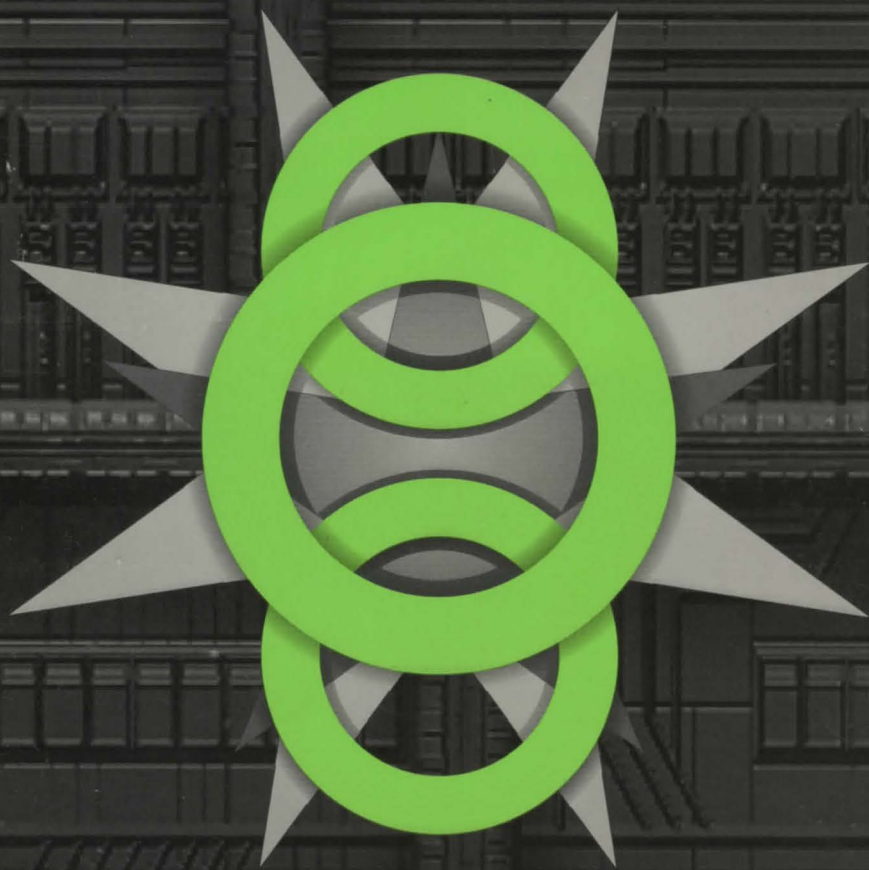


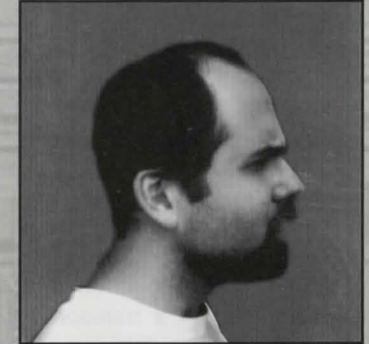
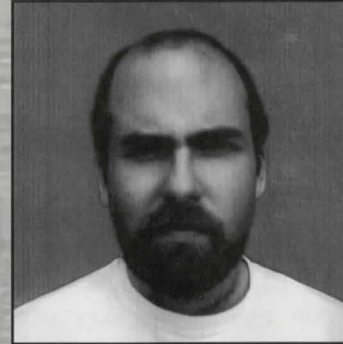
FIELD PERSONNEL FILE



DOCUMENTS USED AS EVIDENCE WILL BE FILED WITH THE PROPONENT AGENCY

IN ACCORDANCE WITH PROCEDURE SANCTIFIED BY THE PARAGON
ANY AND ALL PERMANENT DOCUMENTS RELATING TO DISCOVERED TRAITORS
WILL BE FILED BELOW THIS DIVIDER

FIELD PERSONNEL FILE



SUBJECT: Caynan, K. C.

K. C. Caynan was Security Chief of our Daedalus Archaeology Base until recently. Although he had received the highest level of security clearance, he still defected from the cause shortly after Dr. Mastaba arrived on the moon base of Daedalus.

The following documents show the gradual shift of his allegiance from the Mondite cause. He began to doubt the wisdom of our founder and leader, the Paragon Soolamesh Astradraya Namdangmaren. He began to doubt our most basic beliefs of the necessity of technological evolution and the superiority of science over nature.

As you will see from the documents within, his orders became erratic as his thoughts lost clarity and focus. He lost faith in the way of the Paragon. His sympathy with the experimental subjects necessary to Dr. Mastaba's development of a super-assassin was a manifestation of his neurosis.

It has been determined that he was not susceptible to rehabilitation.

Followers of the Paragon
Headquarters, Astradraya
Astradraya, Stralea

Orders: 1A-2-4
CAYNAN, K. C. 114-72 HCS Com 1, 1st S.C. SANMondite (St)
Astradraya, Stralea 97

You will proceed on permanent change of location. Absolute Confidentiality Required. You are in communication blackout. You will act as Chief of Security under Doctor Mastaba, keeping his laboratory and environs free of any dangers or unnecessary distractions. Warning: his work involves experimental subjects, most of whom must be considered dangerous.

Within one hour of receipt of message, transportation will arrive for your relocation.

Assigned to: Starship Kasenko (FMS-9TO), Outward Stralea Tranship
Additional instructions: (a) If you have any properties of vital and proven necessity, contact a transportation officer after the first stage of relocation. Identical property will be secured for your use. Upon arrival at next duty station, prepare a contact-transmission in case of delay.
(b) You will refrain from reporting to the Housing Referral Office. You are in communication blackout. All arrangements for housing at your new duty station have been prepared in advance.
(c) Prior enlistment commitments have been nullified. Assignment instructions have been forwarded.
(d) You may authorize an immediate notification of death to the public. Reward for doing so will be a 50% increase in salary.

FOR OFFICE USE:

Auth: NA
SAN: NA
Med: Stable
POR: NA
Form: 1+ NA
DIST: NA

Security Memo

From: Caynan
To: All
Subject: No Pets, No Plants
Date: d0078

Do not bring lifeforms within the laboratory walls. Research has been primarily archaeological, not biological. We do not know the peculiarities of any of the native life.

Everyone knows that we have already lost lives due to ignorant handling of animal life. Not to mention that we have had the whole laboratory installation nearly shut down around us. I don't care how harmless it looks, **DON'T TOUCH IT!**

Security Report

From: Caynan
To: Chief Supply Officer, Tolka
Subject: Secrecy Status and Supplies
Date: d0093
Status: URGENT

I have received disturbing news. The Supply Technician from the Archaeology team, who is under your supervision, submitted a supply order for Team Three. This is negligence. Apparently he had noticed a "discrepancy" in the supply order that "overlooked" food and medicals for the Team Three troops.

1. I should not have to remind you that we are in an INFORMATION BLACKOUT! Dr. Mastaba chose this place to conduct his experiments because Daedalus is a closely guarded secret. Even those who know about the existence of the planet — and its archaeological significance — must never know about his bioengineering research. My people recalled the order and fixed the problem, but I must express concern for the confidentiality of the project.

2. In your report of d0187, you stated that you had thoroughly briefed all personnel. I assumed this included the necessity of a complete firewall against outgoing information. There must be no suggestion, even to those few who know about the archaeology site, that this is anything more than a simple dig site.

3. My people are now reviewing all previous outgoing messages and orders. Our counterparts are addressing those leaks that we did find on the outside. If you do not take ALL NECESSARY measures to ensure ABSOLUTE secrecy, I will take the matter directly to Dr. Mastaba. I am confident that he will consider this a serious infraction.

Electronic Mail

From: Overman
To: Caynan
Subject: Subject Day-Periods
Date: d0982

I've programmed a random schedule of light and dark periods for Dr. Mastaba's experimental subjects. Although it wasn't mentioned, I also thought an erratic feeding schedule would keep them even more disoriented.

I'm not sure if it will affect their health. Do you suppose that we should check with Dr. Mastaba?

All other cell functions check out at 100%.

Electronic Mail

From: Ullman
To: Caynan
Subject: Nursebot
Date: d1017

I updated the Nursebot program in the experimental subjects' cells. The Sarta problem highlighted their flaws. They are 27% faster than before, and 340% more durable. Also, from now on they will maintain a minimum three-foot distance from the force bars.

Memo

From: Caynan
To: Security Team
Subject: Dr. Mastaba
Date: d1017

It has come to my attention that there has been a certain lack of enthusiasm in obeying Dr. Mastaba. Although he does not hold official rank in the chain of command, you will obey the doctor's commands promptly. He is the ranking Mondite on base.

Dr. Mastaba is performing experiments in cybernetic and genetic manipulation. He designed the mental programming techniques used successfully today, as well as the most recent cybernetic control systems.

Nothing less than full cooperation will be tolerated.

FOLLOWERS OF THE PARAGON

MAY THIS BE MANIFEST TO ALL THOSE WHO INQUIRE: THIS IS A VALID CERTIFICATION FROM THE CHIEF OF DAEDALUS SECURITY, MOUNT SION, DAEDALUS, THAT ON THIS DATE D1020

The Premier Security Commendation

WAS AWARDED TO

Security Trooper Ullman

BY

Caynan, Chief of Security

For exceptionally meritorious actions in support of shipwide security in the transportation of troops and materials to Mount Sion, Daedalus, while assigned to Shipboard Security duty. Trooper Ullman's technical knowledge and commitment to shipboard security and integrity significantly contributed to the Kasenko's ability to survive an unanticipated and unprecedented hull breach on the 114th day of the mission, thus enabling the Mondite movement to commence research that will ultimately culminate in restoring and maintaining world security goals concerning the Reticulum. Trooper Ullman's superior nano-technological expertise was used in reprogramming the nanite anti-oxidation swarm to inhibit the loss of atmosphere in Cargo and Repair Bay Seven by creating a carbon crust used as sealant. Trooper Ullman was able to remain calm under the intense pressure of atmosphere loss, irrevocable emergency sector quarantine and the ineffective tracking of repair droids. His self-control resembles the efficiency of an android, reflecting great credit upon him, his unit and his ship.

Memo

From: Caynan
To: Mastaba
Subject: Cooperation from Security
Date: d1112

Once again let me apologize for the discipline problem of this morning. I informed the security troops that you are to be obeyed in all matters. We have reordered the thinking of the instigator, Grayson. Please note that we used techniques you developed at an earlier stage in your career. Further note that we have reassigned Grayson to a lower-security position.

I am confident that you will have no further problems.

Security Report

From: Caynan
To: Security Team
Subject: Intra-Battalion Reassignment
Note: Use of former Reticulum Scouts
Date: d1115

Reports of dangerous and hostile native life-forms in the vicinity have led me to reassign security troopers Nordish and Esposito to reconnaissance duty. Both have considerable experience from their previous service as Reticulum Scouts.

As Scouts, both have extensive reconnaissance and observation experience. They have both orbit and ground-level survey experience. The archaeology team has complained of dangerous life-forms. The acid lake seems particularly hazardous. Furthermore, because the alien civilization seems to have been built by a kind of life-form never before encountered, I have ordered a survey simply as a precautionary measure. The less we know about an area, the more apt we are to be unprepared.

They will begin their survey duties immediately. I will keep you informed as pertinent data arrives.

Security Memo

From: Caynan
To: All
Subject: Operation Room Cameras
Date: d1121

The operation room optics are malfunctioning. There is a distortion in the left fields of both overhead units. The audio receivers also record static when the cybernetic limbs are implemented.

General Notice

From: Caynan
To: All
Subject: Letters Off Daedalus
Date: d1130

Troops are allowed two letters every three months to go off Daedalus. Security conditions must be observed at all times.

- Do not mention tour of duty.
- Do not mention alien environment.
- Do not mention anything that might indicate location.
- Do not mention names or occupations.

All letters will be checked by the Chief of Security, and censored or changed as necessary. The edited version will be returned to the writer on a read-only basis.

Security Report

From: Caynan
To: Security Team
Subject: Power-Armor
Note: Suiting-Up Could Save Your Life
Date: d1154

ARMOR. *There are hostile life forms in the area. Some are confined, some are at large, all are dangerous.* Power-armor is not just for the marines. 50% of our casualties to date could have been avoided if the correct armor had been worn.

Power-armor prevents any outside energy forces from making contact with your internal integrity. The continuous current forms a dependable barrier against energy weapons or unexpected overloads, environmental chemical imbalances and extremes in temperatures. It is a valuable protection against physical attacks of most natures.

1. **Wear your armor correctly.** Consult the instructions on the upper inside panel on all armor units.
2. **Inspect your armor regularly.** If there is any reason to believe it is not functioning at peak efficiency, turn it in.
3. **Clean your armor.** Any soil or alien matter could cause a fault in its functioning.
4. **Turn in the appropriate forms after extreme use.** See form 10-TMCu.

Security Memo

From: Caynan

To: All

Subject: Expended Test Subjects

Date: d1158

We will be depositing Expended Test Subjects in the acid lake starting immediately. There is some concern that the native wildlife is digging up and developing a "taste" for humans, thus becoming more aggressive. The Acid Lake should solve that problem.

Take utmost care. Team Two is in no way to observe the disposal. The nature of these experiments is confidential.

Caynan's Personal Log

Subject: Evolution

Date: d1166

Yesterday I overheard a discussion about how nanites were going to change the course of human evolution. Everyone in that group agreed that soon we'll discover the secret to bioengineering from the inside out. From that point humans will quickly evolve from the animals that they are now to the next stage.

As luck would have it, several days ago I heard Dr. Mastaba talking about why nanites were not useful in bioengineering. Apparently, the immune system rebels. If scientists manipulate the immune system to accept the nanites, inevitably a systemic cancer begins to take over. Right now they don't even know if the nanites or the immune system controls cause the problems.

He mentioned bioengineered nanites. It sounded as if we can create them, but can't keep them from functioning chaotically in an uncontrolled environment. Such as a human body.

It's a shame. It seems rather primitive to actually cut open a body to attach the cybernetic parts.

Electronic Bulletin Board

From: Caynan

To: BB

Subject: Musicians?

Date: d1167

Dr. Escher has asked for a proper memorial service for Commander Wilm. I can't find any audio recording of the funeral dirge. Does anybody have one? Does anyone have a musical instrument that they could play? If you know of someone, volunteer them.

Caynan's Personal Log

Subject: Philosophy

Date: d1174

Quite a few of the team members are beginning to show signs of restlessness. No fights have broken out, but tempers are rising. I would be more comfortable with occasional flare-ups. They are keeping such a tight lid on themselves that when things finally begin to break out, they'll be much more intense than the situation warrants.

I understand their confusion. I underwent the same transition when I moved deeper from the outer fringes of the Mondite movement. We look at things differently as we delve into the philosophy. Someone fresh to the movement feels productive simply from following the changing dictates of the Paragon. I know that he is more than a leader. He understands a deeper truth than others — he is truly a wise man. People new to the cause follow his lead in order to more deeply understand the true way. I did. Sometimes, though, the things we did as initiates seem trivial to me now.

I remember the month we Believers spoke only in whispers. The Paragon showed us the way. I felt a feeling of togetherness, knowing that everyone united in this show of faith. It spanned the galaxy ... Mondites everywhere spoke in hushed tones. The Paragon was very wise, saying that the truth need not be loud to be truth. Wisdom softly spoken was no less wise. The Paragon is always right. It was good to know that in some small way I participated in a deeper truth than I could have reached on my own. The ten days prior to our time of whispering we dedicated to speaking only in shouts, because the Paragon said that the truth must be loud in the worlds' ears. My throat was so sore! I doubt if I could have spoken in tones louder than a whisper.

Our loyal Mondite security teams are lost without the Paragon's words. They did not have enough transition from their former philosophical emersion to their present tour of duty. Building the labs kept them too busy to feel detached from the movement, but now they only have routine patrols and inspections. Perhaps if I told them that I knew the Paragon's dictates? I could invent a few every week or so. It might give them a focus. It's worth a try. It could solve the problem. We are too busy with the native life-forms and the experimental subjects. We can't afford any distractions.

Electronic Mail

From: Caynan

To: Escher

Subject: Artifacts

Date: d1178

I think that we can clear some space on the lower levels for any artifacts that you consider too fragile for outdoor storage. I agree that your storage units are a bit flimsy.

My only concern is that in the event of a crisis, the lower levels seal themselves for security reasons. Anything you would want to take with you in an emergency evacuation should be kept in a more accessible area.

Security Memo

From: Caynan
To: All
Subject: Dropship Training
Date: d1180

Anyone interested in a change of scenery may volunteer for training aboard the dropship *Chelios*. Topics will include third-space navigation, applied thermal dynamics, and OMS recycling.

In return we have offered to train dropship troops in observation techniques, nanotech programming and hoverbot design and maintenance. Those chosen for instruction duties will be contacted later.

10-TMCu

Name: Caynan
Rank: Chief of Security
Unit: Daedalus
Date: d1184

Duty performed when armor used. Subduing experimental subject in Cell One.

Check One: Energy Fire Life Form Chemical Use Booby Trap
Projectile Fire

Location of Use: Guard room Cellblock Corridor Cryo Room
Tower Control Area Elevator Tank Area
Landing Area Basin Area Dig Site

Date of Hit: d1184
Continued to Carry Out Duties: Yes
Injury Sustained: No

Describe: Biological experimentation subject under the management of Dr. Mastaba. It used the required nursebot to somehow overcome the security net, and freed self. Overpowered guard but was unable to escape from holding area. Armor hit sustained while subduing subject.

Caynan's Personal Log

Subject: Memory Downloading
Date: d1197

For the moment, everything is running as it should. Finally. It's hard to believe how much trouble a plasti-steel-eating fungus can cause! It was amazing how rapidly it spread, not to mention how difficult it was to locate. It was everywhere by the time we found a nanite program that would eliminate it. We had to pry open doors with brute force because the build-up had clogged mechanisms and stuck door-seams together.

I hate whenever something like this happens — an unknown force appears from nowhere and attacks the system. It's frightening to a true Mondite. My goal, like every Mondite I've ever known, is to download my memories and thought-processes into a computer. We are so close to perfecting the system! There are only a few obstacles remaining. Memory cross-referencing is still in a primitive form. Stored thoughts don't "randomize" creatively. Or when they do, it isn't in a manner consistent with the previous patterns. I would be a different person — or an incomplete person. Sometimes huge amounts of memory disappear during transfer, as well. What if a kind of fungus, like the one we just discovered, attacked the data-matrices? I would lose everything. They haven't found the perfect way yet ... but it's getting closer.

I long to evolve out of this state of flesh and fluid! When I think about what a primitive shell I am trapped in, I feel like some animal that just crawled out of the slime. Mostly I can avoid thinking about it. Someday, though, I'll discard this form and let the bestial nature that spawned it consume it utterly!

Electronic Mail Response

From: Caynan
To: Held
Date: d1199

The correct procedure is to report this. Threats are unacceptable for team morale.

From: Held
To: All
Subject: Who Did It!?!
Date: d1199

I know that some of you morons are jealous of my recent winning streak. That's no reason to break into a person's locker and steal his gambling tokens! If — and I mean WHEN! — I find out who glued my tokens to the ceiling, they're going to look like the Experimenting Doctor did exploratory surgery on them with a dull knife and a mallet!

A weeks' pay to anyone who helps me catch them! This means YOU, Paskins. Bring your derma-camera!

Electronic Mail

From: Caynan

To: All

Subject: Recreation Off-Hours

Date: d1201

The Dropship *Chelios* is sponsoring a series of challenges including firearms, drill, physical endurance and emergency procedures. Other areas of competition may be added at a later date. Ground-based troops will be competing against Dropship troops on a bi-weekly basis starting the first of next month.

The events will take place on Daedalus in the Barracks/Rest Areas. All participants are responsible for area maintenance. Any off-duty personnel may observe. There may be impromptu ID and scheduling checks. The attitude will remain congenial at all times.

Any personnel interested in competing should notify Sumpter within one week of the event date to reserve a place. Do not attempt to enter an event scheduled during your on-duty hours. Exchanging shifts is not allowed. There will be staggered events to allow all personnel to participate.

Caynan's Personal Log

Subject: Dr. Mastaba

Date: d1203

Dr. Mastaba talked to me this morning ... he seemed almost friendly! It was as if we had known each other since childhood. The last time I saw him, he treated me as though I were a tech who had crossed the hydraulic and sewer lines. Now I'm his best friend?

He unsettles me in a way nothing else does. One moment he's telling me that we're working on an amazing project — he says it will propel the Mondite cause into the highest level of power in the galaxy. Four hours later he'll be in a tooth-grinding fury that would frighten a Kallean king-eater.

It's his intensity that makes him so intimidating. He focuses his attention to a laser-sharp point. I've never seen that in a human. I've watched him work. He can even bring that sort of concentration to bear on more than one thing at once. It's uncanny. It's not-human.

Which reminds me ... when Dr. Mastaba spoke to me, he said that Mondite scientists have found a stable computer matrix that updates itself! Could this be the discovery of perpetual evolution?

Security Report

From: Caynan

To: Dropships Chelios, Belfour, Roenick

Subject: Base Security

Date: d1207

Status: Normal

I see from previous reports that you have been lax in your interstellar observation. There is no room at this project for sub-par performance. System surveillance is not enough. Turn at least half of your scanners to deep space.

May I remind you that the Reticulum is showing signs of suspicion? This suspicion, I might add, stems from careless actions of Mondite agents. I won't have this carelessness in my own troops.

Those who perceive the Mondites as a threat are not stupid! They have already discovered the layers of plausibility we have taken care to establish. Most people see the Mondites as a loosely connected group of fanatics. Almost all governments see us as harmless cults. Those few people who have guessed the rest know that we have an enormous base of power and a strong internal hierarchy. Our ultimate motives, they can only guess at. We know these individuals have made their suspicions known to the Reticulum. The intergalactic government could be a very powerful enemy.

You can be certain the Reticulum is trying to discover our secrets. There is no organization more far-reaching or better financed. You make a serious error in judgment when you turn your backs to them.

Be assured they are seeking the base. As soon as they have even the slightest idea where we are, they will be scanning with long-range sweeps. Keep alert for unusual ionization fluxes. Scan or destroy any asteroids entering the system. Destroy any space debris that affects the orbit of its neighbors in an unusual manner. Investigate any disturbances, no matter how trivial.

Your only responsibility is the safety of the base. Take it seriously.

Security Memo

From: Caynan

To: Escher

Subject: Dig-Site Artifacts

Date: d1212

Zane has requested security clearance to the lower levels where the artifacts are stored. What is your opinion?

Security Log

Subject: Potential Security Problems

Date: d1219

My main concern for the secrecy of this base is that I have such limited control of outside forces. The absolute secrecy demanded by this project leaves me unable to receive information from any of my contacts. Ignorance of events makes me extremely nervous.

They chose this site for the laboratory because the archaeological dig is unknown to anyone not directly involved. I received this post because I happened to be both qualified and present at the opening of the *Ambassadoria's* Captain's Log. Everyone who was present at that event was a potential security leak, willing or no. Actually, each constituted the beginning of a chain of leaks.

Since all those who were present were officially "under suspicion," I did not perform the security follow-ups. I wish I had more confidence that the job was thorough. Memory conditioning is a difficult and tedious process. If not done correctly, the brain will create new pathways. It can by-pass implanted blocks, or reject your suggestions after a random time period. A suggestion to avoid saying the word "table" may last forever, or only until the next time the subject hears "chair."

Three years passed from the discovery of the *Ambassadoria's* log to the base's establishment. That leaves far too large an opportunity for random error. If only I had more information!

Security Log

Subject: Potential Security Problems

Date: d1223

The lack of raw materials for building and maintenance is becoming more than just a nuisance. It has reached a level that may mean serious future repercussions.

We needed to maintain the absolute secrecy of Dr. Mastaba's experiments. We built the entire lab section of the base from the starship that brought us here. Dr. Mastaba's whereabouts are unknown even to the Mondite Headquarters. As far as our enemies know, he is working on cybernetic control techniques on the moon-megalopolis of Taromom. I believe that our attempts at secrecy have been successful.

However, the need for extra material, should the project last longer than expected, concerns me. We expect some supplies on the next ship to arrive, but that will only cover current needs. Ullman says there is a possibility we can replace energy fields for some surfaces. He is going to outline a design plan. I do not like the idea that any part of the lab might "disappear" during energy fluctuations. It just sounds dangerous.

Security Memo to Dropships

From: Caynan

To: Dropships Chelios, Belfour, Roenick

Subject: Native Problems

Date: d1227

I find it very disturbing that three dropships of marines find it uniformly impossible to follow standard regs. When any, I repeat ANY, member of the ground team announces concern about native lifeforms, you are to stay in constant contact until it is resolved. Follow this procedure regardless of the nature of the situation.

If it is known, unknown, hostile or passive, you are to remain in contact. If it is sentient, conscious, dead or merely a thousand-year-old footprint in the dirt — you are to remain in contact. Whether there are security troops involved is immaterial.

You will not let this happen again.

Caynan's Personal Log

Subject: Alien Technology

Date: d1252

During my recent inspection of the archaeological dig site, Dr. Escher was good enough to show me some of the ruins. It is amazing to think of a race of people with such a completely different, yet perfectly functional technology.

When I was young, I imagined myself as a star-traveler. I wanted to deal with alien races and learn things that our Stralean-originating races never imagined. Instead I discovered that aliens and humans seem quite content to stay at a polite distance. There is almost no interaction with the handful of alien species we've ever met. We have no exchange of technology. We do not even exchange diplomats.

The basin at the foot of Mount Sion is like some profoundly quiet school. The scientists think that the mountain was once a volcano. Digging into the ruins of this long-dead civilization is the closest that we've ever come to learning about prehistoric alien civilizations. Is there some religious reason why they built on the planet's north pole? Come to think of it, I can't remember any other planet that has a polar volcano. Strange.

I wish I had time just to study the strange script on the wall. Dr. Escher said that she was coming close to deciphering the language. She understands the aliens better than anyone else. Imagine getting inside the mind of a non-human intelligence ... one that's been gone for thousands of years!

The Mondite cause has brought so much improvement to the human race! When I look back, humans seem almost like some form of sea-life that never moves, never changes, only waits for food and eventual death. With the guidance of the Paragon, we progress to something better.

Memo

From: Caynan

To: Security Team

Subject: Troops Must Wear Blasters at All Times.

Date: d1271

Starting immediately, security personnel must wear blasters at all times. This includes off-duty hours.

It is common knowledge that there are several varieties of hostile life native to Daedalus. Exactly what their capabilities are, and how many varieties exist, are unknown. You will observe all safety precautions. I am aware that some security troops have been slack during their recreation periods. This laziness and inattention will not be tolerated.

Security Log

Subject: Personal Shields

Date: d1273

The energy-dispersion units for the surface troops' personal shields are no longer working. No one can discover the reason. By all our routine checks, they should be working. They don't.

At least there wasn't any loss of life in the discovery. Alonzi was inspecting an area of the dig-site. He received a jolt in the chest from one of the archaeologists' sonic brushes. Apparently the archaeologist, Dr. Perius, was being protective of a fragile section of the dig. "It tickled a bit," I overheard Alonzi tell Lasita. When I asked why he wasn't wearing his personal shield to protect his chest, he said he was. A thorough inspection revealed that all energy-dispersion units were either non- or malfunctioning.

The trouble, whatever it is, is apparently unique to the surface. None of the dropship marines are experiencing any trouble whatsoever. I'm betting it's another damn alien fungus. Give this planet a drop of moisture, and it will try to kill you.

Security Log

Subject: Improved Troops

Date: d1295

It pleases me to note that the techniques and maneuvers of the troops have improved measurably since their shields became useless. It was as I suspected. Troops who feel secure grow overconfident. It is only when they feel vulnerable that they become cautious. That's fine with me. They need to be careful in an alien and unknown environment.

Perhaps I should have disabled their shields myself?

Security Memo

From: Caynan

To: All

Subject: Food Fabricator

Date: d1317

The Food Fabricator is to be supplied with new programs, thanks to Burra. If anyone would like to contribute a meal concept, please let Burra know within the next 20 days.

Burra asks that if you desire a specific flavor or texture that is not currently programmed in the fabricator, that you be willing to perform taste tests. He does not promise anything better than approximation, especially on favorite foods.

I remind you that alcoholic beverages, or any potent consumables, are off limits.

Security Log

Subject: Tonfa Guns

Date: d1377

Getting Tonfa guns for the ground troops is turning into an impossible morass. Our shipment should have arrived two months ago, but it didn't. It hasn't yet.

I suppose that having the dropship marines armed with Tonfa guns ought to be enough for any foreseeable danger. It's the word "foreseeable" that makes me uncomfortable. I'd much rather be prepared for "unforeseeable" dangers, than assume that if I can't predict something, it can't happen.

Having the dropships prepared for any eventuality is fine. Of course, the ground troops are more likely to meet a first wave of attack than a dropship.

Electronic Mail

From: Caynan

To: Escher

Subject: The Tour

Date: d1428

Dr. Escher,

I enjoyed the tour of the Dig Site. I am glad to be working so closely with such an important project. You were so thrilled about the discoveries that I picked up your enthusiasm. You are right, it is very exciting to learn about alien cultures.

I hope I did not offend you when I used the word "creature" in regard to the alien race you are researching. I just meant that they must have looked very different from humans. I am sure that we would look very strange to them, as well.

I hope that as your project progresses you will take the time to show me the new discoveries. I look forward to it.

Electronic Mail

From: Caynan
To: Escher
Subject: The Soldier
Date: d1442

In order to further your research, Dr. Escher, I think you need to see something. I am granting you security clearance to view the alien soldiers we found earlier.

When we retrieved the *Ambassadoria*, we also discovered some aliens. The destruction of the *Ambassadoria* and the alien ship are certainly linked. We traced the ship back to its homeworld here. You know that. Did you know that we returned with the alien ship in tow?

You might find it interesting. Consider it a fair trade for the tour you gave me. Do not mention it to anyone, though. It's bending the rules a bit.

Status Condition Report

Subject: Security Robots
Date: d1450

Given the nature of the experiments being run by Dr. Mastaba, I feel that the number of security robots is insufficient.

One type, a level D-bot, performs patrols of dangerous or remote areas. It also monitors those areas inherently unlikely to provide any problems. Its responses are too limited. Its range of vision is narrow. It moves slowly. When it captures someone who doesn't know the code to disable it, it can only call for security troop backup. If the prisoner attempts to escape or attack it, it will shoot. I'd be a lot happier with this if my troops had personal shields.

Our level A 'bots monitor the higher-risk areas that are difficult for humans to access. In general I'm quite pleased with these. I only wish I had more. The entire research facility on Daedalus has a level of secrecy hard to maintain, and we already know that the Reticulum is suspicious. I don't see how you can reasonably deny my request for more security. The condition is less stable than could be desired. I am sure that Dr. Mastaba would feel the same way. If I do not receive some kind of cooperation in the immediate future, you may be sure that I will take it up with him.

Memo

From: Caynan
To: Mastaba
Subject: Mirror Suit
Date: d1469

I thought a conversation that some of my troops have overheard might interest you. It seems that the scientists working in the alien archaeological site have discovered information about an apparent variety of reflective alien armor. Actually the scientists do not refer to it as armor. They call it shielding. They believe that it was either inherently or mechanically able to repel ALL FORMS of energy. The scientists believe that as a shield to encase the FTL interstellar engines it would be invaluable.

It would also seem to provide a superior personal shield for Mondite troops and starcraft. It occurred to me that you might be personally interested in how such armor might be useful to the project on which you are currently working.

I just mention this out of respect for your accomplishments and present project goals.

Caynan's Personal Log

Subject: Colonization
Date: d1472

When I was a boy, I wanted to be an explorer. I played games with my friends — they were aliens, and I was a bold Reticulum Scout. Sometimes we became allies; sometimes we became blood enemies. We never dreamed how hard it would be to find a planet that could sustain life. Plus, we assumed that any suitable planet would already support intelligent races.

Now we know that planets like Stralea are almost impossible to find. The Reticulum Scouts are happy just to discover a world with terraforming potential. I'm even told that two colonial planets being planned will use domes of artificial atmosphere. The Scouts had originally classified those planets as uninhabitable, but it turns out we need them.

The amazing thing is how adaptable humans can be to these strange new environments. High gravity, extreme temperatures or humidity, hostile native life ... people have adapted to these worlds. They can even thrive. When they try to bring Stralean flora or fauna to their new homes, their transplants almost invariably waste away and die. Only the humans remain strong. Somehow we can adjust like nothing else can. It's not evolution, of course. We need to go on to an advanced stage, and cybernetics will answer that need wonderfully ... but sometimes I wonder if we are so very badly off the way we are.

Security Medical Report

From: Tayke
To: Caynan
Subject: Guard 47923
Date: d1473

Condition: Serious, Stable

Comments: Won't be able to perform regular shift for a minimum of four days as a result of food poisoning.

Further note: This is the second time that this guard has gone down with a bad meal from a food fabricator. No one else has complained of poisoning.

Caynan's Personal Log

Subject: False Wisdom
Date: d1484

I've been inventing "Paragon" dictates. It helps reassure some of the troops new to the Mondite philosophy. I was right in believing that they were suffering from a lack of focus. Following the weekly observations of the Paragon makes them feel unified with the Mondite cause. It allows them to participate in a galaxy-wide cause that is as immense as it is worthy.

It bothers me a little, though, that they cannot tell the difference between the true wisdom of the Paragon, and the simple words of a follower. Most of the time I don't even try to teach them anything worthwhile. I just give them something to do — something that keeps them aware that they are part of the movement. I had them eat their meals without using their thumbs for a week, to "keep them aware that humans are merely organisms entirely dependent on health and wholeness to be useful." Yager said that his eyes opened to his real self for the first time. My words weren't wise! They weren't even true! Ullman would have been just as useful during the *Kasenko* hull-breach if he were missing a leg, or were dying of Sirean lung-rot.

What concerns me the most, though, is that I didn't even realize how untrue the statement was until after I had considered it for a few days. When I made it up, it sounded just as true as the words of the Paragon.

I'm trying not to think about the Paragon's dictates now.

Caynan's Personal Log

Subject: Anti-Establishment
Date: d1496

Chief Tolka was furious. I tried to explain that low-level Mondite troops wouldn't respect him because he had held his position for so long. It's part of the Mondite philosophy. Things must change to progress. Someone who won't change by definition is blocking improvement. He said that change means progress only sometimes, while other times it means things get worse. I sometimes don't know whether he's ever listened to the Paragon at all.

He asked me about "low-level" Mondites. Would they follow an established process after being told it was wrong? We both knew that they would rather revolt. Then he asked if they would revolt against an established process even when they personally believed it worked. I said probably — it depended on who told them to revolt. If they were told it was wrong, they'd believe it was wrong.

He then asked if a "low-level" Mondite would be able to replace a system with one that would encompass all necessary changes. One guaranteed to be better than the old one. I said they could if the Paragon told them how. He said, "only if the Paragon was right." I told him the Paragon is always right.

He said that not following an established pattern for no reason was as wrong as following it for no reason. He's very strange for a Mondite. He seems to know so little about the Mondite way. I can't understand how he got to such a responsible position as commander.

I wonder how many Mondites share his beliefs.

Electronic Bulletin Board

From: Caynan
To: BB
Subject: Reading Material
Date: d1510

I have the following disks:

The Complete Philosophical Treatise of the Paragon
Stratas' Military Histories of the Nine Planets
The Benefits of Technological Evolution
Mikas' Intra-Galactic Exploration Strategies
Nanotech, Volumes I-IV and IX-XIII
Stellar Life
Absolute Recycling, an Achievable Lifestyle
Bad Habits, Survival Strengths
Understanding Hyper-Navigation

Am willing to trade for FICTION or MUSIC of ANY kind. I'm serious.

Caynan's Personal Log

Subject: Downloading Nightmare

Date: d1513

I should know better than to eat spice-fruit after a strenuous day. I do it anyway. Every time. After half a day of shift-drills, I went and did it again. This time I decided to duck the headache I always get and just sleep through it. Bad choice. I had dreams that I can't stop thinking about.

I was standing outside a building. I don't know what world it was on. It was beautiful. It was a domesticated wilderness with soft grasses, enormous flowering trees and warm wind. I was comfortable there. Brilliant light shone down. The sky looked as though it were layers of pure blue crystal. I looked into an entrance leading deep inside the building. The hallway was dark. Even from just outside, I could tell how cold the metal walls were. Somehow I knew I should be somewhere in that building.

I went in. I walked down the corridor. I remembered that this was the day I had always hoped would come. The Mondite scientists had finally perfected the technique to download a person into a computer. I searched for the place I needed to be. It was difficult to walk in the darkness. I finally found a table and lay on top of it. Looking up, I couldn't tell if there were a ceiling to the room, or if it just went on and on. I took a light-pen from my pocket. When I opened my hand, it fell upward. It slowly turned, growing smaller. I watched it until it disappeared. I knew it was still falling. I couldn't tell what was keeping me from falling up into the darkness.

I realized that elastic mesh strapped me to the table. My head was shaved. Invisible devices slid ice-cold probes under the skin on my skull. It felt like cold fire. It was an agony so intense that it almost ceased being a sensation. All I could think was that soon I would be beyond such concerns as pain. I would fade away, and when I returned, I would have evolved to a higher form. Energy and power. I welcomed unconsciousness.

When I awoke, I lay on the table. The mesh had mostly dissolved my clothes, and I pulled the remaining rags off. I knew something had gone terribly wrong. I was still as I had always been. Across the room there was a canister, rounded and slightly asymmetrical. That was supposed to be my housing, yet I remained in the same soft flesh as ever. I was too numb to think.

Then a small droid floated into the room. It attached itself to the canister and lifted it from the floor. It spoke to me. "Transfer successful. Waste products to self-dispose." As it carried the canister away, I realized that I had been wrong. I would not live forever. The machine that contained my thoughts and memories was not me. It was nothing more than a machine. I was going to die, and there would be no purpose in my end. There had been no purpose in my life. I wanted to return to the outside wilderness. I needed to feel the air move on my skin. I thought I could escape ... but there were no doors anymore. Only walls remained.

I can't get the dream out of my head.

ESCHER

DESTROY THIS NOTE AFTER YOU READ IT.
BE CAREFUL WHAT YOU TELL MASTABA
ABOUT YOUR FINDINGS. YOUR GOALS -
OUR GOALS - ARE NOT THE SAME AS HIS.

Electronic Mail

From: Caynan

To: Zane

Subject: The Paragon and Evolution

Date: d1524

I enjoyed our talk at the Dig Site yesterday. I appreciate your patience in talking with me, as well as your knowledge of the Paragon's true wisdom. Getting to know the key people on Daedalus is part of my duties, but sometimes it is also enjoyable.

I have never met a scientist so interested in the "adventure" aspect of the Mondite cause. I recognize in myself the same curiosity of what lies in store for advanced human evolution. You said that the true depth of the Paragon's words is not in the literal meaning, but in what they suggest. I agree.

I am glad that there are truly interested, loyal Mondites on Daedalus. People who think. People who actually work at bringing humans closer to understanding technology, and keep us advancing toward the true evolution. I will be speaking to you again, I hope.

Electronic Mail Response

From: Caynan

To: Zane

Date: d1529

What's keeping it in place? Would one of the mobile 'bots help?

From: Zane

To: All

Subject: Dig-Site Object

Date: d1529

Can anyone out there think of a way to move an immovable object? We've got an obstacle between us and the mysteries of this planet. We don't want to destroy it. It's an artifact, and an impressive one at that. It is a big, impressive artifact that is IN THE WAY!

Any non-destructive advice?

Electronic Mail Response

From: Caynan
To: Rainocek
Date: d1555

Why was the forklift available to those who couldn't use it properly? It should only be available to people with the correct access-codes.

See me.

From: Rainocek
To: All
Subject: Forklift Robot
Date: d1555

Personnel unfamiliar with the forklift robot in the Control Area will restrain themselves from using it.

This is the absolute last time this message is going out. I am not impressed with excuses. It is irrelevant who told you to use it. I don't care what you were trying to do. The next person who runs it off a platform is going to retrieve it the hard way.

Procedure Request

From: Caynan
To: Security Chief Morel
Subject: Tadlock's Feast of Mortification
Date: d1567

Please attend to this in whatever way you think necessary. It can easily be done without jeopardizing confidentiality.

One of my most loyal troops has been preparing for a Feast of Mortification since he was sixteen. He worked double-shift for four years to earn the down-payment on the cloning process, and then continued double-shifting for three years to cover maintenance costs. At the onset of his present tour of duty, he gave a lump sum for three years upkeep. The time is now close to running out. It would be unfair that in his service he would lose his chance at the greatest event a Mondite could participate in — the consumption of his own flesh. That he began at such a young age speaks highly for his devotion to the ways of the Paragon.

Please arrange to have his stipend sent directly to his account at the Sion Duplication Services. Although I expect delays, there should be ample time to establish a solution.

Caynan's Personal Log

Subject: The "Human" Factor
Date: d1570

I spoke to Eng today after review. I never knew that he was from a frontier family. I told him that I thought that it was strange to live on one world for more than a few years. To me it seems almost like a voluntary prison. He said that most of his family couldn't imagine uprooting and starting over constantly. They make friends and plans, and don't want to leave them.

I think it's interesting that there are so many types of people. We probably couldn't survive as a race if we weren't so diverse. Take Eng's family, for instance. Most want to stay. Eng yearned to explore the galaxy. If everyone on the planet died of an alien sickness, the family continues because Eng is safe. If star travel eventually kills Eng, the family continues because some people stayed planetside. People are that way naturally. Sometimes it seems like the higher programming, obviously missing in individuals, exists on a species-wide scale.

The "human" factor may actually be a strength. I sincerely hope that the scientists of our movement are taking it into consideration.

Caynan's Personal Log

Subject: Mastaba's Spies
Date: d1575

I've discovered conspirators at work on Daedalus. I don't know how long they have been here. I will, though. As Chief of Security, it is my responsibility to know everything that occurs on this base. My loyalty is irreproachable. This is more than an insult. It is an outrage!

Legget was trying to access my files when I caught him. He seemed amused that I should be angry. He said he answers directly to Dr. Mastaba. Anyone who objected to being checked was immediately under suspicion. He said that he'd known for some time that my files were unusually well-protected. He accused me of hiding dissident information! I was not "hiding" anything! I have an unusual talent for security — I would not have gotten this position otherwise. It's only natural that my files would have extra safeguards. It was an hour of idle entertainment.

I spoke to Mastaba about the incident. Normally I would never think to talk to him in such a manner, but I was almost out of control. Mastaba, at least, was reasonable. He said that Legget had acted out of excess enthusiasm. He promised that Legget would be reprimanded. Mastaba recognizes that there is no Mondite more loyal than I am. Unless he's trickier than I think he is.

I'm re-designing the locks on my files. This time it won't be an idle attempt — it will be my best work. Just because Legget won't try again doesn't mean that there aren't other people out there with unknown goals. If Legget spied on me there are probably others. One lie, and they destroy my reputation. I've got to start being more careful.

Caynan's Personal Log

Subject: Mastaba's Secret

Date: d1577

I'm beginning to suspect that my men may be in danger. It's not from the native lifeforms. Mastaba's concern for absolute secrecy may lead him to believe that we are all expendable. It may not stop him that we are all loyal to the cause. It didn't keep him from sending Leggett to download my files. It must have been Mastaba. Leggett is too much of a foot-licker to have tried that on his own.

Mastaba could have his spies, whoever and however many there are, try to kill us all. It couldn't work. There aren't that many of them, I know. Still, if they all take off on a supply ship, we'd be helpless. It was Mastaba's idea that we cannibalize the *Kasenko*. We have no way to get off. Even if we tried to rebuild a starship from the lab, we'd never be able to get it off the planet. We'd rot on this hellish planet. If we didn't die of something more sudden and deadly.

He might not even take his spies. He could just leave. I'm sure that the secret would be safe with him.

We're trapped on a moon with a madman.

Caynan's Personal Log

Subject: Goals

Date: d1583

The screams sound different. Before, I knew that it was necessary for the furtherance of Mondite goals. Their pain was temporary. The goals that can be earned by creating fearless and unstoppable soldiers would be formidable. Surely the experiments are necessary.

At first I was able to ignore the atrocities. The subjects were such pathetic specimens that their deaths would be no loss to anyone. Not even they could have been happy with their continued existences. Not anymore. Some of these recent subjects could make valuable contributions. We could persuade them to join the Mondites. Their services would be infinitely more valuable than their deaths on Mastaba's table.

Sometimes I wonder why we need super-humans. The Mondite cause will flourish without making monsters like these. Why should we continue when the work doesn't seem to be going well? Mastaba says that he is approaching success. All the results are equally dead. If his true goal is to develop techniques of inhuman torture, then he may be approaching perfection.

I cannot imagine a goal that would accomplish so much that these experiments would actually be worth the cost. I am not sure what to do.

Official Reprimand

Commanding Officer: Caynan

Personnel Receiving Reprimand: Tallis

Rank: Security Troop

Security Clearance: Level D-4

Date: d1588

Comments: The simple fact that Tallis fought with marine personnel is cause enough for reprimand. That he instigated the brawl casts a darker light on the entire matter. That neither Tallis nor the marine he attacked can remember what caused the flare-up of violence is dismaying. Obviously Tallis cannot distinguish Just Cause from an unmemorable and unremarkable comment.

More serious than the fight, however, is that Tallis attacked an unarmed Marine with a weapon. The Bormag distaff that Tallis used could easily have been lethal. The fact that he had it in hand after the game of Bormag, that it was not an "intentional" weapon, is beside the point. The marine required medical treatment and will be unfit for duty for at least two days. Tallis acted without thought or self-restraint. Moreover, he fought without skill or control.

Captain Tumolt has asked for leniency in the punishment. Were that not the case I would recommend a demotion at the least. Keeping Tumolt's request in mind I will do nothing more than log a formal reprimand.

Security Memo

From: Caynan

To: All

Subject: No New Personnel

Date: d1593

Some people have expressed discontent at the heightened work-load. I regret to inform those who do not fully understand the situation that there will be no new personnel to replace those lost by misadventure.

A certain amount of attrition was expected in establishing a base in an alien environment. Some loss was accounted for in the original roster. There is no one who is expected to perform beyond his capabilities. No one is working unreasonable hours. Those people who feel particularly put upon may complain to me in person. I will go to whatever lengths necessary to ensure that their tender sensibilities are coddled to the appropriate level.

Electronic Bulletin Board

From: Caynan
To: BB
Subject: The Paragon's Request
Date: d1597

I remember when the Paragon asked people to kill him. Did anyone ever try?

Security Memo

From: Caynan
To: All
Subject: New Security Robots
Date: d1607

I've studied the current situation, and I have adjusted my previous claim that the base is in need of more security robots. We have not run into the large number of lifeforms that we expected. The current equipment is satisfactory. Proper maintenance is all that is required.

The security robots' visual mobility units have continually broken down since the onset of the fungus. The solution will be that their VMUs will be set in a fixed position — directly ahead.

It is my belief that a lower level of efficiency in the security machines does not threaten the security of the base.

Caynan's Personal Log

Subject: Mother's Name Day
Date: d1625

Tomorrow will be Mother's Name Day. This will make the fifth year in a row for me to miss her celebration. I remember when I said I would always be there for her Name Day. I was young. When she told me not to make promises I couldn't keep, I was hurt and angry. She was right, of course. I can't even say that I've been there for half of them. I always think of her, though. Nearly every day.

She hasn't written to me in years. I know she was annoyed when I joined the Mondites. She didn't understand. She never truly listened to what I had to say about the Paragon. I just wasn't good at explaining about the cause. If only she had heard the people who had spoken to me, then maybe she would see why I had to do what I did.

I hope things are going well for her, wherever she is.

Electronic Mail

From: Caynan
To: All
Subject: Combat Tournament Tomorrow
Date: 1741

The Ground vs. Dropship Combat Tournament begins tomorrow at the beginning of second shift.

Security Memo

From: Caynan
To: All
Subject: Lower-Power Blaster Capabilities for Robots
Date: d1776

Security robots will carry lower-intensity blasters than previously. They have sometimes proved dangerous to our own security troops.

As a precaution, therefore, I am limiting their power slightly.

Caynan's Personal Log

Subject: Death of Technician Odon
Date: d1879

Odon was stung by one of those damn bugs. No one told me. It is a terrible way to die.

They said that Dr. Mastaba comforted him in his last hours of life. They even say that Mastaba eased his pain with some kind of impromptu brain surgery. I never thought of Mastaba as a compassionate man, but he may have more layers than I thought.

It is comforting to know that Mastaba has human feelings. I was beginning to think I was turning soft. I am getting increasingly uncomfortable with the fate of the AFA subjects. Some of them I cannot help but see as people. The volunteers, for example. Others seem amazingly brave in the face of their doom. I wish we could recruit them for other purposes. I haven't spoken to the subject, Dane, but I've heard him speak to Mastaba. I respect him.

I don't respect myself anymore.

SUBJECT: Caynan, K. C.

BACKGROUND: Security Chief assigned to the Daedalus base. Caught while attempting to betray the project and the movement. It was deemed that killing him outright would simply be a waste of resources considering he fits the requirements of an AFA prototype candidate.

EXPERIMENTATION: AFA genetic alteration, Stages One and Two.

RESULTS: A series of genetic mutations have given the subject a level of strength and endurance far beyond a biologically normal human. It has also produced the side effect of giving him a blue pigmentation. These alterations have drastically and adversely affected his sanity.

COMMENTS: Caynan was never considered a serious contender for the AFA project, just a mass of expendable tissue that conveniently became available.

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