

How Many Clones ... ?

An adventure for Paranoia XP

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Introduction

Alpha Complex is a complicated place to live in, especially if you are a high-clearance citizen. At lower security clearances, all that most clones have to worry about is where their next dietary supplement is coming from and who is going to turn them in to IntSec. However, as one climbs the greasy pole of security clearances, the spectrum of those who are willing to tread hard on you seems to grow almost exponentially. It's almost enough to drive a clone mad. Or to commit heinous acts of treason.

In this case, it is the latter. Citizen Gen-B-CLN has been constructing a traitorous plan of enough proportions that his rivals have decided to pay him more than the usual amount of attention. The plan has involved an alliance with Clone Arrangers' secret society in order to provide him with enough good clones to ensure his success. This was its weakness. Gen-B's rivals fed this information to IntSec, who mounted a raid on the Clone Arrangers' secret lab. Gen-B managed to escape the raid, and has gone to ground. The Computer, however, is worried enough to assign more manpower to Gen-B's case. And, on the grounds that it takes a traitor to catch a traitor, The Computer has decided to use Gen-B's illicit stock of clones to track down their prime and bring him to justice. The clones have all been programmed with the last back-up of Gen-B's MemoMax data in the vain hope that they will pool their knowledge and use it in their mission.

Riiiiight. It only gets more complicated from here on in ...

In order to run "How Many Clones ... ?" all that is needed is a copy of the Paranoia XP rulebook. The Paranoia Flashbacks anthology is also recommended for the (brief) entry it has on the Clone Arrangers. A copy of Extreme Paranoia will come in handy, as will copies of The Traitor's Manual, The Mutant Experience and Service Service. Can I have my bonus ration of B3 now?

An Unusual Briefing

All the players are brought into the game as newly-decanted clones. The referee should read or paraphrase the following text for them:

You wake up with a feeling of happiness and peace, as if you have just experienced a warm and pleasant dream. As you open your eyes, the world remains out of focus. It is as if you are looking at everything through a pair of blood-red jellies. Strange lights flicker around you, while muffled sounds reverberate through your ears. A shadowy form peers at you through the red haze and you hear a voice say, "Right. Let's get this vat slime out of the tubes. I've got work to do."

There is a sudden feeling of fluid draining away from around you. Your body cries out in pain as the need to breathe assaults your lungs and a crushing force holds you in its fist. You fall forward onto a cold, metal floor. Next to you, you can see identical, naked figures squirming and gasping for breath like primitive organisms. They all look exactly like you. Then the realisation hits like a bad MemoMax transfer – they are you. And you must be in deep trouble.

The PCs are helped to their feet by yellow-suited Tech Services staff. In front of them is an INDIGO-clearance IntSec officer with a squad of armed GREEN-level goons.

“Greetings citizen Gen-B-CLN. Yes. That’s all of you. I am your briefing officer, Ivan-I-VIS. And you are in an unusual circumstance. It seems that your prime, Gen-B-CLN-2 has been implicated in an act of high treason against Friend Computer. The penalty for this act is termination. Unfortunately, traitor Gen-B-CLN-2 has gone into hiding and we have not been able to determine his whereabouts. Also, we are not able to access his MemoMax recordings for evidence about his crimes.

“Thus, The Computer, in its infinite wisdom, has taken the unusual step of activating you – his remaining clones. The Computer believes that you hold the best chance of tracking down this traitor and bringing him to justice. Of course, only the psych template that is proven loyal will be allowed to continue. The rest of you will be scrubbed and reprogrammed. This should provide sufficient incentive for you to prove your loyalty. Shouldn’t it?

“Of course, I am of the opinion that we should just terminate you immediately. And I will, given an excuse. Your clothes and effects are over there. Now get dressed.”

Ivan-I sneers at the PCs as they dress themselves in their identical jumpsuits. There are enough sets of clothing and equipment for each of the clones. Of course, the players can take the opportunity to get themselves some extra equipment at the expense of themselves. If this is noticed (assume the cloning chamber is Tension 15), then they will get an object lesson in equality from the IntSec goons.

Each player gets the following items of equipment:

- Laser pistol body (no barrel).
- BLUE jumpsuit.
- BLUE reflec armour.
- Series 1300 PDC (Note: the PDC has been altered to act as a surveillance device for IntSec. It will require a successful Software roll to discover this and a successful Hardware roll to disable the surveillance devices.)
- A ME Card with 5,000cr on it (not each, though).

Once they are dressed, Ivan-I addresses them again.

“You may have noticed that there are some holes in your memories. This is because The Computer has taken the precaution of editing your MemoMax downloads to remove some obviously disloyal impulses. Don’t worry, we have given you the information you need to do your job. The address books of your PDCs contain the contact details for those we believe are involved in your prime’s treachery. Now, go. And remember what I said about who gets to survive.”

And with that, the PCs are left on their own.

If any of them ask for additional equipment or information, Ivan-I will have the offender beaten into submission while reminding the others that they are BLUE-level clones and therefore expected to be more resourceful than mere RED Troubleshooters. If they can’t work something out, then maybe he should just scrub the mission and have them terminated here and now. Hmm?

Home Cloning is Killing Something or Other

Usually, clone families only have one active member at a time. This clone (known as the prime) is usually the lowest number clone, although there are exceptions to this rule. And there is a very good reason for this rule.

Currently, IntSec have managed to capture a dozen illegal clones of Gen-B-CLN. Their plan is to use the clones to track down the current Gen-B-CLN prime. Any clones that are eliminated during the course of the investigation will be replaced from the stock that they have. However, there are problems with this. Normally a MemoMax download is only passed to one clone at a time. With more than one clone active at a time, any death of a Gen-B clone will cause the MemoMax files to be downloaded to *all* the Gen-B clones, whether they are in the tanks or not. Thus, all the knowledge of the recently deceased clone is passed on.

In the game, this has the effect that all the players will have to update their character sheets with any new specialties that have been developed by the dead clone during the game. Also, the referee should feel free to tell the clones exactly what treason their brother has been up to. If this gets too complicated, the referee is perfectly entitled to make it up. After all, who says that MemoMax recordings are perfect?

Also, in the event that their prime, Gen-B-CLN-2, is killed, then his knowledge will be downloaded into the PCs’ brains, effectively making them traitors as well. And IntSec will know if this happens as they are monitoring the Tech Service MemoMax records for the Gen-B clones.

In any event, a download into a conscious clone will leave them Snafued for d20 – Management rounds (for a minimum time of one round). This should be enough time for an enemy to take advantage of their helplessness.

Finally, there will be certain social problems. Decent citizens of Alpha Complex will find it unusual that more than one clone in a family is active, even if the clone in question is of higher clearance than themselves. Not-so-decent citizens and the downright traitorous will be suspicious and resort to various methods to protect

themselves from any threats, whether they are real or imagined. In Paranoia, these methods are usually in the nature of “Shoot first, don’t ask questions.”

The Mission

At this point, the PCs are on their own. They have a list of contacts, some very basic equipment and (hopefully) an incentive to commit mayhem against each other. A brief description of each of the contacts is given, along with some events that may (or may not) take place. The referee should use these as the basis for the adventure.

The list of contacts that the players have is as follows:

- Caroline-Y-RTS (a clone in Tech Services)
- Clara-B-VVM (a clone in CPU)
- Doug-G-QPS (a clone in Power Services)
- Isaac-I-RHP (a clone in HPD&MC)
- Michael-SRD (a clone in R&D)

Making Contacts

At some point during the game, the PCs may decide to contact one of their secret society contacts or try and requisition equipment – either legitimately or through the IR Market. If the PCs try to contact their secret societies, then consult the relevant section. If they try to requisition extra equipment, then the referee is advised to indulge in the time-honoured tradition of “winging it”.

The events described assume that only one clone at a time makes the contact. If more than one clone turns up to an appointment, then the contact will be suspicious and act accordingly.

Caroline-Y-RTS

Read the following to the players if they ask for information about Caroline-Y:

Ah yes. Caroline-Y. The memory comes flooding back to you. You remember her as one of your underlings from Tech Services – a very good administrator and an even better friend. You have shared some good times together. Yes. She would definitely help.

Caroline-Y works at the R&D firm of “Does My Boom Look Big In This?”, the weapons effectiveness assessment firm that Gen-B-CLN was managing. If anyone contacts her over the PDC, then she will sound tearful and upset, while asking the PC to meet her at work.

Caroline-Y can be found hiding in a cupboard in her office, crying amidst a pile of empty boxes of Gynochoc Fun Bars. She is under some horrendous strain as she is pregnant with the child of Gen-B. The pregnancy is just starting to show, and her natural hormones are flooding her system and making her moody. This is a very frightening experience for a clone. In an attempt to hide her problem, Caroline-Y has

taken to coming in to work at odd hours and wearing large clothing to mask her appearance.

She addresses the PC who meets her:

“There you are! Where have you been? Do you know what has been happening to me? Do you even care? Well, I’m sure you don’t. I’m fat. And ugly. And I feel like I want to kill you. Or myself. Maybe I’ll do both!”

At this point, Caroline-Y pulls a laser and opens fire.

Sidebar: Caroline-Y-RTS (Mistreated assistant and ex-lover)

Management 14, Stealth 06, Violence 06 (Agility 05), Hardware 10,
Software 03, Wetware 05

Weapons: Yellow laser pistol

Armour: None

Caroline-Y does not know anything helpful, except that Gen-B promised that she would “stand next to him in the new world”.

Clara-B-VVM

Read the following to the players if they ask for information about Clara-B:

Ah yes. Clara-B. The memory comes flooding back to you. You remember her as one of your CPU contacts during your time in Tech Services. She was always happy to help you out in return for a favour. Hopefully she will still be just as willing to help.

Clara-B works in a CPU Program Group under the High Programmer Justin-U-FVS. If anyone contacts her over the PDC then she will tell them to meet her after work in her quarters, just as they arranged.

Clara-B’s is indeed waiting, just as she promised. She also has two combots waiting with her. Before the PC has any chance to protest, Clara-B addresses him:

“Well, here you are again. I told you that if you wanted the chip, you had to do me a favour. Now you’re back, I hope that you have the merchandise you promised. If not ... Well, let’s just say that IntSec might be interested in the evidence I have. Or maybe the Frankenstein Destroyers?”

Then she holds up a data card, dangling it tantalisingly in front of the PC.

If the PC makes any sudden moves, then Clara-B will activate the combots and order them to attack.

Sidebar: Clara-B-VVM (CPU Programmer and blackmailer)

Management 12, Stealth 08, Violence 10 (Projectile Weapons 14),
Hardware 06, Software 12, Wetware 04
Weapons: Needle Gun
Armour: Concealed Kevlar (I2)

Combots (Robotic thugs)

Violence 10 (energy Weapons 14, Hand Weapons 14)
Weapons: Blaster, Truncheon
Armour: A4

Should the PC actually manage to get hold of the data card, it contains an encrypted video file of Gen-B entering a restricted access area. Unfortunately, the exact location cannot be determined. Clara-B will not help any further.

Doug-G-QPS

Read the following to the players if they ask for information about Doug-G:

Ah yes. Doug-G. The memory comes flooding back to you. You remember him as one of your co-conspirators in Pro-Tech. Maybe he knows something that will lead you to your prime.

Doug-G does not answer his PDC. However, his current location can be traced from its signal. He is currently in a service corridor at a nearby TUBE station.

When the PC catches up with him, there is already a 116 Emergency Services crew there, along with an IntSec BLUE-clearance investigation team. A shrouded corpse is lying at the side of the service corridor. This was Doug-G. If the PC sneaks away now, then they will not be noticed in the crowds. On the other hand, if the PC decides to get involved then they will be in a world of hurt.

As the 116 crew takes Doug-G's body away, a successful Stealth roll will allow the PC to notice something small and shiny (an Illuminati secret society badge) falling from the body. If the PC goes to pick it up, or otherwise interfere in the scene, they will draw the attention of the IntSec BLUES.

“Excuse me citizen, but is this any business of yours? What makes you think that this is any of your concern? May I see your ME card? Now, why do I recognise you?”

IntSec have put out an alert on Gen-B-CLN to their operatives. The alert instructs IntSec personnel to report Gen-B's whereabouts, but not to interfere. The two IntSec officers, Chute-B and Bang-B, have decided that they might get a commendation if they bring in Gen-B for questioning. Failing that, they might get some blackmail information on their superiors.

Sidebar: Chute-B and Bang-B (IntSec BLUES and troublemakers)

Management 10 (Interrogation 14, Intimidation 14), Stealth 08, Violence 12 (Energy Weapons 16), Hardware 06, Software 06, Wetware 06 (Suggestion 10)

Weapons: Blue laser pistols, truncheons
Armour: ArmorAll

If the pair manage to bring the PC in, he will be subjected to harrowing interrogation for a number of hours, until word gets back to Ivan-I. Ivan-I will not be pleased, but will arrange for the PC to be released and given a scathing lecture. If the PC attacks the BLUEs, he (and the others) will be hunted down for treason.

Isaac-I-RHP

Read the following to the players if they ask for information about Isaac-I:

Ah yes. Isaac-I. The memory comes flooding back to you. You remember him from when he was a junior clerk in HPD&MC. You never got on with him. He always seemed to have something against you. Maybe you'd be better off not talking to him.

If anybody talks to Isaac-I, he is very friendly. Maybe too friendly. Of course he'll meet up with you. Always glad to do a favour for an old friend. Just don't talk about it over an unscrambled line. Somebody might be listening.

Isaac-I will meet up wherever he is asked to. When he arrives, he is on his own and carrying no obvious weapons apart from a small black sphere. He makes small talk for a while, then launches into the following statement:

"Now, I presume you have a reason to talk to me. And that reason would be Project Mindstar, I suppose. Well, I have a message for you from Primus. He says that it is too late to make amends and you will have to be disappeared. Goodbye."

At this point, Isaac-I holds out the sphere, which dissolves into a thick-flowing black goo. Alternatively, if the sphere has been taken away from him, it will start to dissolve anyway – possibly out of sight of the PC.

Sidebar: Isaac-I-RHP (Illuminatus and assassin)

Management 14 (Command Nanotech Assassin 18), Stealth 08, Violence 10 (Agility 14), Hardware 06, Software 07, Wetware 06

Weapons: Indigo laser pistol, nanotech disassembler goo (Violence 10, does one wound step per turn it is in contact with target)
Armour: INDIGO reflex

The goo is a nanotech disassembler colony. It is controlled by a cybernetic implant in Isaac-I's brain. There are two ways of stopping it: either by using an area effect weapon with sufficient firepower to totally sterilise the area, or by eliminating Isaac-

I's control. If this happens, the goo will continue to obey the last orders it was given; probably with horrible consequences. Every turn that the goo is in contact with something it has been ordered to destroy, it will do one step of damage, beginning with Snafued and working its way up to Vapourised.

If Isaac-I is captured, he will fall dead due to a post-hypnotic command that has been implanted into his subconscious.

Michael-SRD

Read the following to the players if they ask for information about Michael-SRD:

Michael-SRD? Never heard of him. Besides, what good would a mere INFRARED be to you? There's probably no point in going to see him.

Michael-SRD is actually a cover identity set up by Gen-B in case he had to make a run for it. However, the PCs do not know this. If anybody goes to visit Michael-SRD at his registered quarters (an INFRARED barracks near the sector's Bright Happy Complex fission reactor), they will find that his bunk is unusually neat. Indeed, the other INFRAREDS in the dormitory have never even seen him.

If the PCs decide to search the dormitory, they will find a stash of MemoMax recording devices and some brainscrub chemicals (M4T treason code) concealed in a space beneath Michael's bunk. Unfortunately, the MemoMax devices are blank.

Secret Societies

If the PCs try to contact any of their secret societies for help, they will be told to give their current location and wait to be contacted. If the PCs are stupid enough to do this, they will be attacked by a secret society hit squad. The exact composition of the hit squad is up to the referee. However, their orders are to leave nobody alive.

The Deus Ex Computer

After the PCs have been given enough of a runaround and are starting to show signs of stress and homicidal mania, the referee should spring the final scene on them.

As the PCs are wondering where to go next, particularly now that their last lead has just proved to be a bust, a PDC belonging to one of the group starts to ring. The call is untraceable. If anyone picks up the call, they get the following message.

“Hello. It's me. Or, rather, it's you. Gen-B-CLN-2. I know that IntSec have co-opted you, but I'm giving you a chance to help me. I won't betray you – after all, I need you as much as you me. If anything, I've got more to lose by betraying you than you have to gain by betraying me. But, if you want to join me, I can answer all your questions. I'm sending a download giving my location. Why don't you come and see me?”

If the PCs pass on the download to IntSec, then go straight to “Wipe 'Em All and Let The Computer Sort Them Out” in the Epilogue. Otherwise, keep going.

The location given by Gen-B is a service junction in the Tranz between Alpha Complex and the Underplex. It is a crossroads between three service corridors, and it is filled with steam pipes, electrical cables and data ducts. Gen-B is waiting there for his clones. He asks them to follow him, and leads the group to an abandoned terminal room. In the centre of the room is a large piece of machinery consisting of a number of chairs with MemoMax helmets attached to them. These are attached to a massive data processing unit, which has cables that extend into the ceiling above.

Gen-B turns to his clones.

“Why don’t you sit down, and I’ll plug you in?”

If any of the PCs resist, Gen-B is not unprepared. As well as being armed and armoured, he has also placed voice-controlled blasters in the corners of the room. He can use these to strike down any clones who disobey him. Of course, because they are voice-controlled, the clones can also use the blasters to shoot anybody who they want to.

Sidebar: Gen-B-CLN-2 (Arch-traitor and cause of all the trouble)

Stats are as the PCs, except he has the mutation Machine Empathy and has a stun gun, a tangler and a neurowhip.

If the PCs agree, Gen-B connects them to the helmets, then joins them in the machinery.

“To the future, brothers.”

Then, there is a burst of white light and the PCs pass out. At this point, the referee should go straight to “Wipe ‘Em All and Let The Computer Sort Them Out” in the Epilogue.

If Gen-B-CLN-2 is killed during this scene, his memories are downloaded into the PCs. The shock causes them all to pass out. At this point, the referee should go to “I’ll Have You Yet!” in the Epilogue section.

If the PCs manage to subdue Gen-B-CLN-2 and get him back to IntSec, then the referee should go to “You Expected Gratitude?” in the Epilogue section

Epilogue

There are three possible endings, depending on how the PCs do.

You Expected Gratitude?

This ending should be run of the PCs get back to IntSec having captured Gen-B-CLN-2 alive.

The PCs are brought in for debriefing by Ivan-I. The following should be read to the players:

Ivan-I looks at you.

“Well, you appear to have done well. It certainly shows that The Computer’s faith in you has been rewarded. Now, all we have to do is sort out which one of you gets to survive.”

The PCs should be allowed enough time to incriminate each other, then:

Just as things are starting to get interesting, Gen-B-CLN-2 speaks up.

“If I may be permitted, I think that a terrible mistake has been made. I am a victim of injustice committed by one of these clones. I don’t know which one, but I am sure that there is evidence that will prove me right. However, I appeal to Friend Computer. He knows that I am innocent, and that the best course is to eliminate these clones. While only one of them is the traitor, only a traitor would refuse to lay down his life for Alpha Complex.”

There is a pause. Ivan-I opens his mouth as if to say something, but is stopped as the voice of The Computer emanates from a nearby terminal.

“Citizen Gen-B-CLN-2 is perfectly right. Citizen Ivan-I-VIS, I hereby order you to terminate all the Gen-B-CLN clones except for citizen Gen-B-CLN-2. The rest are non-citizens with no rights.”

Ivan-I smiles at his goons.

“Well, men. You have your orders.”

I’ll Have You Yet!

This ending should be run if the PCs kill Gen-B-CLN-2 and receive his memories.

You come to in an IntSec debriefing room. You, and your clone brothers, are strapped into a battery of monitoring equipment. Your heads are full of strange voices and new ideas. If only you could concentrate.

The voice of Ivan-I breaks into your train of thought.

“Well, you managed to stop Gen-B-CLN-2, but you have, unfortunately, been contaminated by his memories. I am afraid that we will have to get them out of you. Still, given that I have so many clones and all of them illegal clones, I shall have plenty of time to find out what I need to do. Of course, you could confess now, but that would ruin my day.”

The PCs should be given one last chance to get themselves out of trouble. However, as they cannot give Ivan-I the information he wants (they are still suffering from

download trauma, as well as the effects of various drugs), he will insist on conducting the interrogations.

Ivan-I shrugs.

“Well, it looks like my afternoon will not be wasted after all.”

Then the screaming starts.

Wipe ‘Em All and Let The Computer Sort Them Out

This ending should be run if the PCs fail to capture Gen-B-CLN-2.

The PCs are brought in for debriefing by Ivan-I. The following should be read to the players:

Ivan-I looks at you.

“Well. You are the most pathetic clones that have ever had the misfortune to be decanted. You have failed to bring me Gen-B-CLN-2, and you know what that means.”

At this point, the PCs should be given an opportunity to shout themselves hoarse.

Ivan-I continues.

“And that merely proves my point. You are all back-stabbing, low-bandwidth vatslime. As none of you are worthwhile keeping, it would be best if you were all scrubbed.”

He turns towards the technicians.

“Wipe them.”

As the players’ jaws hit the floor, read the following to them:

You wake up with a feeling of happiness and peace, as if you have just experienced a warm and pleasant dream. As you open your eyes, the world remains out of focus. It is as if you are looking at everything through a pair of blood-red jellies. Strange lights flicker around you, while muffled sounds reverberate through your ears. A shadowy form peers at you through the red haze and you hear a voice say, “Right. Let’s get this vatslime out of the tubes. I’ve got work to do.”

What Do You Mean: “They Succeeded”?

It is entirely possible that the PCs may succeed at this adventure, or that you (the referee) may be feeling kind towards them. In this case, the deed is its own punishment and you will have to make something up. However, bear in mind, The Computer will only let one template survive. Maybe they should settle it like

gentleclones? How about a guest appearance on “Bake The Traitor”? Gladiatorial combat? Ro-sham-bo? It’s up to you.

So What Was The Plan?

Gen-B’s plan? Yes. That is a loose end, and deliberately so. The PCs have no idea as to what Gen-B is up to, and neither do IntSec. Also, Gen-B’s plans have absolutely nothing to do with what is going on with the various contacts. The fact that there is no information at all should help engender the proper attitude of confusion, fear and paranoia in the players.

That’s Paranoid.

However, should the referee really need some logic behind the scenario, they are encouraged to develop their own ideas as to what has been going on.

PC

PC. That’s right. There is only one PC in this adventure, but there are a lot of him.

Gen-B-CLN 3 (4, 5, 6 and so on ...)

Illegal clones of traitorous scientist.

Service Firm: R&D

Service Firm Type: Weapon Effectiveness Assessors

Security Clearance: BLUE

Tics: Varies from clone to clone.

Action Skills & Specialties

Management 08

 Bootlicking 12

 Interrogation 12

 Moxie 12

 Hygiene 01

 Oratory 01

 Blame Another For Your Failed Experiments 14

 Projectile Weapons 10

Stealth 08

 High Alert 12

 Security Systems 12

 Shadowing 01

 Surveillance 12

Violence 06

 Energy Weapons 10

 Agility 10

 Fine Manipulation 01

 Run Away Real Fast 12

Knowledge Skills & Specialties

Hardware 08

Mechanical Engineering 12
Electronic Engineering 14
Habitat Engineering 01
Vehicle Ops & Maintenance 01

Software 04
Wetware 04

Mutation: Different for each clone.

Society: Frankenstein Destroyers (7th Degree), Illuminati (12th Degree), Pro-Tech (5th Degree)

Secret Skills: Cyborging 08, Demolition 10, Old Reckoning Cultures 08, Programming 09, Toolmaking 12

Background: You have managed to rise through the ranks of Alpha complex by dint of hard work, professed loyalty and not a little graft. But hasn't everybody? However, you have managed to work yourself into a position of power in the R&D hierarchy. This is your chance to take control and seize the reins of destiny. If only you could remember exactly what is going on. It seems that you have some nagging holes in your memories and a feeling that everything is not as it should be. Still, it can't be that bad, can it?