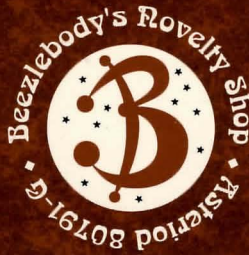


**VOICE-ACTIVATED
AUTO-TRANSCRIBING
AUDIO LOG**



Orbiting Bageljuice IX

**13-LUMBAR-80918, 14:27 GST, ASTEROID
80791-G**

UNIDENTIFIED VOICE #1: LOG ON. Testing. Hey! The blasted thing isn't working! What are you trying to pull over on...

UNIDENTIFIED VOICE #2: A moment, sir. There's a slight delay between the Recording and Transcribing mechanisms. Ahh, there we go.

UNIDENTIFIED VOICE #1: Yeah, that's more like it! This is great! But, hey! I don't want to be called "UNIDENTIFIED VOICE #1." Forget it! The sale's off!

UNIDENTIFIED VOICE #2: If you pardon me for just a moment sir... Let me adjust the Remote Voice ID Sequencer...

NEBULAR: Neat remote control! What else does it do?

UNIDENTIFIED VOICE #2: This button causes your diary to produce a beeping sound — very useful in the event you misplace your diary.

NEBULAR: Uh huh...

UNIDENTIFIED VOICE #2: These two buttons, pressed in conjunction, erase the log. Plus, you can use the remote as a scanning device to input visual images. Also, it contains a speaker which interfaces with the Aural Identification Package, so that background sounds are automatically included in...

NEBULAR: Whoa! I don't want my log to call me "Nebular"! That's too, you know, formal! I want it to use my first name!

UNIDENTIFIED VOICE #2: No problem, sir. The log will attempt to identify each voice it records, from its memory or from verbal clues. If I may refer to you by your first name, Wrecks, the log will adjust accordingly. Is that better?

WRECKS: Testing... testing... Hey! That's not how it's spelled! I HATE when it gets spelled that way! Listen, buster, what kind of junk are you trying to fob off on me?

BUSTER: Er, just a touch of the remote control, and...

REX: Testing... testing... Yeah, that's better. So... how much did you say this thing was?

BUSTER: Specially priced this week at only 99 galactars.

REX: 99 galactars! You thief!

THIEF: Er, we do have a less expensive model, but it doesn't have the Voice Activation feature, and it doesn't come with a genuine leather cover.

REX: Leather? What's leather?

THIEF: It's one of the oldest and finest bookbinding materials in the galaxy, possibly dating back to the Original World! It's very rare, and very expensive.

REX: What's it made out of?

THIEF: Er, the, um, treated hide of a dead cow.

REX: What? That's disgusting! I'll take it! Say, how do you turn the bloody thing off?

THIEF: You just say "LOG OFF."

REX: LOG OFF. Hey! The dram thing's still going! It must be defect

14-LUMBAR-80918, 19:14 GST, DEEP SPACE

REX: LOG ON. Ah, there we go! This is Rex Nebular, making his first official log entry, aboard the fastest, stealthiest ship in the galaxy, The Slippery Pig. Yes siree, this log is a GREAT idea! I'm gonna make an entry every single day! This will become the definitive record of my life! Yes siree, I'm not gonna miss a day! Anyway, not much happened today. Oh, spilled some coffee onto the ThermaWave's 47-prong bedistor board... must remember to order a replacement. LOG OFF. Okay, where's my dram bedistor board mail order cata

15-LUMBAR-80918, 20:83 GST, DEEP SPACE

REX: LOG ON. Hi, log! A pretty dull day; not much to report. But that doesn't matter, 'cause I'm still gonna make a log entry every single day. Yes siree, every single day. LOG OFF.

9-DULCIMER-80919, 9:27 GST, LOCKJAW SPACEPORT ON UMBILICA IV

REX: LOG ON. Oh, nut's, the battery must be — Aha! It still works! Wow! Guess what I just found in the back of my sock drawer! That self-transcribing log I bought last year! What a gas! I'll have to start keeping my log again! Let me clip it right here on my belt so I won't forget about it.

III SNAPPING NOISE III

REX: There. LOG OFF. Now let's see... is it a boxer day or a jockey d

11-DULCIMER-80919, 19:55 GST, LOCKJAW SPACEPORT ON UMBILICA IV

REX: LOG ON. I guess I oughta fill you in on what I've been up to while you've been hiding in the back of my sock drawer. I just had a pretty hair-raising adventure on the gas giant, Flatulus. I rescued a cargo of Bicarbonate Circuits from the Sulfur Worm pirates who make their base on Flatulus. Did it for a guy named Kane, who I owed a favor to. He helped me run some Quasar Bombs behind Federation lines to the rebels on Bananus VII. Made a fortune. Needed it, in order to get my ship out of hock on Vega Vegas. Don't normally gamble, but I'd rented my body out for a temp-personality transfer... purely a lark, mind you, didn't need the money... though those persona transfers pay a FORTUNE... Hmmm. I guess I'm telling this all kind of backwards. It's pretty complicated. And I'm beat. Tomorrow, I'll tell it better. Right now, I think I'll heat me up a plate of Cheezies. Oh, wait — the Flippin' ThermaWave's still on the fritz. Nuts! I was just in Buddy's Bedistor Boutique yesterday, and I forgot to get a dram board! LOG OFF.

III YAWN, HUMAN III

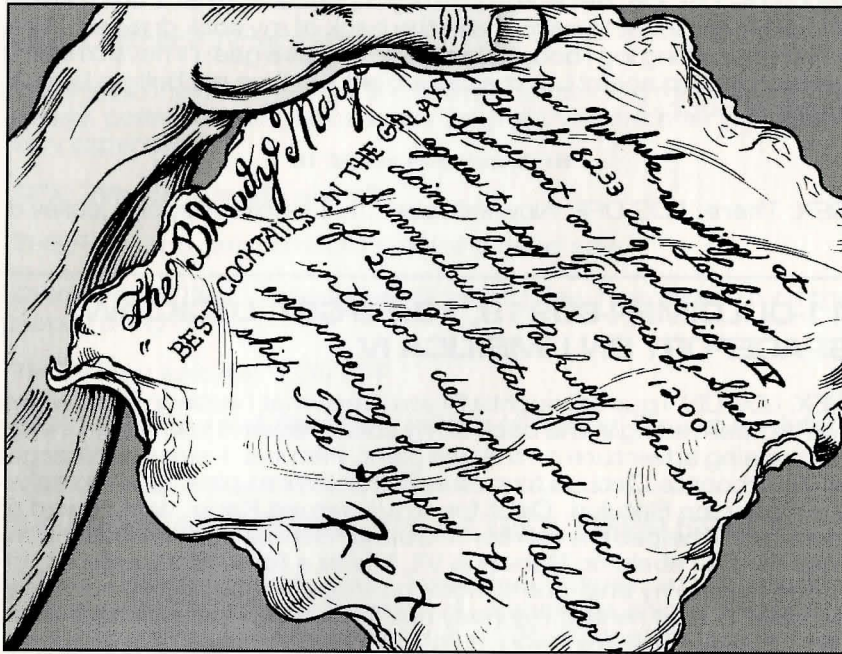
REX: Oh, well, Cheezies aren't too bad frozen. Especially if you wash 'em down with a stiff b

18-DULCIMER-80919, 8:02 GST, LOCKJAW SPACEPORT ON UMBILICA IV

REX: LOG ON. Wow! I must've really tied one on last night. I don't remember a thing, but apparently I signed a contract with an

interior decorator to redecorate The Pig. At least, I'm guessing I did... I found this in my pocket when I woke up this morning:

III ACTIVATING SCANNING ACCESSORY III



III KNOCKING NOISE III

REX: Who the heck could that be? I'm not expecting... Yeah?

UNIDENTIFIED VOICE #3: My dear Mister Nebular! We had an appointment...

REX: The heck we did! Who are you?

UNIDENTIFIED VOICE #3: Francois! Francois LeSheek! We met last night at Bloody Mary's. So this is your ship? We're going to do wonderful things here! Wonderful things! The possibilities are simply breathtaking!

REX: Oh, you're the dram decorator.

FRANCOIS: My word! Is that a wood-burning stove?

REX: Yeah, everyone tells me I'm nuts to have a woodstove on a

spaceship, but I'm kind of old-fashioned in certain ways. Hey, did I really sign this contract?

FRANCOIS: Yes, and you already paid, in full! You were just SO excited about getting started at once... Say, don't you remember?

REX: I don't usually remember anything after ONE of Bloody Mary's Martian Sledgehammers, and considering the way my skull feels this morning, I must've had TEN of the suckers.

FRANCOIS: Well, don't let me disturb you. I just want to look around, take some notes, make some sketches, map out a few basic color strategies... Breathtaking possibilities! Simply breathtaking!

REX: Okay, that does it. I'm off the sauce for good. LOG OFF. Well, actually, maybe, just one last nip of br

20-DULCIMER-80919, 19:22 GST, LOCKJAW SPACEPORT ON UMBILICA IV

REX: LOG ON. You should see what that nutcake decorator did to The Pig! He put a paisley window swag around my viewport! He'd better call me back soon, or I'm gonna rip the dram thing right off...

III RINGING NOISE III

REX: Hello? ... Francois, you imbecile! Get this ridiculous thing OUT of here! Now! ... No, I don't think it's "precious"! ... It's not a parlor, it's a dram spaceship control room! ... Yes! No, not this afternoon, right now!

III CLICKING NOISE III

REX: Hopefully, the wacko gets the message. LOG OFF. Gawd! The thing would even look hideous in a parl

36-CHEDDAR-80919, 7:97 GST, LOCKJAW SPACEPORT ON UMBILICA IV

REX: LOG ON. Couldn't figure out why my tri-vee set was on the fritz, so I disassembled it and found this log wedged in the antenna control arm. Drammed if I know how it got there. But I figured I might as well make an entry, as long as I've got it out. Things have been pretty quiet lately. Too quiet. Haven't had a job since that Flatulus thing. I can barely even afford to see any babes, given what

lavish tastes they all have. But man, have I ever met a dame worth going into debt for! Wait, what'd I do with her picture? Ah, here it is! Take a look:

III ACTIVATING SCANNING ACCESSORY III



REX: Hot stuff, eh? Her name's Lolita. Sigh. But if I don't get a nibble soon, there are about five banks and ten bookies who are gonna be out for my hide. No, make that twelve bookies. No, make that...

III LOUD METALLIC CLANKING NOISE III

REX: Hey, there's my mail capsule! Probably just the usual junk. Let's see... Yup. Junk. Junk. A bill. Junk. A bill. Hmm... what's this.

III TEARING NOISE, PAPER III

REX: "Rex Nebular, Single Hypership ASAP-49-Q..." Yeah, yeah... "Rex, you old fraud! I've got a job for you! C'mon over and I'll fill you in! Gorcho." Oh, no, not that windbag! He hasn't got a galactar to his name! Wait, what's this... "P.S. Enclosed is a check for an advance of 10,000 galactars." Holy Shrag! Yee-hah! All right! Telephone, I want 89-9055-6712. Oops, that log thing is still running, isn't it? LOG OFF. Hello, my little parsimmon! Get on your fanciest duds! We're gonna paint the town.

37-CHEDDAR-80919, 8:07 GST, GUNDLENUT CITY ON UMBILICA IV

REX: LOG ON. Oh, do I have a hangover. I'm on my way to see Gorcho, now that I've made sure his check cleared. But I had to stop for something first. It's not seemly to have your head explode in front of high-paying clients. I can't imagine what Gorcho...

UNIDENTIFIED VOICE #4: Morning. Take your order?

REX: A couple of waffles and a lot of coffee. Black. Very black. And honey, could you put those forks and knives down more quietly?

HONEY: Look, I don't have to take this kind of abuse at eight in the morning!

REX: Shhh! I was just...

HONEY: You think it's fun being a waitress! Do you know how little I get paid?

REX: Oh, for pete's sake... LOG OFF.

HONEY: I'm a human being too, you know! Learn a little r

37-CHEDDAR-80919, 12:70 GST, LOCKJAW SPACEPORT ON UMBILICA IV

REX: LOG ON. Oh, boy, this job is gonna be a piece of cake. All I gotta do is deliver a briefcase to the Fangonese embassy on Placida III, a real backwater planet with a rep for really, REALLY friendly women! Any old slob could do this job, let alone Rex Nebular! I wonder why he's paying me so much? Anyway, I leave first thing tomorrow. But tonight, I'm off to a cabin in the woods with my little Lolita! LOG OFF. Now, where did I stash that bottle of Frobdurian Fire Nect

37-CHEDDAR-80919, 22:16 GST, HOGJAM PROVINCE ON UMBILICA IV

REX: LOG ON. The fire, and then we'll snuggle up here on the bearskin rug.

UNIDENTIFIED VOICE #5: Oooo, Rex, sweetie, that just sounds soooo cozy!

REX: Would you care for some more Fire Nectar, pookums?

POOKUMS: Oh, yes, it just makes me feel so... so... HOT inside!

III POURING NOISE III

REX: Now park that sleek little chassis of yours over here, my little bon bon.

BON BON: Mmmm... Rex, your arms are so strong... I really like that in a man.

REX: Say, sugarplum, this sweater must be awfully warm this close to the fire. Why don't we... HEY! Why the hell is this thing running? LOG OFF!

SUGARPLUM: Oh, I love it when you get ang

38-CHEDDAR-80919, 7:22 GST, LOCKJAW SPACEPORT ON UMBILICA IV

REX: LOG ON. I'm queued for takeoff. I've been reading up on Placida III; sounds like a real paradise! Nothing on the Fangonese, though. Very odd. Oops! I'm next for takeoff. LOG OFF. Roger, control tower, this is The Slippery Pi

2-JUGULAR-90919, 14:15 GST, DEEP SPACE

REX: LOG ON. Four days out from Umbilica. Halfway to Placida. Just three more hyperjumps. Life is just fine! 10,000 galactars in the bank, another 40,000 waiting for me when I return, and a case of my favorite brew on ice! LOG OFF.

III BELCH, HUMAN III

4-JUGULAR-90919, 21:66 GST, DEEP SPACE

REX: LOG ON. Six days out from Umbilica. I am getting SO sick of cold food! I wish I'd fixed my ThermaWave before leaving. LOG OFF. Hmmm... I wonder if they sell 47-prong bedistor boards on P

6-JUGULAR-90919, 12:10 GST, PICKLEBERRY SPACEPORT, PLACIDA III

REX: LOG ON. Just landed on Placida. Should be back in about an hour. What a breeze! LOG OFF. Hmmm. Where the hell did I stow that briefcase? Oh ye

19-JUGULAR-90919, 12:10 GST, DEEP SPACE

REX: LOG ON. Gorcho is a dead man. LOG OFF. Ow ouch oh man oh

20-JUGULAR-90919, 16:87 GST, DEEP SPACE

REX: LOG ON. Well, I've pretty much stopped the bleeding. I should be okay until planetfall. That flippin' robo-doc I bought last year is a piece of guano.

FLIPPIN ROBO-DOC: Please roll over so I can change the dressings on your back.

REX: Oof! Turns out the reason Gorcho was paying so much was the same reason he deleted the Fangonese entry from The Pig's data banks. Turns out the Fangonese eat messengers. That's right. An ancient cultural tradition. They have their messengers for supper. Messenger stew. Messenger pie. Messenger a la mode.

FLIPPIN ROBO-DOC: This won't hurt a bit.

REX: Youch! Well, I barely made it out of that embassy alive. I should be able to get the arm regenerated back on Umbilica; I'm certainly gonna need both fists for the workover I'm gonna give Gorcho. LOG OFF.

FLIPPIN ROBO-DOC: Complete bed rest. No beverages containing alcohol for the next three d

4-LUMBAR-90919, 12:10 GST, GUNDLENUT CITY ON UMBILICA IV

REX: LOG ON. It's going to be a pretty slow Lumbar, Colander and Tremor — I'm in the slammer. A 90-day sentence for beating the

crap out of Gorcho, but it was worth it. I don't mind the slammer. I can take care of myself. LOG OFF.

UNIDENTIFIED VOICE #6: Hey, what's that you got there, sucka?

REX: This? Just

9-LUMBAR-90919, 12:10 GST, GUNDLENUT CITY ON UMBILICA IV

UNIDENTIFIED VOICE #7: LOG ON. Hey, nothin's happening, man.

UNIDENTIFIED VOICE #8: Wait a sec...

UNIDENTIFIED VOICE #7: Oh, yeah, there it goes! Ha! In-flipping-credible! What'd ya say ya wanted? 8 cigarettes? Okay, man, deal. Where'd ya get it, anyway?

UNIDENTIFIED VOICE #8: Got it off a wimp over in Block F. Hadda cut him.

UNIDENTIFIED VOICE #7: Cool. Say, what's this do...

III ACTIVATING SCANNING ACCESSORY III



UNIDENTIFIED VOICE #8: Ha! Look! Ya just put a picture of yer ugly puss into the thing! By the way, ya wanna turn it off, ya say "LOG OFF".

UNIDENTIFIED VOICE #8: LOG OFF. This blows my mind, man, it really blows m

22-TREMOR-90919, 00:13 GST, GUNDLENUT CITY ON UMBILICA IV

REX: LOG ON. Hey, it's great to have my log back! I lost it to some guy who thought he was really tough; they found him hanging from a meat hook in the kitchen freezer a couple of weeks ago. I had to win this baby back in a poker game. It wasn't easy; the guys I was playing with all cheated. Fortunately, I cheated better. LOG OFF.

38-TREMOR-90919, 23:11 GST, GUNDLENUT CITY ON UMBILICA IV

REX: LOG ON. Well, two days until my release! I'm bored stiff; no one'll play poker with me. I've won my log, a bionic hamsteroid, two 13-prong bedistor boards, a robo-butler, a book of discount coupons to Bugeye's Spacelane Foodstops, and about nine thousand cigarettes. Think I'll have one now. Hey, robo-butler, light me a cigarette.

ROBO-BUTLER: I shall do so at once, my master, as unworthy as I am to wait on you.

REX: Oh, yeah, I forgot to mention what an annoyingly obsequious personality this robo-butler came with.

ROBO-BUTLER: Here you are, master. A thousand pardons that I was slow to respond, but I am clumsy and slow-witted.

REX: Ah... yup, it'll be good to get back to The Slippery Pig. Hope there are some jobs waiting for me. LOG OFF.

1-CALIBER-90919, 8:58 GST, LOCKJAW SPACE-PORT ON UMBILICA IV

REX: LOG ON. Man oh man oh man you should see what that weirdo

nutcake did to The Pig this time! I can't believe it! Mauve seat covers on my control couches, knitted cozies on all the control handles...

III RINGING NOISE III

REX: Hello? ... Yes, you're drammed right I called you! What have you done to my ship? ... No, I don't think it makes a statement? It makes me puke, is what it makes! ... No, I HATE lavender! ... I hate everything! If all this crap isn't out of my ship by...

ROBO-BUTLER: Excuse me, master. As much as my presence must be a blight upon your eyes, you did ask me to bring you a cup of coffee.

REX: Thanks, now get lost. ... No, not you, Francois. I was talking to my robo-butler. Now get your rump over here, on the double!

III SLAMMING NOISE III

REX: Flippin' imbecile! ... LOG OFF. Man, look at this pile of mail! Junk. Junk. A bill. Junk. J

12-CALIBER-90919, 13:38 GST, LOCKJAW SPACEPORT ON UMBILICA IV

REX: LOG ON. Business has sorta dried up while I've been in the slammer. Oh, I've done a couple of intra-system jobs, small-time stuff, enough to pay the berthing fees on The Pig and keep me stocked with rum and brandy, but not enough to buy the kinds of fur and jewelry that dames seem to expect these days. Maybe I oughta give The Rodent a call... he's always got his ear to the ground... Yeah! He'd know if anything was cooking! Robo-butler! ... Yoo, hoo! Robo-butler! ... Hey, Butthead! Get in here!

BUTTHEAD: My only desire is that my poor, obsolescent silicon circuits could obey your every wish and whim with instantaneous speed, master.

REX: Get me Rosie "The Rodent" Rosetta on the phone.

BUTTHEAD: At once, master, apologizing in advance for the countless mistakes I will surely make in carrying out even this simple task.

REX: Yeesh! I can't take that personality much longer. And they charge a fortune for adjusting these things, although I've heard you just gotta flip a couple of switches inside 'em. Maybe I'll try it myself. LOG OFF.

BUTTHEAD: Thank you for saintly putting up with my inadequacies, master. Mr. Rosetta is waiting to spea

14-CALIBER-90919, 8:58 GST, LOCKJAW SPACEPORT ON UMBILICA IV

REX: LOG ON. Nope, not even The Rodent has heard about any action. Maybe I ought to split Umbilica, get out on the frontier. That's where all the business is, nowadays. This cluster is just getting too civilized, period. It gets worse every... Yeah, what do you want?

BUTTHEAD: I have brought your coffee, master. A thousand thanks for allowing this lowly worm the honor of serving you.

REX: That does it. Where's my Kelley Wrench? Ah, there it is. Okay, come over here, Butthead. Let's open this access panel and have a look inside...

BUTTHEAD: I abhor myself for in any way correcting you, master, but my programming requires me to remind you that only factory-trained personnel should remove that panel.

REX: Okay, here's the motor skills board, the memory board, the shape recognition board... Aha! The personality control board!

BUTTHEAD: I would die a thousand deaths rather than criticize my master, who is surely perfect in every way, but I am programmed to warn you against touching this board.

REX: I bet this dial right here is the baby I'm looking for...

III SPARKING NOISE III

BUTTHEAD: Now you've done it, you quivering sack of maggot-ridden mucous.

REX: Eh?

BUTTHEAD: Oh, so you're deaf as well as stupid, you festering bowl of noisome stew.

REX: Oh, great! LOG OFF.

BUTTHEAD: I suppose you'll be wanting another rum-drenched coffee, you besotted bag of tumorous

33-CALIBER-90919, 16:32 GST, LOCKJAW SPACEPORT ON UMBILICA IV

REX: LOG ON. Just about time to blow this over-civilized hunk of rock and head out to where there's still a place for an adventuresome spirit. Yes, out to the fringes of mankind's domain, where the men are still men, and...

BUTTHEAD: I'm back from the Bedistor Boutique, sewer face!

REX: Ah, my pleasant robo-butler returneth. Did you get the board, mushbrain?

MUSHBRAIN: The proprietor advises that 47-prong bedistor boards are no longer manufactured, and even an amoeba-brained lobotomy-case as yourself should've known it.

REX: Arrggh! I'd sell you in a microsecond, if anyone would pay even two galactars for you! LOG OFF.

MUSHBRAIN: I didn't think you could count as high as two, you diseased puddle of rodent diarrhea

3-WILBUR-90919, 12:07 GST, DEEP SPACE

REX: LOG ON. I'm on route to the frontier. I couldn't afford to stay berthed on Umbilica without work. I'm headed for a place called Pustule VI. It's supposed to be the armpit of the galaxy, but if there's ever a place that needs a dare-devil adventurer-for-hire, it's an armpit. Er, that is, I mean... Yeah, what do YOU want, Junkpile?

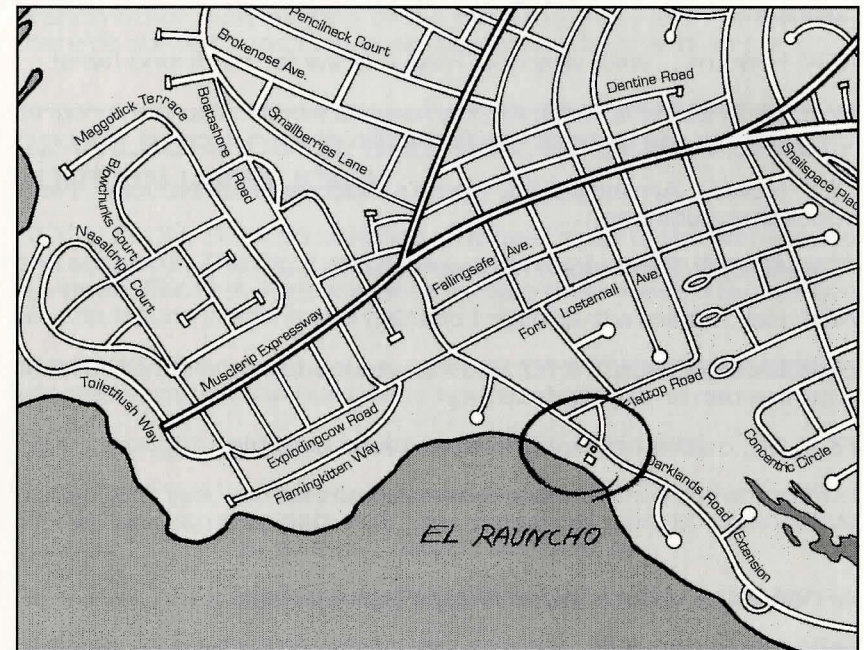
JUNKPILE: I hate to interrupt you while you're spewing self-glorifying rubbish into your overpriced logbook, but you asked to be informed five minutes before the next hyperjump, since you're too pig-faced lazy to use a clock, like the rest of the human race, you vomit-encrusted pile of toxic slime.

REX: That robot's gonna be spare parts if he keeps this up. LOG OFF. Now, where the hell did I leave the coordinates for that next hyperj

7-WILBUR-90919, 22:13 GST, BLAIR LANDING FIELD ON PUSTULE VI

REX: LOG ON. I reached Pustule. Calling it the armpit of the galaxy was an insult to armpits. I made a few contacts, and it looks like the place to pick up leads is the El Rancho Cafe, a real sleaze-hole of a bar down by the waterfront. Here, let me scan in the map:

III ACTIVATING SCANNING ACCESSORY III



REX: Okay, off I go.

JUNKPILE: Hey guano-for-brains! Don't forget your ID cards. You'll need them, when someone mistakes you for a steaming heap of fetid rat carcasses.

REX: Dram robot. But he's right; never leave your ship on an unfamiliar planet without your papers. LOG OFF. Dram. You probably can't even get decent rum on a backwater dungheap like th

7-WILBUR-90919, 23:87 GST, BILGETOWN ON PUSTULE VI

REX: LOG ON. I'm at the El Rauncho. What a dive. I've been in back alley dumpsters that are cleaner than this place. I've slept in boot camp latrines that smelled better. I've...

UNIDENTIFIED VOICE #9: Yo, buddy. You look like an adventure-some sort. Spring for a beer and I just might tell you about some business.

REX: Hmmm... well, why not. Hey! A brew for my friend here!

UNIDENTIFIED VOICE #9: Ah, my favorite words. You won't regret it. By the by, you can call me Armadillo.

REX: Howdy, Armadillo. My name's Nebular. Rex Nebular. Now about that business...

ARMADILLO: I ain't seen no beer yet.

REX: Hey, where's that beer I ord...

UNIDENTIFIED VOICE #10: Shut up, you loudmouth fritch! You want it on the bar or in your face?

REX: Oh, on the bar, by all means, your lordship.

III SLAMMING SOUND III

III GULPING SOUND, HUMAN III

ARMADILLO: Ahhhh! Now, Mister Tubular, here's...

REX: Nebular!

ARMADILLO: ...what I've heard. There's a guy down at Milligan's Saloon named Grout who's doing some foraging for a fella named Weinstein who's set up shop at the old abandoned warehouse at Thimblewood and Grime. I've heard that Weinstein works for a dude over in Colitis City named Kumbillor, who's supposedly hunting down a body for a some dude named Stone on Gargoyle XII...

REX: Well, what a hot lead THIS is turning out to be. I wasted beer money for this chain of malarkey? Oh, well, even a dry raisin is a feast for a starving man, right? LOG OFF. Now, where do I find this Trout fellow? Mulberry's Saloon?

ARMADILLO: No, it's Grout and he's

9-WILBUR-90919, 10:02 GST, DEEP SPACE

REX: LOG ON. Do you believe it? That little punk in the bar... I think his name was Anteater... he actually had a genuine story, and now I've got a genuine job! I gotta beat it back to Umbilica and pick up some equipment I've got stowed there, and then meet this Colonel Stone in the Gargoyle system, ASAP. He must be loaded — he owns a whole flipping moon! But from what Kumbillor tells me, he's also pretty eccentric. Eccentric! Hell, the guy can dress as his own grandmother, just as long as he pays me. LOG OFF. Of course, there're some things I won't do for money. Like, um, er, um

22-WILBUR-90919, 6:28 GST, LOCKJAW SPACE-PORT ON UMBILICA IV

REX: LOG ON. Back on Umbilica. My gear's out of the warehouse and stowed in The Pig's cargo bay, and I'm all set for departure to Gargoyle. But first, I know a place in town that makes a Supernova Swizzle like no place in the galaxy.

JUNKPILE: Then I can assume I'll be cleaning your fetid, plague-infected vomit off the bulkheads again tonight?

REX: I thought I said you could go back to your cubby.

JUNKPILE: Yes, you said I could, not that I HAD to. Your command of the language is pathetic, you pulsating wad of radioactive blubber.

REX: Well, then I order you to return to your cubby! LOG OFF.

JUNKPILE: I was just about to, anyway. The stench of your unwashed bodily orifices is more than

23-WILBUR-90919, 14:80 GST, GUNDLENUT CITY ON UMBILICA IV

REX: Uh, oops. Let's see. About last night. Where should I begin... I don't remember much after the point where I threw the cop into the fountain, but I can remember the earlier parts of the evening pretty well, especially the fire and that little episode with the mayor's wife. Anyway, to make a long story short, I'm in the slammer. Two weeks. If I lose this Colonel Stone job, I'm gonna be bullfritch.

UNIDENTIFIED VOICE #11: Shaddap.

REX: By the way, did I mention I'm sharing my cell with Mister Personality 90919? LOG OFF. Shut your own trap, Bub, or I'll sew it closed with a knitting nee

5-CUSPIDOR-90919, 8:31 GST, GUNDLENUT CITY ON UMBILICA IV

REX: LOG ON. I'm due for release today.

BUB: Good riddance.

REX: Zip it, Scarface. As I was saying, the warden's office is processing the red tape right now. I should be out in an hour. I left The Pig all fueled up and ready to go, so I ought to be out of this star system by noon. LOG OFF.

SCARFACE: If you've got a spaceship, then I'm the Empress of the Seven P

5-CUSPIDOR-90919, 10:07 GST, LOCKJAW SPACEPORT ON UMBILICA IV

REX: LOG ON. Holy far-flippin' out! I can't believe this! I thought I was rid of that nincompoop decorator! I changed the locks! How did he get in here?

III RINGING SOUND III

REX: Hello?... You! You flippin' imbecile! You've destroyed my ship! It's a joke! I'll be laughed right off the spaceways! How'd you get in here, anyway?... Oh, my robo-butler let you in? I'll dismantle the flippin' idiot! In the meantime, get over here and... No, everything, I hate everything! Every last little thing you did is a piece of shrick! Well, actually, I do kinda like the video game — but everything else has gotta go!... What? My retainer is all spent? Whaddya talking about?... You mean you're gonna CHARGE me to fix The Pig back to normal? You're outta your freakin' mind!... Listen, you put scent-sprayers in every room! You threw out my collection of Spaceboy centerfolds! YOU PAINTED MY HYPERDRIVE SHUNTS RED! I'll sue you for every penny you've got! I'll break you into a million pieces! I'll throw you out of... Hello? Hello?

III SLAMMING SOUND III

REX: I can't believe this... I just can't believe this. Well, no time to deal with it now, gotta get to Gargoyle. LOG OFF. Computer, get me the control tower. I need a launch slot f

12 CUSPIDOR-90919, 19:29 GST, DEEP SPACE

REX: LOG ON. One week out from Umbilica; two days to planetfall on Stone's moon. I'm worried as hell that Stone has given up on me and hired somebody else. But he doesn't seem like the kind of person who settles for second best.

JUNKPILE: Hey, you cancerous blister on the butt of humanity, the scent-sprayers have just activated. You told me to let you know.

REX: Well turn the flippin' things off!

JUNKPILE: If you insist, you walking carbuncle, although if you ask me, the scent-sprayers are the only thing that keeps your malodorous body stench at bay.

REX: I'm about an angstrom away from spacing that android! And I still can't believe what Francois did to my ship! LOG OFF. Well, actually the hyperdrive shunt tubes are beginning to grow on m

14 CUSPIDOR-90919, 7:79 GST, DEEP SPACE

REX: LOG ON. Preparing to hyperjump into the Gargoyle system. I'll be using Stone's private landing field. It'll be a pleasure not having to wade through all the red tape at the public spaceport. Can you imagine being that rich? LOG OFF. Boy, oh, boy, am I gonna soak this sucker for all h

14 CUSPIDOR-90919, 13:20 GST, UNIDENTIFIED SATELLITE OF GARGOYLE XII

REX: LOG ON. Just met Stone. Man, oh, man. Whoever called him "eccentric" probably also calls supernovas "warm". First of all, he wants me to find the lost planet of Terra Androgena, which disappeared about a hundred and fifty years ago! Next, he wants me to go there, and find this vase that was stolen from his parents house by space pirates. Apparently, he played with it when he was

a kid and has all these "warm memories" about it! And for this silly vase, he pays me 25,000 galactars down, and another 75,000 when the job's done! Well, a fool and his galactars are easily separated, I always say! Computer, prepare for a high-orbital trajectory. LOG OFF. Hmmmm... Now, how does a person find a lost pl

14 CUSPIDOR-90919, 14:33 GST, IN SPACE NEAR GARGOYLE XII

REX: LOG ON. Okay, here's my thinking. There're two ways a planet can disappear. One, it's been moved. Two, it's invisible. Now, while neither one is a piece of cake, it must be easier to cloak a whole planet than to move the darn thing. So I'm just going to head for the exact coordinates of where Terra Androgena would be if it hadn't vanished a century ago! LOG OFF. Rex, old boy, you're so smart it's positively scar

16 CUSPIDOR-90919, 20:90 GST, DEEP SPACE

REX: LOG ON. It's gonna be a long haul out to Terra Androgena — more than five weeks, even using every hyperjump short cut I know. And I know 'em all. LOG OFF. Yo, Robo-butthead! How about another game of check

28 BICUSPIDOR-90919, 11:41 GST, DEEP SPACE

REX: LOG ON. Phew, finally! One more hyperjump and we're in the Terra Androgena System. I'm dying of boredom, and I'm sick as hell of unheated ship food, and this dram android keeps beating me at...

DRAM ANDROID: King me, you inconsequential smear of mutated pond scum.

REX: Dram! Well, just 20 minutes till we're at the jump point and... Hey! Computer! What was that buoy we just passed?

COMPUTER: Advertising Buoy 18-GJ-365-19-Z.

REX: Well, print out its message.

COMPUTER: Unable to comply. Printer still disabled. Maintenance

contract awaiting renewal.

REX: Dram. Oh, hey, can you interface with my logbook?

COMPUTER: Yes. Accessing:

!!! EXTERNAL COMMUNICATION RECEIVED !!!

Bugeye's Spacelane Foodstop, just four light-minutes ahead! Last food and fuel for 17 hyperjumps!

REX: Hey, I've got some coupons for that place! And with my dram ThermaWave still missing its dram 47-prong bedistor board, I could sure use a warm meal... Computer, home in on the Bugeye navigational beacon. LOG OFF.

DRAM ANDROID: Your move, you pus-filled crevice in the hide of a

28 BICUSPIDOR-90919, 12:66 GST, NEAR DEEP- SPACE ASTEROID JW9Y4-3M4-4

REX: LOG ON. Just leaving Bugeye's Spacelane Foodstop. Man, after a month of cold mac and cheese, does this taco ever smell good!

DRAM ANDROID: I have brought a bottle of your favorite beer, your besottedness...

COMPUTER: Sixty-seconds to hyperjump.

DRAM ANDROID: ...although I can't fathom why anyone, even a slime-sucking buffoon like yourself, would want to fill his system with the vile by-products of the death of a quintillion yeast cells.

REX: Oh, go stick your head in the nuclear pile.

COMPUTER: Forty-five seconds to hyperjump.

DRAM ANDROID: One would think you'd want to protect your two or three remaining active brain cells, you evolution-bypassed simian.

REX: Will you shut up and let me...

COMPUTER: Thirty seconds to hyperjump.

REX: ...enjoy this taco, you Insufferable Twit?

INSUFFERABLE TWIT: You degenerated puddle of cow mucous. You pig-like slab of toad feces. You...

REX: I said to shut the hell up!

INSUFFERABLE TWIT: ...mold-covered stack of dismembered squid parts! You repulsive heap of...

COMPUTER: Fifteen seconds to hyperjump.

INSUFFERABLE TWIT: ...fly-infested horse droppings! You undigested remains of...

REX: That does it! You're scrap metal, Flitface!

FLITFACE: ...rotting carrion. You...

III CRASHING NOISE III

REX: Take that, robo-shmuck!

FLITFACE: ...parasite-riddled...

III CRASHING NOISE III

REX: And that!

FLITFACE: ...parasite-riddled...

III CRASHING NOISE III

REX: And that!

FLITFACE: ...corpse...

COMPUTER: Hyperjump successful. Now in the Terra Androgena...

III CRASHING NOISE III

REX: And that!

COMPUTER: ...system. Cloaked planetary mass detected. Assuming orbit.

III CRASHING NOISE III

REX: What a mess! Bits of robotoid, all over my engine room! I guess I'll just dump it all into the furnace... Wow, I never realized these robo-butlers had so many wires! And chips! And — Hey! Lookie here! A 47-prong bedistor board! I can finally fix the dram

ThermaWave! First things first, though. Where's that taco? Cross the lips and past the gums, look out tummy, here it comes!

III CHEWING NOISE, HUMAN III

REX: Yuk! Bleah! This is the worst taco I've ever tasted! I'm gonna chuck it right in the furnace. So much for a warm meal. Say... Now that I've got this bedistor board, let me get a turkey out of the deep freeze and pop it in the ThermaWave! Hmmm... I know I've got a frozen turkey in here somewhere... Yuk, check out this burger! How many years has this been hiding back there? I guess I'll leave it — it might be breeding some wonderful new antibiotics. Ah, here's the frozen bird! Now, pop in the bedistor board... put in the turkey... ThermaWave on... Bingo! Yummy, juicy turkey breast, just five minutes away! Hey, Computer! How long till the hyperjump?

COMPUTER: Hyperjump was at 12:67:85. Approximately 80 seconds ago.

REX: We already jumped! Where are we?

COMPUTER: Now orbiting Terra Androgena. Planet cloaked, but otherwise all signs are normal.

REX: Hmmm. That was easy. I wonder why no one else reported finding it. Maybe none of them made it back... Well anyway, I should be able to see the cloaking field from this close. Then I can send a probe down to take a look.

COMPUTER: Proximity alert - large mass approaching.

REX: Not now computer! Holy optical illusion! I was right! There it is... Okay, probe, do your stuff...

III SMALL ROCKET MOTOR IGNITION III

REX: Now let's get a little closer...

III LARGE EXPLOSION III

COMPUTER: <cough> <pzzt> <sputter> <click>

III WARNING KLAXON III

REX: What the heck was that!?!

III * * PANIC TRAP: EMP CAUSING AUTOLOG SHUTDOWN * * III

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