

CORPS ENTRY

Star Trek
Gaming Material

sticks, as could be expected, to everything. No matter how different two or more surfaces or compounds may be, wet or dry, Stick adheres to them. Not only that, it links to itself, forming chains of Stick with impossibly high bonding strengths. Like Slip, it can be broken down to a gummy film by heat in excess of 300°C, but is unaffected by cold and most radiation.

Manufactured by the same concern

or weakens, though it can be diluted. Even the solvent will not remove all traces of it, and spills may be permanently sticky.

It was once thought that in very tiny amounts Stick was useful in surgical closures, but experiments and bitter experience have demonstrated the horrifying effects of 'Stick toxicity syndrome.' Stick is absorbed into the tissues, replacing the need for sutures



that originally produced Slip, Stick is a manufacturing success. If confined while it reacts, it can bind materials as disparate as metal and uncured leather, or ceramics to soft plastic, producing a bond stronger than the materials it holds and probably longer-lived. For a time, Stick had great promise in the field of medical and surgical research, a field that still uses adhesives but not this one.

Stick is impossibly difficult to handle. It must be kept in tightly-sealed containers in suspension with a particular solvent to keep it from linking. It must be applied to the surfaces to be glued with no excess at all, for it cannot be fully wiped up even with solvent. Dry Stick is a nearly invisible grayish film that will instantly grip anything it comes in contact with—even liquids. The longer the contact, the tighter the bond, as the linked molecular chains of Stick permeate the structure of the objects it binds. The more permeable the substances, like cloth or flesh, the tighter and the stronger the bond. It never wears off

or plastomers, but its absorption never stops. It proceeds deeper into the tissues, closing off blood and lymph vessels and causing a ring of tissue around the closure to die. So-called Stick necrosis cannot be halted except by surgical removal of the affected areas—solvent being impractical for internal medical uses. If unchecked, Stick necrosis causes a long, painful, ultimately incurable syndrome often ending in death.

Possession of Stick, unless a manufacturing license has been issued, is a Federation crime requiring confiscation, detention, and rehabilitation. Furthermore, arrest for Stick possession has been held to constitute a right to personal-records access, allowing the apprehending agency to search the offenders's personal records for any names of people who may have been victimized, intentionally or not.



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Close Shave...

knowledge of physics would make it seem altogether less fanciful. Intrigued, I ventured further, 'What if the Holbein Project were concerned with effecting a contact between parallel worlds!' The thought was deliciously titillating. And then I noticed something that had eluded me. Written hastily across the cover of one of the magazines—a standard cover showing a spaceship landing on another planet—were the words DANGER OF THIS. I determined that the handwriting was Holbein's by checking it against some memo notes penned on the kitchen calendar. But what did it mean? I studied the illustration for a long time, I looked at the cover illustrations of the other magazines—then, after about twenty minutes, it occurred to me that the notated cover was different from the others in one subtle respect that had nothing to do with the illustrations themselves ..."

Breckenridge picked up the magazine in question and tossed it to Redfield, but the Inspector scarcely glanced at it before looking up helplessly.

"Look at the color," Breckenridge pointed out. "The printing is off-register. Each color slightly overlaps its boundary. It's something that happens frequently in printing—you've seen it before."

"Yes, but what does it mean?"

Breckenridge chuckled softly. "How ironic that it was a blurred picture that brought everything into focus for me! Like you, I asked myself, 'What can it mean?' I put myself in Holbein's place, imagined myself writing those words. I figured that the danger he referred to was a danger to the project. And so it was. Just suppose, Inspector, that the buildings here house machinery designed to harness enough energy to allow penetration into a parallel world, travel there. It would have to be done that way—by controlling and utilizing a vast amount of energy, an awesome amount of energy. But then, suppose too much energy was used during the initial experiment! Can you surmise what might happen?"

"Go on," Redfield murmured.

"The space-time continuum might be jolted slightly out of kilter, so to speak. There could occur what, for the sake of verbal convenience, we'll call a "dimensional collision," an overlapping of one of the dimen-

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THE RETURN OF THE KILLER B's

By Ed Naha

Has success spoiled science fiction filmmaking?

If the current crop of megabudget studio productions is any indication of the state of the genre, the answer seems to be yes. Major studio executives seem to have forgotten that, sometimes, less can add up to more and, in the wake of such big budgeted hits as *Star Wars*, *Close Encounters*, *Alien* and *E.T.*, have poured on the special effects but have skimped on plotting and, from a pure production standpoint, clear-thinking.

The past year or so have been disastrous for big budgeted science fiction and fantasy films. While an occasional hit, such as *Back to the Future* and *Cocoon*, has saved the studio-spawned genre items from a total slump, more often than not, the big boys in Hollywood have continued to approach sf, fantasy and horror in a determinedly half-assed way.

Universal poured \$50 million into the movie version of *Dune* and watched it arrive D.O.A. at theaters after half of the plot was excised from the final cut. *2010*,

although more modestly budgeted, was anything but the smash MGM was hoping for with the finished movie owing more to *Rocky Jones*, *Space Ranger* than the original Kubrick flick. *Goonies* managed to make *Santa Claus Conquers the Martian* seem like high art while movies such as *Weird Science*, *My Science Project* and *Real Genius* disappeared without a trace. *Baby* proved an expensive stillbirth for Disney studios as did *Return to Oz*. *The Black Cauldron* didn't exactly set box offices bubbling and *Lifeforce* showed anything but.

The list of recent films that were minimal successes or out and out flops is endless: *D.A.R.Y.L.*, *Red Sonja*, *Cat's Eye*, *The Bride of Nauseum*.

With major studios behind them, big name stars and directors bringing them to the screen and with budgets rivaling the gross national product of most Third World countries, why are these movies proving so lackluster?

Bad planning.

That's all, folks.

Really. Case in point. Twentieth Century-Fox's recent Christmas release,

Enemy Mine. Originally planned as a mid-range budgeted movie, the film has doubled its cost (now \$30 million plus) because of indecisiveness. The movie's original director Richard Loncraine was canned after several weeks of production. The movie was put on hold while a new director, Wolfgang Petersen, entered the picture; redesigning the story and the look. Nine million dollars were flushed before the cameras even started rolling on the new version. Even if the movie proves to be the *Citizen Kane* of science fiction, it's going to have to sell beaucoup tickets in order to turn a profit.

(This sense of confusion in the realm of megabuck fantasy is not a new wrinkle, by the by. The \$40 million *Star Trek-The Motion Picture* was filmed as the script was being written. Ditto the \$25 million plus *Krull*. Joe Dante was rushed into making *Explorers* while the script was being tinkered with and then had the movie taken away from him by the studio, Paramount, shortly before its release.)

As of this writing, the grand prize of