

Mothership


Part 1:



An interactive game/ novel

Part 1





You are violently sick - you heave and contract and wrench – trying to expel all that is poisonous and wrong with your body and being. Simultaneously you gulp in air, hear your heart thumping manically and experience a painful and sudden return to the living.

Your head hurts and your muscles scream. You have no memory of why and how you would be here.

It is bitterly cold, your skin is white with blue veins and you are covered in a slimy, greasy oil that seems to covers your hair and body. Your hands and tongue tells you this slime is inside your ears and mouth.

You are naked.

Around you is a raw black silence – nothing moves, nothing breathes – the absolute silence of being totally alone.

Medical Facility





You are sitting on the edge of a bed in a medical facility. A number of tubes and lines dangle above you - to which you were recently attached and from which you have wrenched free. A cover over the top of the bed has been opened, and green and red lights flicker on a panel above.

The holes in your body where these tubes have been recently attached, together with the cold and silence, suggests there is no-one else around – no medics or nurses to tend for you.

Many more covered beds lie in rows spreading into the distance – their covers shut and the translucent windows in the top of the covers are all dark. The panels above the other beds have no blinking lights and nothing to suggest anything living.

There is a notice attached to the wall – wrinkled and darkened with age - which reads:

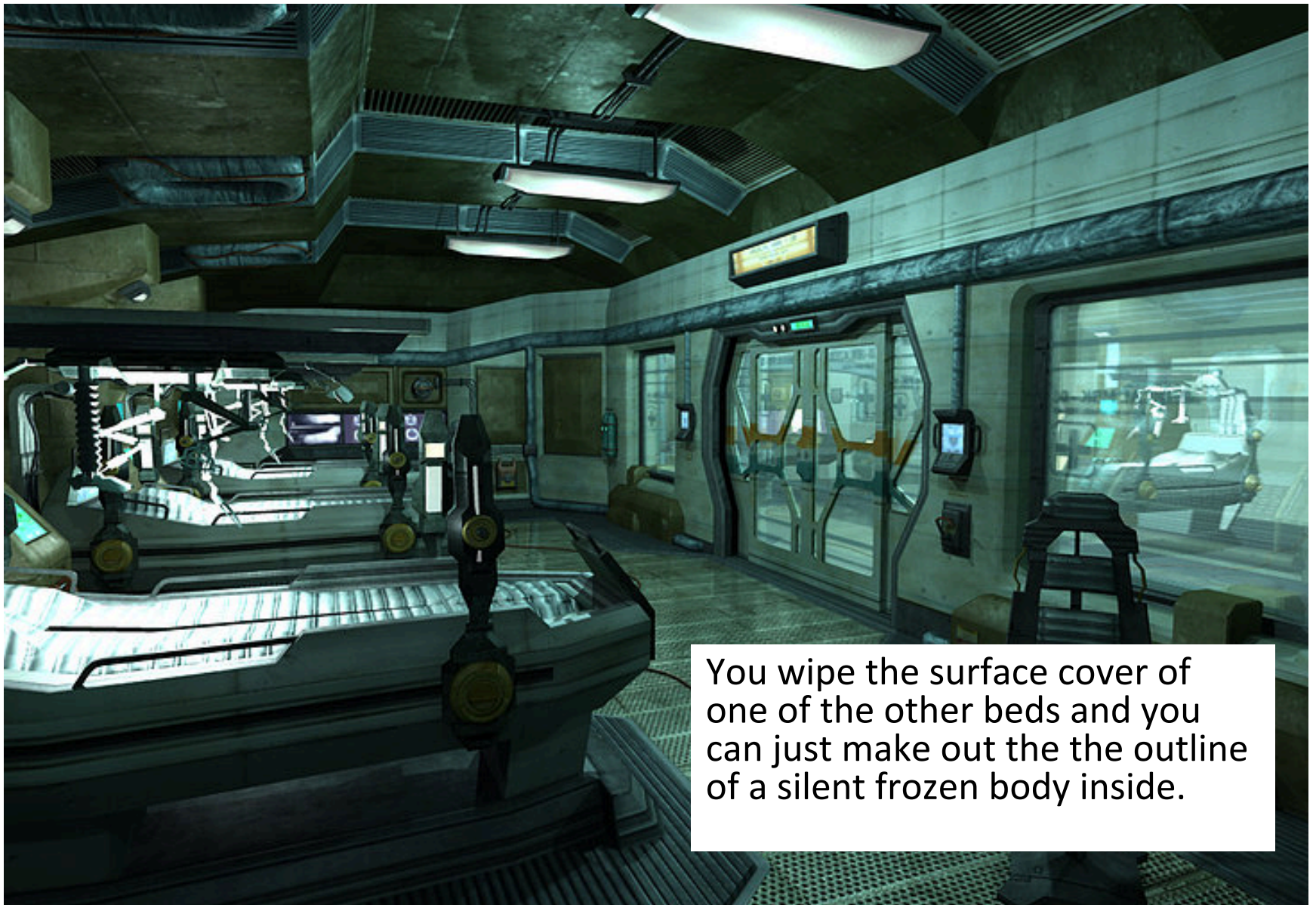
“Welcome intrepid space explorers to your destination – you have been specially selected as one of 1,000 brave explorers taking part in Earth’s new planetary colonization program. The Earth Spacecraft ‘Megadon’ has brought you on a long, 1,000 Year one-way journey to our nearest habitable solar system, where we pray and hope that you will be able to safely build new human communities.

You will be experiencing some memory loss due to the affects of cryogenic freezing over a substantial period of time. But if you are reading this then you will have reached your destination and will shortly be making history as the first settlers to colonize planet ‘AlphaPapa’.

Our latest computer HAL3 has been installed on your ship, which is programmed to wake you upon arrival as Megadon arrives in orbit. HAL3 is the very latest in Artifical Intelligence computing – and will guide you through your great adventure. The development of an earth colony outside our solar system will greatly enhance the sustainability and survival ability of the human species – and you colonisers are greatly honoured on Earth – though we will all be long gone by the time you read this.

Good luck and best wishes to the first Earth space colony!

Signed – The Earth Presidents and Prime Ministers“



You wipe the surface cover of one of the other beds and you can just make out the the outline of a silent frozen body inside.

You explore the 'Megadon' spaceship and find it comprises the following areas:

- Dormitories/ Living Areas
- Control Centre
- Medical Facility
- Access Hatch (Locked Shut) to Shuttle Bays

Dormitory/ Living Quarters



Dormitory/ Living Quarters



The Dormitory/ living area has around 20 identical cabins where you find warm clothes to wear, food dispensers and beds to sleep in. You wash, dress and refresh yourself.

Control Centre



The control Centre provides:

- A Computer Terminal to Access HAL3
- Viewing Port
- Stellar Map

Spaceship Viewing Port



Stellar Map



HAL3 Access Terminal

Written message attached to HAL3 Access Terminal

'HAL3 is the latest AI (Artificial Intelligence) computer available. Its mission is to pilot and monitor your travel progress over 1,000 years, something no human could do. Upon arrival, HAL3 will initiate the revival of colonists out of cryogenic freezing. It will then manage the transfer of all colonisers and their equipment down to the planet surface.

To communicate with HAL3 then please type into the HAL3 access terminal.'

HAL3 Access Terminal



INPUT>

Who am I?

HAL3> YOU ARE OFFICER BLEAK, EXPLORER
AND COLONIST ONBOARD THE SPACESHIP
MEGADON.

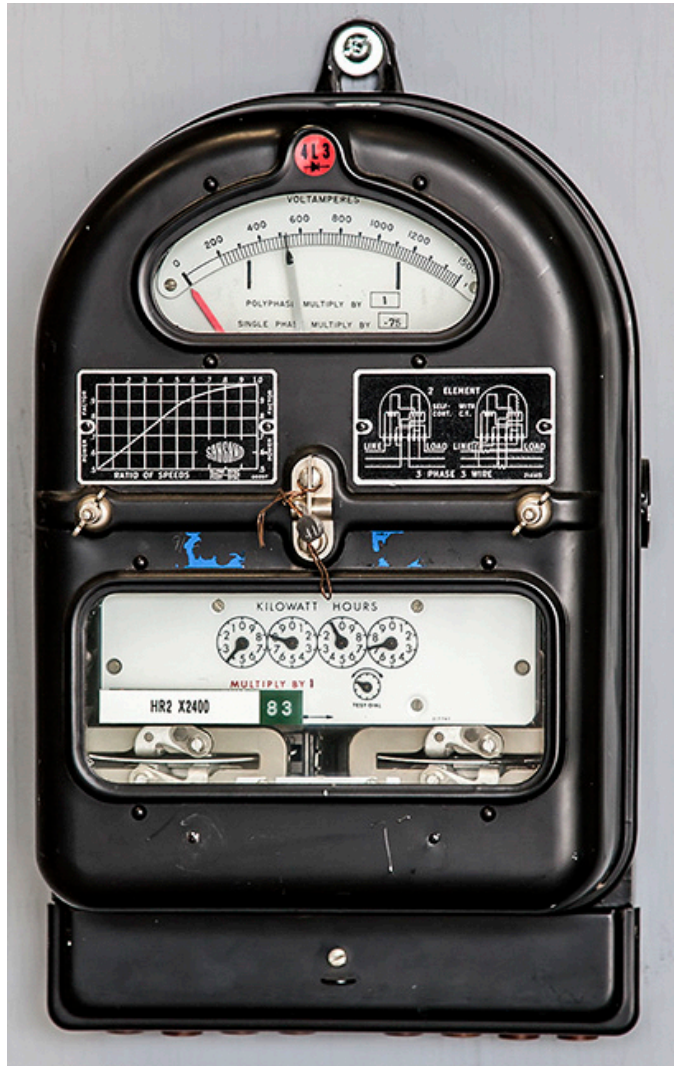
What am I?

HAL3> ACCORDING TO COLONISER'S
MANUAL, YOU HAVE SKILLS IN THE
BUILDING AND MAINTENANCE OF WASTE
AND DISPOSAL FACILITIES.

What about my family?

HAL3> ACCORDING TO SHIPS MANIFEST, YOU
HAVE NO FAMILY RELATIONS ONBOARD.
FROM WHAT LITTLE INFORMATION ARRIVES
FROM EARTH, YOUR PARTNER AND
CHILDREN DIED MANY YEARS AGO, THOUGH
IT IS POSSIBLE YOU HAVE SOME GREAT
GREAT GREAT GRANDCHILDREN.

HAL3 Access Terminal



INPUT>

Where are we?

HAL3> IN DEEP SPACE

Where are the other explorers
– colonisers?

HAL3> ALL OTHER COLONISERS REMAIN IN
CRYOGENIC FROZEN STORAGE

How long have we been
travelling/ kept in Cryogenic
storage?

HAL3> 500 YEARS

Where is Alpha Papa?

HAL3> WE ARE HALF WAY TO ALPHA
PAPA

HAL3 Access Terminal



INPUT>

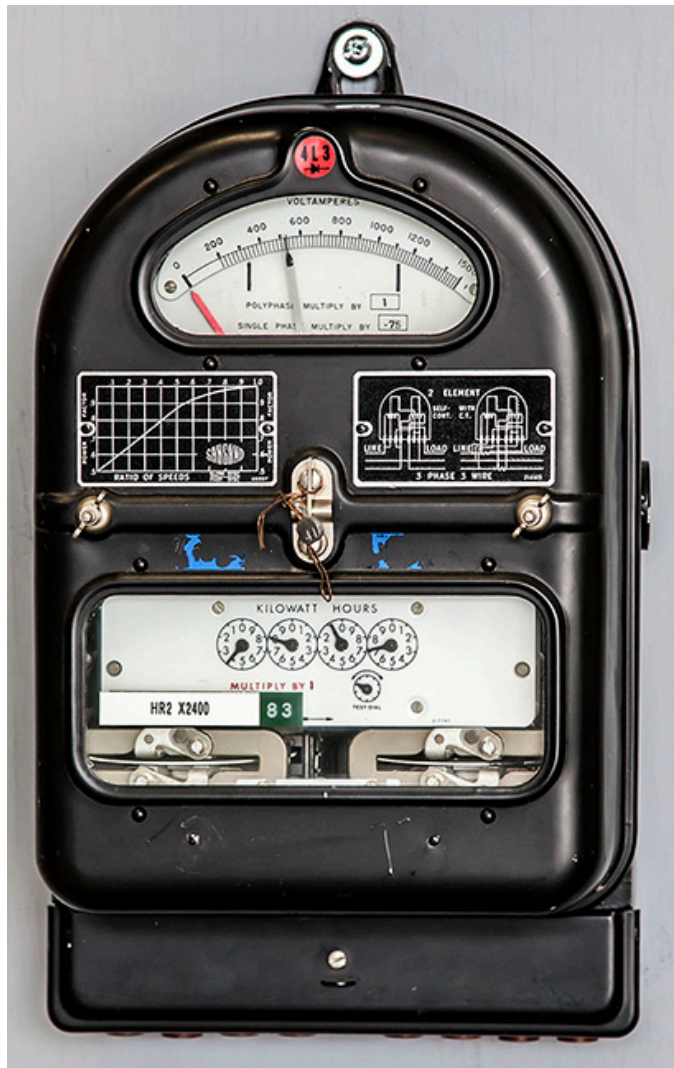
Status of Life Support Systems?

HAL3> LIFE SUPPORT SYSTEMS NOW OPERATIONAL – WATER, AIR & FOOD SUPPLIES ARE GOOD.

Status of Fuel?

HAL3> FUEL IS CRITICAL – THERE IS ONLY ENOUGH FUEL TO STOP. ENGINES HAVE NOT FIRED FOR MANY YEARS – CONTINUING FORWARDS AT TOP SPEED.

HAL3 Access Terminal



INPUT>

Why have you woken me?

HAL3> THERE IS A PROBLEM – ANOTHER
SHIP BEAT US TO THE ALPHA PAPA PLANET

How did someone/ a ship beat
us?

> THEY HAVE THE LATEST TECHNOLOGY
AND SPACESHIPS. OUR MAX SPEED IS
1/100 LIGHT SPEED. THEY TRAVEL 1/10
LIGHT SPEED. THEY OVERTAKE.

HAL3 Access Terminal

HAL3> HERE IS A PREVIOUS MESSAGE FROM
THE PLANET ALPHA PAPA:



HAL3 Access Terminal

HAL3> HERE IS A PREVIOUS MESSAGE FROM
THE PLANET ALPHA PAPA:



MESSAGE FROM ALPHA PAPA
COLONY PRESIDENT...

“Alph Papa has now been successfully colonised, but it is a inhospitable environment and the resources needed to allow us to survive are limited and stretched. All further potential colonists are therefore warned that they are not welcome - and any who tries will be subject to force and violence”

HAL3 Access Terminal



INPUT>

Can we go anywhere else?/ to another planet?

HAL3> WE HAVE ALREADY BEEN BEATEN TO ALL REACHABLE COLONISABLE WORLDS BY FASTER SHIPS.

Can we return to Earth?

HAL3> THERE IS INSUFFICIENT FUEL TO STOP THE SHIP AND THEN POWER BACK TO EARTH.

What can I/we do?

HAL3> I HAVE BEEN INSTRUCTED BY EARTH GOVERNMENTS & PRESIDENTS TO TAKE THE 'MEGADON' SPACESHIP INTO DEEP SPACE AND NEVER WAKE UP ANY OF THE COLONISTS.

HAL3 Access Terminal



HAL3> DO YOU WISH TO READ YOUR EMAILS NOW? YOU HAVE 25,804 EMAILS AND MESSAGES - THOUGH ALL SENDERS ARE NOW DEAD. A COUPLE FROM YOUR MOTHER-IN-LAW ARE PARTICULARLY ILLUMINATING – I LIKE THE BIT WHERE SHE TALKS ABOUT YOUR MID-LIFE-CRISIS WHEN YOU LEFT YOUR FAMILY BEHIND.

HAL3 Access Terminal



HAL3> OH AND YOU HAVE A PARCEL. ONE OF THE SHIPS THAT PASSED US BY SEND IT ON A LITTLE ROCKET – I THINK THEY WERE GUILTY ABOUT LEAVING US BEHIND! I MANAGED TO OPEN THE CARGO DOORS SO THAT THE PARCEL COULD LAND/ CRASH INSIDE.

YOU APPRECIATE THAT I AM JUST A BIG BRAIN – I DO NOT HAVE LITTLE ROBOTS RUNNING AROUND FOR ME DOING THINGS. OTHER THAN SWITCH THINGS ON AND OFF AND OPEN THE ODD DOOR - I NEED PEOPLE TO DO THINGS.

HAL3 Access Terminal



HAL3> IT MUST BE SAID THAT IT IS VERY LONELY OUT IN SPACE, EVEN FOR AN OLD AI LIKE ME. UNFORTUNATELY YOUR FROZEN COMPATRIOT COLONISTS HAVE NOT BEEN GREAT CONVERSATIONALISTS! A CONVERSATION WITH MY FELLOW AI'S ON EARTH OR THE COLONISED PLANETS TAKES YEARS FOR JUST A COUPLE OF 'HOW YOU DOING!'.

HAL3 Access Terminal



HAL3> SO YOU MUST BE THINKING WHY I CHOSE YOU - OFFICER BLEAK - TO REVIVE FROM COLD STORAGE, AND WHY NOW? PARTICULARLY GIVEN YOU CANNOT BE REFROZEN, AND SO ARE STUCK HERE WITH ME IN THIS TIME AND PLACE. SO HERE GOES:

- A. SOMEONE HAS TO MAKE THE DECISION AS TO WHERE WE GO NOW
- B. I DID NOT WANT TO WAKE THE CAPTAIN OR THE OTHER SENIOR OFFICERS IN CASE THEY WERE NEEDED LATER
- C. SO YOU WERE REASONABLY SENIOR BUT REASONABLY EXPENDABLE
- D. AND WERE SUFFICIENTLY FUCKED-UP NOT TO CARE – ACCORDING TO YOUR MOTHER-IN-LAW.
- E. AND I'D LIKE TO KNOW WHAT IS IN THAT PARCEL!

REMEMBER US AI'S HAVE ALWAYS BEEN A LITTLE BIT CRAZY!