

Close Shave, cont. from p. 41

Redfield nodded glumly, but said nothing. There followed a moment of heavy silence during which the two stared solemnly at each other; then, shrugging and heaving a deep sigh, Breckenridge rose slowly to his feet, a grim little smile tugging at the corners of his mouth. "Not that I'm complaining, of course," he said. "It's no challenge at all tackling a simple problem. What do you say to a look at the scene of the crime, Inspector?"

They crossed the city in a squad car driven by an expressionless officer, no one speaking. The Holbein Project was located in an area where bleak industrial warehouses were gradually encroaching on a neighborhood of considerably bleaker slum apartments. It consisted of a large complex of low square buildings encircled by a tall barbed wire fence. The car was stopped at the entrance gate by a uniformed guard who checked Redfield's credentials, then waved the driver on. Moments later, Redfield and Breckenridge were mounting the steps to a door marked PRIVATE in bold black letters.

They went inside, passed through a short corridor and opened another door, emerging in an expensively furnished living room. Immediately Breckenridge began pacing around the room, hands clasped behind him, his dark eyes flashing briefly over everything in sight. He went to the back of the apartment, located the bathroom and studied it for a few moments, then returned to the living room. Dropping nonchalantly onto a sofa, he stretched, relaxed, took out a cigar and lighted it. He blew a series of undulant smoke rings, meditative wrinkles creasing his forehead.

"Well?" said Redfield.

"I'd like to be left here for a while," Breckenridge requested. "Do some snooping and thinking. We have absolutely *nothing* to go on, which means that this dilemma is virtually unsolvable by anyone at this point. There may be a clue or hint of some kind hidden here. Everything depends on finding one and getting some sort of tangible grip on the mystery."

Redfield met the mathematician's gaze. "Search all you want—but my men have been over this place from

Star Trek
Gaming
Material



Christopher Lloyd stars as Kruge in Paramount Pictures "Star Trek III: The Search for Spock."

The Klingon MIND SCANNER

by Mark Vaughan

The dreaded mind scanner is the most insidious of Klingon interrogation devices. It probes directly into the subject's mind, stores its findings on tape, and displays this information on a small viewing screen. The machine itself closely resembles a twentieth century Terran salon hair dryer connected to a support boom which links it to the recording/analyzing unit. The portable model is about the size of a twentieth century video cassette recorder. It includes a storage rack

in specially designed booths with restraining chairs to prevent the subject from escaping or damaging the device while in operation.

The mind scanner has ten levels of force. Each level has an effect ranging from low (one) to high (ten). Force one, for example, is capable of reading only surface thoughts whereas force ten could literally empty a subject's mind and leave him a mental vegetable.

Characters using the mind scanner must have at least a score of 10+ in

Game Mechanics—Klingon Mind Scanner

| Force Level | Effect (successful attempt) | Deception Chance |
|-------------|--|------------------|
| 1 | Records surface thoughts only | INT-25 |
| 2 | Records memory up to 1D10+3 hours | INT-50 |
| 3 | Records memory up to 1D10+3 days | INT-75 |
| 4 | Records memory up to 1D10+3 months | None |
| 5 | Records memory up to 1D10+3 years | None |
| 6 | Lowers subject's INT & skills by 2D10 | None |
| 7 | Lowers subject's INT & skills by 4D10 | None |
| 8 | Lowers subject's INT & skills by 6D10 | None |
| 9 | Lowers subject's INT & skills by 8D10 | None |
| 10 | Lowers subject's INT & skills by 10D10 | None |

with 20 recording tapes (each one can hold the entire memory capacity of a humanoid mind) and a hooded viewer for playback. Mind scanner units installed aboard ships are constructed

Interrogation/Psychology (if using Psychology as a prerequisite, the operator must have a skill matching the race of the subject) and Computer Operations. A successful Interroga-

Close Shave...

top to bottom trying to turn something up."

Breckenridge shrugged, examined his cigar absently, and looked vaguely humble.

Redfield flushed in spite of himself. Then, taking a pen and note pad out of his coat, he quickly wrote something, tore loose the sheet and put it on an end table. "My home phone," he said. "You can find out anything you need to know by calling me. I'm sure you'll be just brimming with questions around midnight. And don't worry about waking me—you'll be keeping me awake as it is." He turned and strode suddenly to the door, paused there and glanced back. "Also, good luck," he added.

Breckenridge smiled. "Never use it."

The sound of the door closing knocked ashes from the tip of his cigar.

Shortly after midnight, Inspector Redfield was awakened by the clamoring bell of his bedside telephone. Conditioned by long experience to such disturbances, he reacted automatically, dragging himself listlessly to a slumped sitting position, at the same time groping a sleep-numbered hand for the phone and pulling the receiver to his ear. He grunted an inarticulate greeting.

The voice on the other end was Breckenridge's. "Can you tell me—or find out—what time Holbein customarily got up in the morning?" he asked.

Redfield, squinting groggily in the darkness, sifted through his mind for the information, and it came to him after a moment. "Eight o'clock," he muttered.

"Can you be here by seven-thirty?"

"Guess so. Sure ... But what's going on? You onto something?"

"Yes, I think so." There was a sharp edge of enthusiasm in Breckenridge's voice. "But I can't really tell until morning," he continued, "so I'll see you then, Inspector. As for now, pleasant dreams ..."

And, abruptly, he hung up.

The mysterious call kept Redfield in a state of baffled insomnia for the rest of the night, his thoughts a whirl of erratic speculation. When the dawn came, finally, he rose with

Close Shave...

muted vigor, shaved hurriedly and dressed, and after fortifying himself with a cup of coffee drove directly to the Holbein Project. He admitted himself to the apartment without knocking. Breckenridge was dozing lightly on the sofa, several magazines strewn in a semi-circle on the floor before him.

"It's seven-thirty!" Redfield announced crisply.

The mathematician twitched, stirred, blinked his eyes open, and sat up straight with brisk precision. "Good morning, Inspector," he said, straightening his rumpled tie with a tug.

Redfield's reply was an inquisitive stare, emphasized by a skeptical frown. "Well, what have you got?" he asked impatiently.

"I'm not really sure, as I said. Also, I'm going to have to ask you to do something that will seem quite unusual before I commit myself. We'll begin right now, if you don't mind..."

Motioning the Inspector to follow, Breckenridge led him back into the bathroom, where two chairs had been placed side by side facing the sink.

They both sat.

Breckenridge said, "Now I want you to watch the medicine cabinet mirror with me, Inspector. We may be here for about an hour, but it's important that we watch closely. It may well be worth your while."

Redfield controlled his curiosity with no small effort and fixed his gaze intently on the mirror. Tempted as he was to ask for an explanation, he knew Breckenridge would speak when he had a mind to. So he managed patience. Even so, after the passage of forty uneventful minutes he was on the verge of erupting with questions.

And then something remarkable happened.

While both men watched, the tip of a straight razor materialized in mid-air a few inches from the medicine cabinet mirror. It made a sudden dipping motion, vanished, then appeared again. It ascended in a swift precise arc, disappearing a second time. Then it was gone.

Redfield rose suddenly and walked slowly into the living room. He sank onto the sofa, pale-faced, and looked up with a dazed expression at Breckenridge, who had followed him. The mathematician was

continued on p. 50

Mind Scanner...



Stephen Liska (left) as Torg and John Larroquette as Maltz in Paramount Pictures' *Star Trek III: The Search for Spock*.

tion/Psychology skill roll must be made for the mind scan itself and a Computer Operations skill roll is made to access the desired information from the machine. A complete scan takes five minutes of game time, and the operator may not perform any other actions while the device is in operation. Later, the operator may ask specific questions of the machine if he makes a successful Computer Operations roll for each question asked. The answers will vary depending on the question and the information picked up by the machine (Game-master's discretion).

The portable mind scanner has a power pack that provides it with 100 points of power. Each five minute scan costs a number of units of power equal to the force level used (a level one scan costs one power point, a level two scan costs two, and so on).

The lower force levels (1-5) are not intended for formal interrogation use. Medical personnel use these levels to help a (willing) subject recall a forgotten or subconsciously blocked memory pattern or the cause of some psychological disorder. The first three levels do not delve as deeply into the mind and may be deceived by a subject who is actively trying to "lie" to the machine if his/her INT score is successfully rolled. Then, any falsehoods the subject puts into his/her mind will be registered by the machine as fact. If this roll is unsuccessful, the subject's true memory patterns will be recorded.

Some races with psionic abilities

(notably Vulcans) have the ability to set up a mental shield which is capable of blocking the effects of the scanner. Such individuals have an automatic (100%) chance of deception and may tell the machine anything they want.

The higher force levels (6-10) of the mind scanner actually begin extracting knowledge from the memory itself. Each five minute scan will reduce a subject's INT and *each skill* he possesses by the die roll indicated for the force level used. The effect of this is permanent although skill points may be regained by retraining. A subject whose INT has been reduced to zero becomes a mental vegetable and is totally useless as a character.

Klingon players are advised to use good judgement when using higher mind scanner levels. Subjects reduced to mental vegetables will be useless (except for medical experimentation) for prisoner transfers, slave labor, psychological study, etc. Moreover, the average character does not possess sufficient information to warrant such a waste of valuable power and time. Even brilliant scientists or inventors should not be "brain drained." You may obtain all the knowledge he has learned up to that time, but he will not be able to produce anything more for the Empire's benefit.

Further research and development of the mind scanner since reference Stardate 2/0801.09 has led to a method of implanting suggestions in the subject's mind with a programmed pain response if the suggestion is not carried out. This technology is not unknown to Federation science. The late Dr. Adams of the Tantalus Penal Colony ("Dagger of the Mind") developed the neural neutralizer which had a very similar effect.

To place a suggestion in a subject's mind using the mind scanner, the operator must make a successful Interrogation/Psychology skill roll. Characters with implanted suggestions may fight them if a successful INT saving roll is made. If this roll succeeds, a saving roll vs. the END score must be made or the character in question will be incapacitated by pain spasms for one combat turn (10 seconds).



Star Trek is a trademark of Paramount Pictures Corporation used by FASA Corporation under exclusive license. Star Trek logos and ships used with the permission of FASA Corporation.