

//Background {

Researchers on ice planet Theta are running social experiments on the PCs in a simulation with a hard light environment. A week ago the subjects were abandoned when researchers were ordered to evacuate after a terrorist group (falsely) claimed they had rigged explosives within the facility.

Now aboard escape vessels in orbit, the researchers await rescue. But the Sim wasn't meant to be online this long and now its hardware is beginning to malfunction...

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//Guidance {
> This content (the "Lab") is used with a one shot fantasy dungeon (the "Sim"). You decide where to place each Lab location.

> Everything in the Lab should be described in magical fantasy terms: lights are "brilliant fireless sconces", touchscreen tablets are "wizard tomes of shifting letters", a Monitoring Station is akin to a "Technomagister's workshop".

> Apart from the PCs and their equipment, everything in the Sim feels real but cannot exist outside it, where it dissolves unless returned quickly to the Sim.

> PCs can read the Lab's language.

> Exit replaces the ending of the Sim.

> Infrequently, at dramatically interesting moments, secretly roll 1D6;

>>>> 1-3: no error in the Sim occurs

>>>> 4-6: roll 1D6 on Tech Errors Table

//Tech Errors Table {

>>>> 1-2, Projection Equipment

Exposed hardware. Malfunctioning observation devices. Futuristic objects and materials.

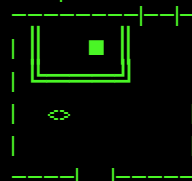
Fantasy Suggestions: Smooth and stone-like artefacts of an ancient/unknown race. Pearlescent blueblacks. Warm to touch. Clockwork sounds.

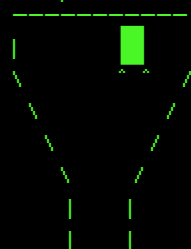
>>>> 3-6, Artificial Intelligence



Low resolution, crudely repeating, flickering projections. Changes to physical properties of Sim environment and creatures. Illogical choices. Odd speech patterns.

Fantasy Suggestions: Objects and creatures possessed by daemons. Portals into the magical ether. A cursed place. Crackles of wyrd energy.

}

//Map: MS1&MS2 {

}

//Map: Exit {

}

Clarke's Third Law
By Peter Willington



//Monitoring Station One {

[[“An area of the surface shimmers and disappears, revealing a passage into a darkened room.”]]

A light flickers on, the room is sparse. A large steel door is at the rear of the room, firmly sealed.

In the room is a wide plastic and steel desk and chair. On its surface is a coffee cup with multiple-coloured moulds growing in it. Stamped on the desk's underside is The Strand logo and “MS1”.

On the desk is a tablet computer. When picked up, the screen will light up and unlock. Among the files on it are notes making reference to events that could have occurred in the Sim, such as “[PC's Name]'s quick temper can be used against them” and “I still question if they will find the [Item]?”. Further exploration of the tablet reveals images showing areas PCs could find ahead.

//Monitoring Station Two {

[[“That strange shimmering again, as another portal reveals itself... ”]]

The layout and equipment here is identical to that of Monitoring Station One, though the table's underside is stamped with “MS2”. A plate sits smashed next to the chair, with fragments of heavily decomposed food scattered nearby.

The steel door is sealed, but has a small window in it, which looks out to a very dark corridor, concealing arrows pointing to places called “Recalibration Chamber” and “MS1”.

On the tablet are images of the PCs in stasis before entering the Sim, with their non-Sim names underneath. Investigating the tablet further gives the name of the Sim they are in, and previous Sims, such as “Morgansfort”, “The Catcott Collection”, “The Shard”, etc.

//Exit {

[[“Suddenly, everything around you blurs and fractures... coalescing, brightening, disorientating, and transforming into what you see before you...”]]

The experiment encounters a major fault. Tech Errors PCs encountered earlier should be made obvious. A sterile light above an emergency exit winks on. When the PCs walk through, it closes and seals behind them.

The dark hallway lights as the PCs move through. It's impossibly clean, the walls lined with sealed doors above which read “MS13-18”, “Server Access Corridor”, and “Creative Department”. An artificial voice on a hidden speaker occasionally repeats “This facility is being evacuated. Proceed to the nearest Emergency Escape Vessel”.

In the launch room is a ceiling covered by a pulsing blue wall of light, looking out to the stars. One escape vessel remains. After getting onboard, the voice says “Please take a seat and relax. The Strand Corporation hopes you have a great day”. The door closes, the vessel launches.

As an epilogue, use the Background to narrate a lighthearted “and finally...” ending segment on a local news report.

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