0. Welcome to *Paranoia*

THE FOLLOWING IS SECURITY CLEARANCE INFRARED — CLEARED FOR ALL CITIZENS.

May I be of assistance?

Sure. Why don't you tell me how this game works?

I'm sorry, citizen. That information is not available at this time.

What do you mean, it's not available?

You are not yet a Troubleshooter. Therefore your security clearance is Infrared. The rules are security clearance Red. You are not cleared to know the rules. At your service.

Huh? Most games are real eager to teach you the rules.

Not *Paranoia*. In *Paranoia*, you don't know who your friends are. You don't know who your enemies are. You don't know how your equipment works. You don't know the rules. One thing you know: everyone is out to get you.

Stay alert! Trust no one! Keep your laser handy!

Ignorance and fear; fear and ignorance. Those are our watchwords.

The back cover copy says something about a computer.

The Computer is your friend! Trust The Computer.

In *Paranoia*, you play a Troubleshooter in service to The Computer. You are The Computer's trusted agent.

How did I get to be a Troubleshooter?

You turned in a friend for treason. He was executed for betraying The Computer. The Computer rewarded you for your loyalty.

What is a Troubleshooter supposed to do?

Your job is to root out all traitors and execute them. In other words, to find trouble... and then to shoot it.

What's a "traitor?"

A traitor is an evil and malevolent human who has betrayed his friend The Computer and seeks to destroy The Computer, humanity, Alpha Complex and life as we know it. Traitors must be unmasked and destroyed.

All mutants are traitors. They are genetically imperfect. They have no place in utopia. They must be eliminated.

All members of secret societies are traitors. They belong to organizations not officially sanctioned by The Computer. They conspire against The Computer. They must be destroyed.

By the way... you are a mutant. And a member of a secret society.

I'm a... mutant?

That's right. All Troubleshooters would be eager to unmask you as a traitor and execute you. You work with many Troubleshooters. All of them carry powerful weapons.

Let me get this straight. I'm a traitor. The punishment for treason is death. My job is to hunt down and kill traitors. I work with other people, who have the same orders. All of them want to kill me.

Not exactly. All of them want to kill *traitors*. They don't know you're a Commie mutant traitor... yet.

And if they find out that I'm a mutant, they'll kill me?

They'll try. Of course, if you convict them of treason *first*, then they will be executed, and you may survive. Of course, false accusations of treason are themselves treason.

So I want to prove that they're traitors before they can prove that I'm a traitor. And if I don't... I die.

Precisely. Watch out! Traitors are everywhere!

By the way: dead traitors cannot testify to their own innocence — or against you. It is best to shoot first and ask questions later.

Stay alert! Trust no one! Keep your laser handy!

Are you *sure* this is going to be fun?

Certainly, citizen! Of course it will be fun. The Computer says so, and The Computer is your friend. Can you doubt The Computer?

Doubting The Computer is treason.

No! No, certainly not. If The Computer says this will be fun, then this certainly will be fun. Only a Commie mutant traitor could believe otherwise.

Excellent, citizen! You're getting the idea. You have just been promoted to security clearance Red. Welcome to *Paranoia*.

1. Life In Utopia

Greetings, Citizen!

You are a citizen of the far future. Your home is Alpha Complex.

Humanity has advanced greatly since the bad old days of the 20th Century. There is no war. There is no famine. There is no disease. Alpha Complex is a utopia, run by a benevolent and omniscient computer. The Computer is your friend. The Computer provides for your needs. The Computer ensures that each and every citizen of Alpha Complex is happy.

Failure to be happy is treason. Treason is punishable by summary execution.

You *are* happy — aren't you?

We thought so.

You are a clone. According to legend, humans once reproduced by rutting, like vile animals. This is no longer true. Humans are grown in clone banks by The Computer. There is no longer any need for the messy randomness of love, romance and childbirth. The Computer makes certain that every human is genetically perfect in every respect.

See what love The Computer has for its citizens? The Computer is your friend. Trust The Computer.

Each human is part of a *clone family* of six genetically-identical siblings. This is so that no one is ever lonely. Also, The Computer is well aware of the importance of making back-ups,

in case of accidental loss or erasure. The Computer is wise. The Computer is benevolent. The Computer is your friend.

The Computer provides everything for the happy citizens of Alpha Complex. It provides food. It provides shelter. It provides entertainment. It provides challenging and meaningful work. It provides for the spiritual and psychological needs of each of its citizens. It exists to serve you.

But... Alpha Complex is at war. It has been at war for all of recorded history. There is constant danger of infiltration by the enemy. The enemy are the "Commies." Traitorous elements within Alpha Complex, such as mutants and secret societies, assist the Commies. These dangerous elements must be rooted out and destroyed. Enemies are everywhere! Stay alert! Trust no one! Keep your laser handy!

Security Clearance

Every citizen of Alpha Complex has a *security clearance*. Your clearance is Red. Security clearances correspond to the electromagnetic spectrum: Beneath you in status are the unwashed masses, the laborers and drones of security clearance Infrared; above you in status are Orange, Yellow, Green, Blue, Indigo, Violet and Ultraviolet. Ultraviolet is the highest status.

It is whispered that there are clearances above Ultraviolet, but rumors are treason.

The Computer determines each citizen's clearance with complete impartiality. Higher clearance means greater responsibility; it also brings benefits — larger quarters, more privacy, a greater choice in food. The needs of all citizens are cared for, but those who sacrifice the most for the sake of society and their fellow beings are rewarded most greatly.

Citizens of higher clearance are more knowledgeable and more capable than you, and have advanced because they have selflessly served the greater good. You should defer to higher-clearance citizens at all times.

Failure to do so is treason.

Citizens are expected to wear clothing of the same color as their security clearance. Infrared citizens wear black. It is said that Ultraviolet citizens (also known as High Programmers) wear white, but you have never seen anyone wearing white. Indeed, you have never seen a white wall or a white piece of equipment because of the security laws. You must wear red at all times.

Failure to do so is treason.

In order to make sure that only citizens of the requisite competence, judgment and reliability have access to restricted areas, Alpha Complex is divided into colored areas.

Citizens may only enter areas of their clearance or lower. You must stay within black (Infrared) and Red areas at all times.

Failure to do so is treason.

The Computer is your friend.

Service Groups

All citizens belong to one of eight *service groups*. Each service group serves an important role in Alpha Complex's bureaucracy. Each has its own particular responsibilities. Each constantly struggles with the others for funding, equipment, and personnel. Sometimes the struggle becomes violent. Characters may obtain special equipment, information or personal influence through their service groups.

Internal Security (IntSec) is responsible for weeding out traitors and Commies and maintaining order. It combines the functions of law officers, secret police, and monitors of political orthodoxy. IntSec is cordially hated and feared by citizens in all other services. Its agents are everywhere.

Technical Services (Tech) maintains robots, vehicles, communications hardware, industrial and production systems, and various electronic and mechanical service systems. In practice Tech Services' and Power Services' responsibilities overlap. Vicious bureaucratic rivalry and infighting develops over which group is best suited to serve The Computer in disputed jurisdictions.

Housing Preservation and Development and Mind Control (HPD & MC) is responsible for primary human services — housekeeping, creche management, education, entertainment, recreation, and retirement management. This is the largest, the least prestigious, and the least politically reliable service group. But as dispensers of propaganda, HPD & MC can sway the emotions of the masses, making it in some ways the most powerful.

The Armed Forces (Army) protect Alpha Complex against external invasion by Commie mutant traitors. They also supplement Internal Security against internal threats. Tough, well-trained, well-equipped members of elite units like the vaunted Vulture Squadrons frequently serve as bodyguards and handle high-priority missions within Alpha Complex.

Production, Logistics and Commissary (PLC) is responsible for agricultural and industrial production and allocation of resources. It prepares food and stores and distributes all consumer goods. PLC is only marginally more prestigious than HPD & MC.

Power Services (Power) maintains the power plants and the primary habitat engineering systems of Alpha Complex — traffic, air, water, and waste. Disputes with Technical Services fuel a bitter rivalry between the two groups.

Research and Design (R&D) develops new technology and equipment for use by The Computer and citizens of Alpha Complex. R&D's bold advances are better known for their imaginative conception than their reliability. The Computer is unrestrained in its enthusiastic support for R&D's visionary projects.

Central Processing Unit (CPU) is the central supervisory and administrative authority of Alpha Complex. An entrenched bureaucracy handles records, regulations, human resource engineering, utopian engineering, justice, and executive operations. Certain CPU agents assigned directly by The Computer to projects of special interest enjoy unparalleled autonomy and discretionary powers.

ALL TROUBLE-SHOOTERS REPORT FOR TERMINATION. THANK YOU FOR YOUR COOPERATION.

Troubleshooters

All player characters belong to the Troubleshooters, an elite service unit composed of citizens from all service groups. Troubleshooters go wherever The Computer orders, solving whatever problems The Computer wants solved. Being a Troubleshooter is the most dangerous job available to any citizen, but it is also one of the few ways a citizen may rapidly rise to higher status.

If you are lucky and serve The Computer well, you may dream of one day joining the ranks of the High Programmers. But you must beware; the Troubleshooter's job is perilous, and there are traitors everywhere.

Mutant Powers

Your character has a mutant power. This can be a great advantage. This can also be a great danger, since having a mutant power is treason. However, your power may help you stay alive as you try to advance in service to The Computer.

Some citizens are *registered mutants*. A registered mutant is a citizen who learns that, through no fault of his own, he is possessed of a treasonous mutant power, and selflessly confesses his flaw to The Computer. In its wisdom and benevolence, The Computer forgives those who make full confession, and permits such mutants to live. However, The Computer requires registered mutants to wear uniforms with yellow stripes at all times. (Yellow clearance mutants wear a black-bordered yellow stripe.) Registered mutants are not subject to summary execution when they use their powers.

Certain powers are considered so dangerous to The Computer that revealing them results in immediate execution. A character would not reveal such a power to The Computer unless he had a death wish.

Registered mutants are self-acknowledged traitors, but their existence is tolerated by The Computer. Dedicated registered mutants may eventually overcome the stigma of their treason.

Excessive knowledge of the use, functions, and limitations of mutant powers is treasonous. Mutant powers are described in considerable detail on pages 68 through 73. Those pages are classified Ultraviolet. For a player to read those pages would be treason. Not that we can stop you.

The Mutant Power Table is printed on Fold-Out A. It is classified Red. You may read it. It lists the names of the most common mutant powers. Powers which are so treasonous that revealing them to The Computer causes immediate termination are marked with an asterisk (*).

Secret Societies

You belong to a secret society. This can be very exciting. This can also be very dangerous, because being a member of a secret society is treason. However, your secret society may help you advance and provide equipment otherwise unobtainable at your security clearance.

Other citizens may be members of other secret societies. Some of these other secret societies may be bitter enemies of your own. You may have many secret enemies.

Naturally, the doctrines, organization and beliefs of secret societies is restricted information. Excessive knowledge of a secret society implies membership in it, and is punishable by summary execution. You can gain such knowledge by reading the Ultraviolet material on pages 42 through 51. Of course, doing so is treason.

The Secret Society Table is printed on Fold-Out A. It is classified Red, and lists the most common secret societies.

Traitors

Mutants and members of secret societies are traitors. All good citizens should report traitors to The Computer. You are a mutant and a member of a secret society. Good citizens would be quite eager to report you to The Computer. Thanks to The Computer, you will often be surrounded by good citizens.