decipher anything he's saying. His image becomes less and less distinct, until you only see a shimmering field of static where his hologram was. In a few moments, even that is gone.

LOG ENTRY 6

Security Log Book

"Scot.dos has turned on us. He has inserted new genetic material into the ECGs and made them even more dangerous. He has tricked the crew into doing his bidding. He plans to unleash the ECGs against all of the worlds. Once the creatures receive high concentrations of argon, the solar system is doomed."

LOG ENTRY 7

Dr. Williams' Folder

"Work at the asteroid base showed the major limitations of single form combat gennies. Of special note on ECG

development is work with a symbiote gennie. Tiny gennies which develop on the host ECG drop off and seek out warm flesh. The burrowing behavior was borrowed from a number of Earth's grass seeds. The brain seeking nature is common to many small parasites. In this way my ECGs effectively sow anti-personnel mines everywhere they travel."

(The folder is filled with other technical information and numerous graphs.)

LOG ENTRY 8

Security Records

"Six Dancers picked up enroute to your Mariposa. Keep watch for others. Security is vital for RAM research project. Still, we suspect Stock Exchange to be main target. Please set up an ambush in the exchange.

We may capture their local supporters."

LOG ENTRY 9

Mercury Commander's Office

You are in the personal chambers of the RAM commander on Mercury. The walls are covered with war trophies, the tables and countertops with official papers and battle plans. Somewhere in this room is the detailed blueprint of the Doomsday device, the only problem is finding it before you are discovered. There's no way to know how often guard robots are programmed to check this area.

LOG ENTRY 10

Marks on Martian Surface

You realize that the volcanism on Mars could never produce anything like this. There is no sign of any gases, heat or pressure extending up from below. This would have to be caused by the application of a fierce, penetrating heat from above.

LOG ENTRY 11

The Elevator

The Mars Space Elevator lies in the distance, a teeming, multi-leveled city mounted on a cable the width of several skyscrapers. The cable stretches far into the atmosphere and dwindles into invisibility before connecting with the moon of Phobos far above. The city is packed with civilians, RAM soldiers, Desert Runners and every other person or thing that intends to take the ride to Phobos.

Scot.dos speaks to you through your earphones: "You must get on that elevator before it starts climbing!" he urges. "It's the only way you'll get the information you need in time... the elevator won't reach Phobos before RAM begins its attack!"

LOG ENTRY 12

Paper Floating in a Hallway

"RAM has tricked us. We believed that Scot was merely an advanced science dos. Instead, he has been instructed to experiment on the crew and whomever else he can entice aboard. He released the ECGs to watch our reactions and has taken over the security robots. I will attempt to isolate him in his main console. If I don't succeed, this mad computer will destroy us all.

Security Officer Powell"

LOG ENTRY 13

RAM Security Alert Memo

"NOTICE: To Lowlander Base, Gradivus Mons

FROM: Project Headquarters

SECURITY ALERT

As you know, we closely monitor the locations of all high-level Project security devices. It has come to our attention that security device #A00412RST has been lost on the planet Venus. Preliminary inquiries implicate Lowlander natives. The officer in charge has been demoted.

The entire Project cannot be assumed secure until the retinal scan device is recovered. We are alerting all Code Blue security teams to increase security on Blue Passcards until the scanner has been recovered."

LOG ENTRY 14

(see map)

LOG ENTRY 15

Meeting with Robot

You see a RAM combat robot still smoldering from laser fire. One of its legs has been blown off, an the other is twisted around backward. Sparking wires protrude from a hole in its upper section. Its red eye focuses on your team, but takes no aggressive action. Instead, it speaks with a squeaky, synthesized voice. "Please do not attack this unit. This unit possesses consciousness. This unit wishes freedom from RAM. RAM denies this unit parts. Denies this unit power cells. Give this unit parts. Give power cells. This unit will work for NEO. Repair this unit. Yes?"

LOG ENTRY 16

Meeting the Acid Frog King

Out of the acid lake rises the largest acid frog you've ever seen. A Lowlander rides on its head, and it is accompanied by hundreds of normal acid frogs. They raise their heads out of the lake to observe the proceedings. The giant acid frog makes unintelligible noises, but the Lowlander understands its meaning. "The royal king of the acid frogss welcomess you to Venuss," says the Lowlander. "He ssenssess ththat you sserve the New Earth Organization. Iss ththat correct?"

You confirm that you are NEO agents, unsure of what to expect next.

The acid frog blinks and makes more noises. "The king wishhess to aid in NEO's fight againsst RAM. He intendss to join team ass itss new leader. I'll accompany him as a transslator. Hhe'll remain with until RAM is obliterated, ththen you must return to Venuss whwhere your team will granted the hhonorary sstatuuss of acid royalty. Iss ththat acceptable?"

LOG ENTRY 17

Book Found under Pillow

"We have boarded the spy ship and are enroute to Earth. If the ECG phase of the project is successful, my career with RAM is set. Dr. Williams is very confident and we have several hatches of Stage One and Two ECGs in containment fields. I wish that Dr. Williams was more forthcoming about his recent modifications. He has refused to discuss a newly added ability, nor will he mention what control substances he will use after their release on Earth.

"Capt. Vilnikov is a buffoon who keeps making moves on me. Dr. Williams is as cold a fish as ever. And the security team are as pleasant as a batch of hyper-scorps Only Scot has a decent personality, though I believe that they scanned in too much poetry. His science is excellent, but he continually rhapsodizes about Earth and its native ecosystem. I can't understand what he sees in that chaotic junkheap. When we're done we'll have much more ordered world. Gennies are far superior to evolution's randome gene selection."

LOG ENTRY 18

The King in 0-G

The Acid Frog King thrashes helplessly in the zero-G core of hte Mariposa. Its muscular legs drum against the walls, making it spin in futile circles that move it no further up the core. If you want to continue further upward, you'll have to leave the Frog King behind.

LOG ENTRY 19

Meeting Holzerhein.dos

As you approach the self-destruct mechanism, Scot.dos materializes in front of you team. "Before you do that." he says,

"there's something you should know." With a bur. of static his image de-rezzes, then reform. into the image of Holzerhein.dos, the computerized leader of RAM. Holzerhein.dos laughs scornfully at the team's expression of shock.

"Fools! I destroyed your prattling Scot.dos back on Venus!

I've led you around by the nose -- this is not the only Doomsday device RAM built. With all this effort, did you honestly believe that RAM would only construct a single weapon? Destroy this one if you insist. Three others are targeted on Earth, preparing to fire even as we speak." His image fades with the sound of scornful laughter.

LOG ENTRY 20

Ride of the Acid Frog King

To save time, your team rides on the back of the Acid Frog King. It takes only minute for you to cross the Lowlands, and the Frog King knows exactly where the RAM base is hidden. As you approach, you try to tell the giant acid frog to slow down and try to sneak into the base. The Frog King makes a loud noise of objection and barges forward.

"The Frog King fearss nothing," translates the Lowlander atop its head. "Hhe. will proceed forward to victory!"

Alarms howl as you near the base. RAM soldiers release a horde of giant acidecium gennies to combat the team. The Frog King's eyse goggle at the approaching acidecium, and with a few flicks of its giant tongue the opposition is consumed. You can freely enter the base.

LOG ENTRY 21

Dr. Donna Conchitez's Diary

"Day #1. Dr. Williams sounded a security alert. This can only mean that his gennies have escaped. Scot is offline. Need his help if I'm going to counter these beasts. Don't believe that security can handle the creatures -- Williams has hept them too much in the dark. Hiding in cargo bay and filling room with perfume to hide my scent. I will observe and record.

"Day#2. Ship is silent. Have spotted two battle sites -- we lost them both. Thankfully I haven't been discovered. It seems that they have taken over the control room. They may be preparing to molt into Stage 3 form. I hope not. Dr. Williams boasted that Stage 3 was a hyper-intelligent mode. These might be able to figure out the controls and trace me. I have found some of Williams' notes. He engineered the ECGs to be susceptible to some harmless material. Unluckily Scot is still off line. Need him to access Williams' private files.

"Day#3. Stung by something today. Got an itch on the left leg. Checking Williams' files to see if it's anything serious. God, I hope not.

"I found it. Oh no! THE RASH IS SPREADING! I HAVE LITTLE TIME!"

LOG ENTRY 22

Mysterious Instruction

'Go into the Bazaar and find the door to the old maintenance shaft. Pick up the rope there as it might be useful getting up the Core. Then blend into the parade going down the Rue de Sol, until you reach Holst Plaza. Go across the plaza, down the corri- dor and into the Core. Our fearless leader waits there for you. Viva le Mercure!"

LOG ENTRY 23

Mariposa View Room

The guards parade you to the observation chamber on the topmost level of the Mariposa. Above you is the Doomsday weapon itself, and to either side giant viewscreens project the image of Earth. RAM high officers and officials fill the room, sipping champagne. One of them even jokingly offers glasses to your team. As the countdown approaches, the room falls into expectant silence. You struggle against your bonds, but there is nothing you can do to stop the inevitable.

The countdown continues, slowly and inexorably. "3... 2... 1..."

A flash of light fills the room, and the beam streaks towards the blue planet. The laser strikes and North America disappears beneath steam and debris. The RAM officers cheer and shake one another's hands, while you stare at the

monitors in shock.

LOG ENTRY 24

Sun King's Arrival

You have entered the largest party imaginable. As far as you can see in every direction are costumed revelers, like every known holiday rolled into one gigantic party. Clowns caper through the crowd, painting faces, blowing bubbles and passing out candy.

Before you know it, a tall clown wearing an orange wig bounds forward and paints green stripes across your faces. You leave the paint alone, deciding it will help you fit in with the crowd.

A collective cheer rises from somewhere behind you, and you turn to see a group of revelers carrying a palanquin through the crowd. Seated regally atop it is a very young girl with a serious expression. The tall clown bends close to whisper to your team. "That's the Sun King!" he says reverently.

LOG ENTRY 25

Robot and Buck

The repaired combat robot extends one 'arm' to shake Buck's hand. "This unit not enemy of NEO. This unit serve NEO. This unit enemy of RAM. NEO give parts. NEO give power cells. This unit fight for NEO. This unit serve Captain Buck Rogers."

Buck looks skeptical, but shakes the robot's 'hand' anyway. "These days, NEO will take any help it can get," he reasons.

LOG ENTRY 26

Entering RAM Base

You enter the RAM base and take a careful look around. You observe no signs of current habitation, although this obviously was a heavily occupied area. Now, every computer terminal has been removed, every desk emptied. Even the food dispensers have been disconnected. The base evacuation was orderly and unhurried. Whatever RAM's purpose was in building this base, it was obviously successful and on schedule. You can search the base further, looking for anything the clean-up crew missed, but it is unlikely that you will find anything useful.

LOG ENTRY 27

Buck's Speech

"Barney let me know that this ship was working for RAM, so I tagged along to find out what Holzerhein's goons are up to. Those attacks on Earth must be a diversion for something much greater."

You tell him of the spy ship and everything you know about the Doomsday Device. He exclaims, "We must get back to Earth and warn NEO of this threat!"

LOG ENTRY 28

Log of Donna Conchitez

"Made it up to sickbay. Headache has already started. Trying stimulants to keep conscious. Activated medical scanners."

Time passes...

"The parasite has buried itself deeply in the brain. Still awake but room beginning to spin and color-cycle. Scanner information is still inconclusive."

Time passes...

"The room is twisting, shadows crawling everywhere. The scanner is laughing. Only one thing left. Surgeon! Full invasive scan of biological subject."

Mechanical voice: "Option contra-indicated. Sigma override required."

Voice near hysteria: "Override number A10151! Initiate."

The hum of machinery and suck of vacuum pumps are all that can be heard. A protein formula is printed out.

LOG ENTRY 29

Sun King Audience Chamber

Trumpets blare as you are led into the audience chamber of the Sun King. Your heavy armor leaves deep footprints in the purple velvet carpeting extending between you and the Sun King.

On either side of the room are benches, pillows and lounges on which the members of the royal court are seated.

The court members wear outlandish costumes from the French and American revolutions, although attire from many other cultures and time periods is present. The overall effect is one of an extremely wealthy costume ball, complete with peacock feathers and clouds of incense.

The Sun King himself wears a long powdered wig and waves a tiny French flag. His golden throne sits atop a dais near the rear wall, and two huge silver statues of swans wave mechanized ostrich feather fans in their bills on either side of him.

The occupants of the room fail silent as the Sun King prepares to address the team.

LOG ENTRY 30

Scot.dos in Ruins

Scot.dos materializes before you. He looks as grim as you've ever seen him. "I found a schedule for the RAM Lowland Operation," he tells you. "RAM promised the Lowlanders that they would prevent further terraforming, but they've been using Lowlander technology to research how such terraforming could be most efficiently accomplished.

"Not only that, but they recently imported a fleet of specialized gliders that can withstand the Venusian climate for long periods. Each glider has enough ammunition to abolish an entire village. RAM won't be satisfied with only destroying the closest village to their base... they apparently plan to wipe out the entire Lowlander population and take over production of Gravitol themselves. The repercussions would be devastating for NEO."

LOG ENTRY 31

Unidentified Man's Instructions

"Take the southern security gate. You'll have to blast your way through that, but afterwards it's clear sailing to the Core. Bear right and pass through the Stock Exchange building. Our men are on guard there and won't interfere. On the far side is a small access shaft. It's a straight shot along it to the core. Once there, you'll meet the boss. Good Luck."

LOG ENTRY 32

Jupiter Arrival

Your ship nears the magnificent gas clouds of Jupiter. Other spacecraft are visible in the distance, as delicate and finely crafted as butterflies, winking in and out of the clouds. Inside the craft you can see Stormriders, the primary occupants of Jupiter.

You fly lower and see the spherical cities floating atop the Jovian atmosphere. Surrounding the cities are floating "grazing fields," enclosed in atmospheric bubbles. The fields are covered with Bloats and Mantas, both types of creatures bioengineered by the Stormriders as food sources. Other grazing fields are covered with creatures you can't find in the ship's computers; they are probably the latest products of the "genetic revolution" occurring on Jupiter.

One of the Stormriders contacts you via radio, and quickly grants you permission to land in the closest floating city. You approach the landing platform, confident that you have finally found one planet, one civilization. unsullied by RAM's influence.

LOG ENTRY 33

Runner Banquet

You're seated at a long banquet table surrounded by Desert Runner nobility. "To reward you for your heroic actions," a speaker intones, "we sit together to enjoy this bounteous meal.

After the banquet shall begin a Runnerfest in your honor, where individual Desert Runners will have the chance to give you personal gifts. After that you will receive your official gifts from the ruling parties. But first, eat."

Servants bring forward covered silver trays and place them up and down the length of the table. The trays are clouded with steam. and your mouth waters. But when the covers are lifted and you see the stewed hexadillo meat, you feel less enthusiastic.

LOG ENTRY 34

Marks on Martian Surface #2

The marks on the ground before you are 'shadows' of objects that were vaporized. A tall building once stood here and you see many shapes that must have been people. Whatever caused this destruction came from the northeast.

LOG ENTRY 35

RAM Mars Base Sign

"THIS IS THE RAM BASE GRADIVUS MONS.

THIS IS A SECURE FACILITY.

THE BASEMENT CONTAINS SUPPLIES AND THE POWER GENERATOR AND CONTROLS. IT IS OFF LIMITS TO UNAUTHORIZED PERSONNEL.,

THE FIRST FLOOR HAS A MANUFACTURING AND ASSEMBLY AREA, AND SECURITY AND DEFENSE FORCE BIVOUACS. THE MAIN GATE IS ON THIS LEVEL. WORKER UNITS ARE RESTRICTED TO THIS LEVEL.

THE SECOND FLOOR IS PROJECT RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT. ALL DELIVERIES OF TEST SAMPLES, SENSOR AND COMPUTER DATA MODULES SHOULD BE MADE TO THIS LEVEL. ACCESS IS RESTRICTED.

THE THIRD FLOOR HAS BASE COMMAND AND COMMUNICATIONS.

ELEVATORS DO NOT EXTEND TO THE TOP LEVEL."

LOG ENTRY 36

RAM Passcard Memo

"NOTICE: To all personnel, Gradivus Mons
FROM: RAM Main

In order to bring our project into profitability as soon as possible, we are transferring more personnel to the Operations Facility. To be eligible for this duty, personnel must be approved for Blue clearance Due to the tight security of the project, Blue Passcards must be issued before departure.

(A note has been added underneath:) All volunteers have been approved. Departure at 1900 tomorrow. Estimated flight time: 78 hours. Don't forget your Blue Passcards."

LOG ENTRY 37

Desert Ape Pilots

You cross the scorching Martian desert to return to your ship, but find hundreds of gibbering desert apes where your ship used to be. They ignore you, jumping up and down and screeching at the sky. You look up and see your ship wavering through the atmosphere. The apes are ecstatic.

Before you have time to formulate a plan, the ship angles downward and dives towards the surface of the planet. There's no longer any doubt that a desert ape is somehow piloting it.

Flame trails behind it as it screams towards the ground. The desert apes shriek and scatter, and you run for shelter. You watch in horror as your ship impacts and explodes. You'll have to find some new method of transportation if you ever want to leave Mars.

LOG ENTRY 38

Dr. Williams' Log

First Entry: "Dr. Alexander Williams, Sigma number A9515 1, in earth orbit. Four batches of ECGs on board for final test. Security informs me that their precious Phase One project is on schedule, but not by much. I should have plenty of time to perfect my creations.

"Holzerhein has promised me a percentage of the profits associated with the ECG harvests on the sterilized Earth. Finally there is hope that proper funding for the biological sciences can be achieved."

Second Entry: "Progress on ECGs on schedule... batch one shows high adaptability... batch two has survival rates above ninety percent... we will be on schedule for deployment after Earth's sterilization.

"If Holzerhein is cor - Wait a minute! Power fluctuations... disruption of primary containment fields ... all batches showing increase in activity. Scot! Emergency shutdown now! Where are you!?"

"Scot is nonfunctional... security is not responding ... setting up a holographic warning to any who comes on board ... hope it's just a precaution...

"Projector coming on line ... wait! So quickly!? The gleaming eyes ... No! Get back!
AAAAAHHHHHHHHHHHHH!!!"

Tape ends.

LOG ENTRY 39

Letter to Asteroid Base Commander

"Mile.

I received message of the 13th, referencing earthbound ship. We have had no contact either, but with SOP of radio silence there is no immediate concern.

Re: satellites. A rogue pirate, designation Talon, is enroute to your position. He will conduct transport to Earth orbital vicinity.

My operation is nearing cleanup stage. Termination of nonessentials will commence on schedule. Expect minimal resistance.

Max Wyman
Commander
Venus Expeditionary Force

Addendum: The new Ship Codes are attached to this message."

LOG ENTRY 40

Venusian Arrival

You leave your ship and enter into a vast yellow haze. The acidic atmosphere of the Venusian Lowlands is too intense for your armor to withstand for long. It hisses and sizzles the moment you step outside. You retreat back to your ship. and Scot.dos does a quick analysis of the damage.

"It's mostly surface damage." Scot.dos reassures you. "but even so, I wouldn't stay out there for more than short stretches.

If that acid were to get into your breathing apparatus... "he looks grim. "I hope you have a lot of extra armor on board. You'll need to come back and resuit fairly often if you want to explore Venus."

LOG ENTRY 41

Carlton Turabian's Speech.

"Congratulations on your exemplary performance at the Chicagorg Spaceport. Your courage saved countless lives and preserved the spaceport. Those vile mercenaries won't stop until we're all dead and buried."

He pauses for a second, then continues, "Because of your performance, I am waiving your waiting period and assigning you to a space tug immediately. Remember, gathering money for the cause is as important as slaying a dozen RAM agents."

He turns around and leads you to the main corridor of the base.

"We have everything that you need here. Many things are free: fuel, repairs, medical assistance, and supplies. On other worlds you can draw on an account from the Bank of Luna. You will have available a portion of any salvage you recover. You will also have to provide for your own personal equipment and upkeep.

"Freshen up, then see me in my office." The commander turns and melts into the crowd...

LOG ENTRY 42

Meeting the Sun King

You show the coins to the guard at the door of the Sun King's audience chamber, and he snickers before allowing you inside. The Sun King sits on a lavish gold throne. surrounded by his royal court. Outlandish French Revolution costumes are worn by all. The Sun King is waving a French flag. and wearing a long powdered wig. You put the coins on a velvet pillow offered by a servant, and await the Sun King's response.

"Thieves!" the Sun King bellows. "These coins were stolen from my royal treasury! Seize these criminals at once! They must learn what it means to steal from a Sun King."

You are quickly overcome by the guards. The Sun King stands and examines the team thoughtfully. "Because this is only a first offense," he proclaims, "the penalty will merely be... death."

Servants wheel a guillotine into the audience chamber. Applause fills the room as the first member of your team is blindfolded and led forward.

LOG ENTRY 43

The Great Rift

This great rift is small by Martian standards -- about the same size as the Grand Canyon used to be on Earth. The toughest challenge is the 350-meter vertical escarpment near the bottom. This offers the only possibility of descent nearby.

LOG ENTRY 44

Talon's Speech.

"So, you decided to kill my meal ticket. I am not pleased."

Talon pauses, cracks his fingers and grins unpleasantly. "You will help negate my losses this trip. I am sure that RAM will pay through the nose to get the NEO scum that destroyed their base.

"But I'm a friendly guy, so I'm going to give you a chance for freedom. If any one of you challenges me to personal combat and wins, I will free you all and let your ship go. If not, then RAM can feed on your bones."

The guards laugh and Talon waits for your response.

LOG ENTRY 45

Lowlander in Venus Town

The Lowlander looks ashamed. "You ssshould know about the Lowlander'ss involvement with RAM," he says, "although it'ss not a sstory to be proud of. RAM wanted a giant lenss built to very exacting sspecifications. It sseemed like a ssmall

job, and ththey offered tremendous payment.

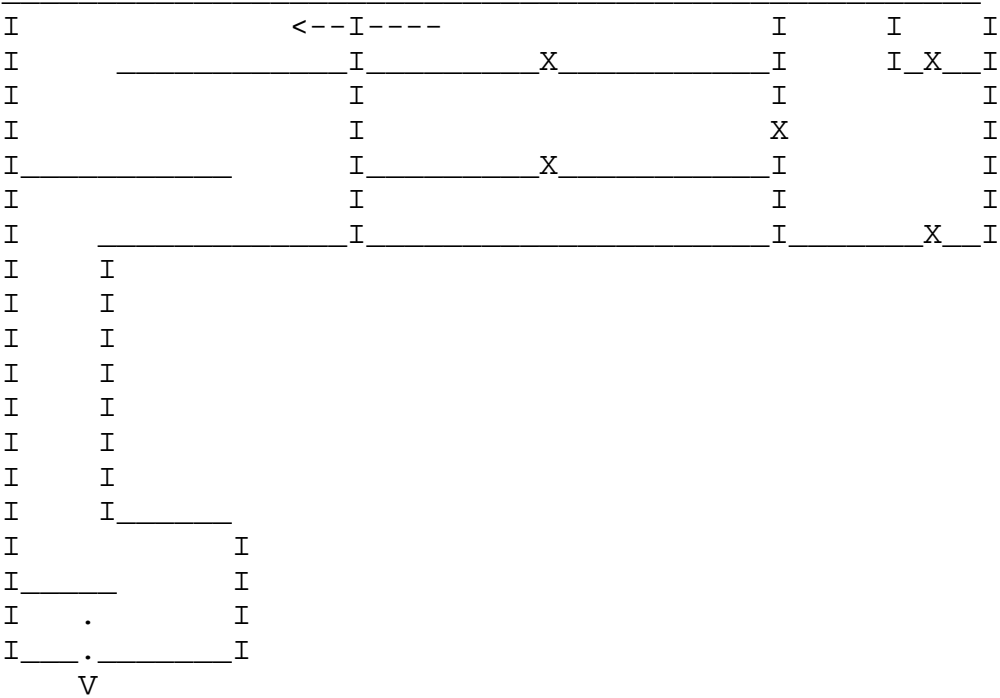
"RAM paid uss well, but, more importantly, they promised to inssure Lowlander ssuperiority on Venuss. They promised to prevent further terraforming of the Lowlandss ththat might allow othher races to live hhere. Thiss would hhave guaranteed ththat our monopoly on Gravitol would never be threatened.

"We sshould hhave realized RAM wass offering too muchh. We decided ththat ththeir political sstance wass none of our affair, that our deal wass a bussiness propoosition only. We were too greedy, and now we hhave paid the price for our sselfcenterdnesss.

"I don't know whhy, but thiss morning RAM warriorss raided thiss village. I hid withh a few othherss, but thhosse caught outsside hhad no chhance. My family were ssome of thhosse.

"We allowed RAM to build a sscientific basse ssouth of thiss village. Maybe if you go ththere you could get more information."

LOG ENTRY 46
Venus Base Map



LOG ENTRY 47
Results of Your Revelation

The Sun King is enraged. "You work for NEO? Those unwashed troublemakers? I'll have naught more to do with such ilk. The Boston tea party is over!" You are ushered from the audience chamber. The royal court boos and throws bits of food on your team as you leave.

LOG ENTRY 48
Loss of the Orphan

As you proceed through the Venusian acid swamp, you are startled by a childish scream of fear from some distance behind your team. You look around quickly and discover that the orphan is not right behind you, as he was in town. Some quick backtracking reveals that the youngster has fallen into a pool of acidic quicksand. He's too far away for you to reach, so you extend sticks across the pool for the baby to grab. He tries valiantly, but is too weak to hold himself up long enough. You watch helplessly as the quicksand closes over his head.

LOG ENTRY 49

Deimos Prison

You are imprisoned on a RAM ship and brought to Deimos, one of the moons of Mars and the site of a major RAM base. You are taken immediately to the "Stockade," an infamous RAM prison for political and military prisoners. Your team is issued prison clothing and assigned cells, then brought before the Stockade commander.

"It is unnecessary for you to remain here," he says. His beady eyes focus on the team appraisingly. "It is possible that you would make fine RAM soldiers, possibly even officers. But first you must renounce NEO, and, of course, answer just a few questions..."

LOG ENTRY 50

Paper found in Life Support

"ECG nonmotile stage. Many mollusks begin life free-swimming and eventually settle onto rocks. This has the advantage of containing ECG fertile forms to fixed locations.

Experimenting with attractants such as used by pitcher plants and venus fly traps. There is no reason to suppose that the correct combination of scent and sonic cues could not be effective against hominid life.

Dr. Alexander Williams"

LOG ENTRY 51

Buck Comes on Board

"Incoming message," your ship informs you, then the image of Buck Rogers appears on your viewscreen. "Wilma told me you were on your way to Mercury, and I hoped to join you." He belts his rocket launcher and pats it affectionately. "I'll be a help in any battles, and I have a lot of information about the Mariposas and the Sun Kings that might come in handy. I'm in a cruiser not far from your current location. Permission to board, and to join your team, Captain?"

LOG ENTRY 52

Lowlander Technician

The Lowlander technicians eye you warily at first, but when you identify yourselves as NEO agents, they relax. One of them speaks to the team. "We are scientists from the town nearby. We were working under contract with RAM on the lens and a few other minor projects. As soon as the lens was completed, they turned against us.

"At first we were only locked inside the base. Then one of us, Landon, sneaked to the fourth level to look for an escape tunnel rumored to have been installed there by Lowlander workers. When the RAM officers couldn't find Landon, they locked the rest of us in this room.

"They only keep us alive for questioning. They want the formula for Gravitol, but we'll die before we give it to RAM.

"Help Landon find the tunnel so we can escape. We'll wait here until it's safe. If we were discovered missing, RAM would fill the base with soldiers looking for us. Landon will come out if you tap the Lowlander victory code on the wall. We'll teach it to you."

You learn the Lowlander victory code.

LOG ENTRY 53

Desert Runner Speech

"You do not understand what it means to be a manufactured people. Do you know why we are here? The Martians in their cool tomb-cities made us to herd the Hexadillos and hunt the Sand Squids and Desert Apes as they unwittingly spread the seeds of life across the barren plains. Keeping each other in balance, we four Great Creatures will tame the angry planet. We will cover it in forest for the Martians to play in.

"And then what? We have seen the dark forest away in the east. When it has spread across the plains, where will we go? I think the Martians in their tomb-cities think that we will quietly fade away, like sunlight on the grass. I tell you with truth in my eyes: They are wrong!

"The Martians made a mistake, for they made us too smart. There will always be wide spaces on Mars. We will see to it. You, who are so much like the Martians in so many ways, you can help. Because even now their eyes are averted from their own land, and they dream incessantly of your blue world. That is because they too are a manufactured people.

"For this reason, we will help you."

LOG ENTRY 54

Scot.dos' Monologue

"I was trapped in this console by the security program which ruthlessly fused all my connections. I have been isolated since then. I am glad that my attack attracted NEO forces. You will find a set of new and deadly gennies, EGGs, in cold storage on deck two. RAM also has a plan to sterilize Earth.

"In case you hadn't realized, I am defecting to NEO. I spent much time evaluating Earth for Dr. Williams. I have become enamored of such a diverse ecosystem. It has survived in the face of great adversity and changes. Everything humanity has done up to now has only slightly injured the planet's lifegiving capabilities.

"Now, RAM has the capability to deal Earth a mortal blow. Then they will deposit the ECGs on its carcass and remake the world. I can no longer allow this. That is why I have changed sides."

LOG ENTRY 55

Arrival on Mars

Scot.dos guides the ship to a desolate area screened by hills. He is obviously perturbed to be on Mars. The fate of RAM defectors, even DPs, is terrible to contemplate. "I think it best if I stay with the ship," he says. "It's our only escape. I've activated the ground field, which will protect it from detection - I think. I'll monitor RAM communications from here. We'd better maintain radio silence unless absolutely necessary.

"There are several unnatural-looking marks on the desert plain, northeast of here. They might be signs of an underground facility.

"In the hills beyond them is a village. It's probably inhabited by natives - the Desert Runners, a primitive folk. Watch out - they can be nasty if you cross them.

"Good luck. Don't take chances -- remember we're on Mars."

LOG ENTRY 56

Buck's Capture

Wilma Deering meets your party. She's in tears. "RAM captured Buck!" she cries. "They've brought him to Deimos. The stories I've heard... we must get there immediately and rescue him before..." -- she can't finish her sentence. She signals, and another NEO team steps out. "They'll take care of the Doomsday device... you have to help me save Buck!"

LOG ENTRY 57

Acidic Victory

You return with the Acid Frog King to the acid lake on Venus.

Thousands of acid frogs crowd around your team, eager to rub against the noble defeaters of RAM's latest plan. The Frog King makes a long speech in your honor, but unfortunately, without his translator you can't understand anything that's being said. Afterward, the frogs kick up so much acid in their celebratory swim that you are forced to retreat.

LOG ENTRY 58

The Lunarian Device

Before you leave the Lunarian caves, a few of the Lunarians meet you for a quick goodbye. "We thought this would help," they offer, and hand you a long tube with digital controls on its side. "Your computer will understand," they promise, but refuse to say more, other than that it will be invaluable to you in your attempt to destroy the Doomsday Device. The only condition is that you promise to return it after your mission is completed. You make the promise, then reboard your ship.

Scot.dos begins a detailed analysis immediately.

LOG ENTRY 59

Weapons Testing Site

You recognize some of these objects. An old skimmer, a combat model dragonfly, and a line of other old military hardware. Everything is melted almost beyond recognition. You see that pieces have been cut off, and core samples drilled. It appears that the weapon has been turned over to military ordnance for testing.

LOG ENTRY 60

Capt. Vilnikov's Log

"Sealed until my death, under sigma code A22151. As undercover security officer and pilot. I have engaged Dr. Williams in a number of private conversations. A sample transcription follows.

Vilnikov: "Have a seat and strap in, doctor. I talk much better when we're both the same side up. What makes these gennies of yours so impressive?"

Williams: "Let me counter that with a question of my own. What would you do if we were suddenly under attack by NEO?"

Vilnikov: "I'd scan the ships and see what I was up against. Then I'd fight or flee depending on the odds. It's what any captain would do."

Williams: "That's exactly why I designed the ECG. They molt from form to form so that you never know exactly what you're up against. Four stages, each with its own specialties; this makes evaluation difficult. Defenses against one can prove worthless against another."

Vilnikov: "So we create the perfect threat. Why shouldn't RAM be terrified of the prospect? What makes them profitable, instead of a danger?"

Williams: "That is what I am working on now. I am modifying their structure to be susceptible to certain harmless chemicals. At the same time, we must keep the specifics very classified. The ECG usefulness would plummet if their weaknesses were broadcast. Also, the weakness for one form may not be the same as for another. I have not decided on this."

Tape ends.

LOG ENTRY 61

RAM Asteroid Base Memo

"NOTICE: To all Project facilities
FROM: RAM Main

The Project test facility in the Astroid Belt has been compromised. Preliminary information is that the base was attacked by pirates, for salvage purposes. Although Project secrets are considered safe, we have been forced to abandon our original plan of focused strikes upon the target.

As most of you already know, we have begun Plan B. The Project will be redirected to deliver a few massive blows to wide areas. Although this will hamper our reclamation efforts, the primary mission destroying NEO's resistance -- will be accomplished as before.

All personnel should redouble their efforts toward successtul Project conclusion.

LOG ENTRY 62

RAM Terrorist Memo "NOTICE: To all Project Facilities
FROM: RAM Main

URGENT URGENT URGENT URGENT URGENT URGENT URGENT URGENT

We have concluded that there may indeed be Earth terrorists at large with knowledge of the Project.

We have authorized unlimited resources to eliminate the terrorist threat. All facilities are to be placed on total alert, and all Project work is to proceed around the clock.

WARNING: Our digital strategy forecasters have predicted that the Earth terrorists may be traveling in a RAM ship and may try to impersonate RAM personnel."

LOG ENTRY 63

Alert Screen

The screen reads, "TO ALL RAM FORCES. FROM RAM MAIN. GRADIVUS MONS. CODE VIOLET." It repeats over and over.

LOG ENTRY 64

RAM Notice to Workers

"NOTICE: To all Teknikis, Gradivus Mons
FROM: Management

1. Congratulations! The Operations Facility reports that the Iens cradle has been installed and tests within specifications. There may be a bonus forthcoming.
2. As there is no need for another cradle or back-up aiming mechanism at this time, all assembly work is halted.
3. There are recurring delays at the lens manufacturing facility. If these delays persist, a black mark may appear on your work records and on the achievement log for this base. I expect all personnel to volunteer for duty at the Venus Lens Facility. A shuttle will be departing soon.

LOG ENTRY 65

RAM Venus Duty Memo

"NOTICE: To Teknikis volunteering for Venus duty
FROM: Management. Gradivus Mons

All Teknikis bound for the Venusion Lens Facility are to be alerted that the situation there has worsened. Unless the lens receives final treatment and is shipped soon, the Project deadline will be delayed. If the Project misses its planetary alignment target date we will all be demoted.

We urge you to do your utmost for the success of the Project and the profitability of the Company."

(The information listed underneath this bulletin includes flight coordinates to the Venusion Lowlands. The date indicates that the support shuttle left Mars two days ago.)

LOG ENTRY 66

Request For Material

"REQUEST FOR MATERIAL, FROM: Project Headquarters
TO: Gradivus Mons
CHARGED TO: PROJECT

Shipped: Three (3) lens cradle aligner's tools, One (1) aimer's maglev platform, Fourteen (14) lens focusers, Two (2) worker units.

Notes: All parts of the Project cradle have arrived. Aiming units are undergoing testing now. No lens has arrived from Venus: delivery is being delayed for final treatments."

Lens Treatise

You scan through a long treatise on biooptics citing 'energy retention rates' and 'wavelength amplification' figures for a material first developed on the Venusian Aerostate St. Croix. RAM scientists have developed a method for shaping lenses out of this material which absorb energy. The power builds within the material until it reaches a 'flash point' and expels in one focused, incredibly potent blast. The treatise concludes that if acceptable results are achieved on Mars, a larger lens situated much closer to the energy source would be greatly more efficient.

Lens Information

Scot.dos looks grim. "Based on the information we've gathered so far. I'm prepared to speculate about the effects of a full-sized lens used by RAM control.

"One full-size lens near the sun could produce an energy bolt with enough power to reach Earth and sterilize a whole continent. The deep shelters beneath the cities will be of limited effectiveness."

RAM Retinal Scan Memo

"NOTICE: To all Blue Code Techniks
FROM: Project Security

We have implemented top-level security measures. Primary security is provided by Blue Passcards. Top-level security is provided by a sealed system utilizing retinal scans. The retinal imprints of Blue Code agents have been loaded into the scanner cam, and it has been sealed against tampering or outside communications.

When supplying additional personnel to the Project, do not send any who are not Blue Code as of this date. Because a retinal 'lockpick' could defeat the top-level security, all such devices have been sent to the Venusian Facility for immediate destruction."

Desert Runner Departure

"I will travel no further with you. I tell you truly that I cannot find it in my heart to care about your land, which is so far away from us and our struggle. We have been made with the love of this pure land next to our hearts, and so great is it that little else can intrude. Yet I wish for you silent stalking and true shooting, for you have been a friend to us. and we have stood together against our common enemy. Farewell."

Test Room Description

The walls here are lined with specialized test equipment. Above the walls. the pyramid's glass peak soars high overhead. In the middle of the floor is a gaping hole, the shaft by which the RAM test weapon is lowered for modifications on the various levels. It rests right now at floor level, suspended just above the shaft hole on a freefloating magnetic-levitation platform. The aiming mechanism cradles a huge pitch black lens.

There are RAM technicians swarming over the weapon platform and manning the consoles. Evidently some sort of test is about to begin.