

PRELIMINARY REPORT

CODE NAME: OPERATION WET FEET

OCTO 20, 23

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PRELIMINARY REPORT

Operation Wet Feet


confidential 10.2

gcode[x]

OCTO SEVENTEEN, TWENTY TWENTY-THREE

Aquanaut Commander

T.S. Williams



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division of Prism Leisure Corporation, P.L.C.

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Manual written by Paul Mithra. Artwork by Brad Parker.

All characters are fictional. Any resemblance to persons,
living or dead, is purely coincidental.

Octo 17, 23

To: General W. H. Strathmore

Re: Operation Wet Feet

Fr: T.S. Williams

Gr: Confidential 10.2 gcode

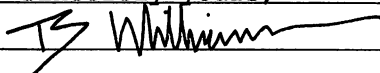
Dear Bill:

I've just about finished gathering the data on our project. You know, it keeps getting more confusing all the time. When you first let me in on this I never expected it to grow to this magnitude.

First, a few quick facts. I've got my first group ready for the dive. Mission is set for 0600 tomorrow. Can't determine completion at this time. Too little data.

Now, you and I know this is just a preliminary report. Lot of loose ends yet, but for the record I'm just going to take it from the top. From the first suspicions and reports. God knows I could do a more thorough treatise, but for field data it ain't half bad.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'T.S. Williams', with a stylized flourish at the end.

T.S. Williams,

Aquanaut Cmdr.

OPERATION WET FEET

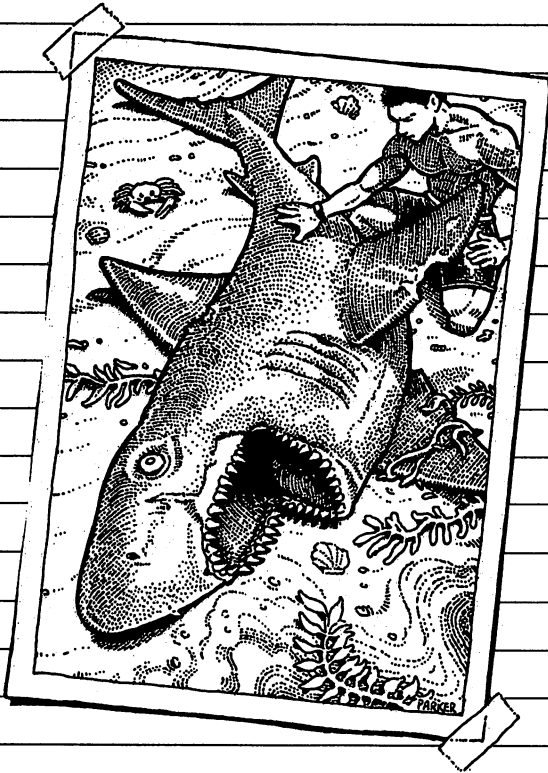
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Report of Octo 17, 23

The Aquanaut group has been brought together to research and act upon many unexplained events occurring in the waters off of the Yendor Isles located near the equator, about 300 miles off the coast of West Afrika. The islands themselves are sparsely inhabited by a native population consisting of both farmers and fishermen. Most of the activity has occurred in or around an area known as Shark Reef (so-named for a large fin-shaped rock). This reef is densely populated with white sharks, swordfish, jellyfish, and other smaller tropical fish. This, alone, is enough to merit notice due to the fact that the water in these areas is normally much too cold (the current flows up from the South Atlantic and brings with it the lower temperatures) to support tropical fish of these sort (though the swordfish is found in cooler waters).

Of the unusual findings in the area, we count

1. A dead shark on the south beach of the westernmost isle (13427 on our map). This shark was reported by a farmer, and we were able to do both a visual inspection and, later, a full autopsy. As



found 10.15
Note minor
fin damage,
little parasite
activity.

the shark has no natural enemies, and had suffered no more than the usual number of minor injuries, it was not immediately obvious what it had died of. Also, dead sharks rarely, if ever, are beached after they die since the others of his clan are more than ready to devour the helpless fish. The autopsy also found no normal cause of death. And as the shark was determined to be quite young, death of natural causes was ruled out. Upon inspection of the bodily fluids, however, we came up with high traces of iridium; a metal found primarily in meteorites.

2. World War II era mine. This was washed up on the shore of island 13425. We were able to defuse the mine and study it closely. And though made of identical structure and materials as those built back in the last century, this had obviously been recently constructed. The metal showed little sign of age, and the weapon was fully operational.

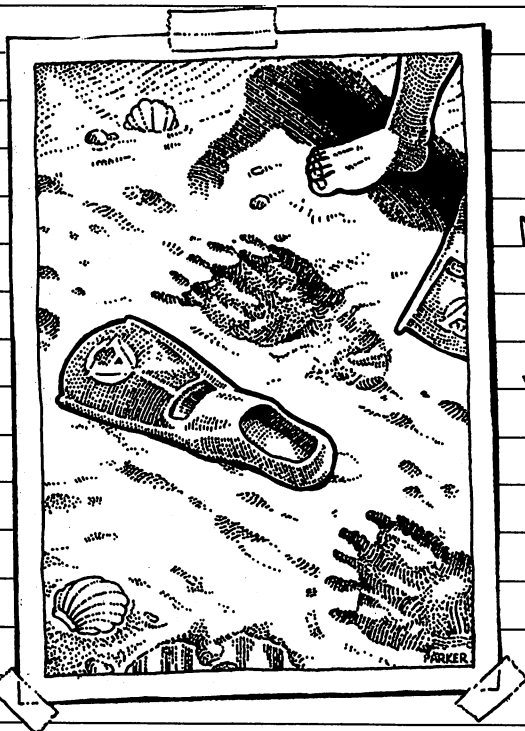
3. Footprints. Near the water by the mine discovery point, we found footprints. Unfortunately we were unable to make plaster casts in time before the water washed them away. Somewhat resembling a brown bear's print shape, the depth of the impres-



Safely
defused.

No metal
deterioration.

Fully
operational.



Note print
size vs. fin.
was heading
toward water.

sion would correspond to a body weight of approximately 250-280 pounds. There appeared to be a sticky residue at the base of the print, but again, we were only able to get a quick photo before they were washed away.

Additional information has been gathered secondhand from other sources. Though not considered necessarily reliable, we include these 'eye witness accounts' to complete our record, and will indeed follow up on the information if further credence is lent to either of these accounts.



Capt. Austin

1. A Captain H.J. Austin has seen a half-woman, half-fish creature swimming in the local waters. He claims that he has seen such a 'mermaid' on several occasions, most often accompanied by one or more porpoises. It is very likely that it was also a porpoise, perhaps with some seaweed in its mouth.

2. As you can see from the accompanying newspaper article, printed one month ago in a London tabloid, a crew on a fishing boat trolling near here, claim to have seen a large, orange, 'fish man' caught in their nets. Soon thereafter, the water began to 'boil' and the occupant 'burned' a



large hole in the net and escaped. Even though there is a consensus of opinion, the fact that they later threw the net overboard severely undermines their claim.

I have left the most devastating event for the last. The most unusual, and yet most inconceivable, report to date is that of a 'falling sun' plunging into the sea nearby. Our Crete-based radar did pick up a faint signal over the Mediterranean on the night in question, and continued to track the craft

while we scrambled 4 fighters out to investigate. We had all 5 on screen and were in constant radio contact with our men. But suddenly, when they were no more than a mile from the target, they completely dropped off the screen. Disappeared. We have found no trace of them on the ground and no reports from the area of any downed flights. It is as if they were disintegrated somehow. We tracked the faint blip to this location, when it dropped below our radar range. Our best guess is that it plunged into the sea. We have been making aerial observations in the area, but have yet to pick up an affirmative sighting.

As I said, we are set to send a squadron of our finest Aquanauts down in the morning. Don't know what we'll find, don't quite know what we're looking for. Say a prayer for us, Bill.

OPERATION WET FEET	
Confidential 10.2 gcodeA	
voicetrans report of Octo 18, 23	
0900	
Sent the squad down at 0600. Had readings on them for close to three hours. Appear to have entered some underground caves and the signals are very faint.	
1100	
I'm afraid we've lost at least some of the men. Or they've gone so far down we can't trace them.	
1300	
Definitely lost some. Have received their lifeforce zero readings.	
1500	
Believe we only have one signal left to hang on to. Hope he makes it back alive. Still don't quite know what we're up against.	
1800	
Looks like our lead man is coming up. Yes, he's come up. Looks badly injured, but alive. Got to go now. Will send details later.	

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Report of Octo 19, 23

Bill

What a night. Stayed up with Rick T. Had to throw together a quick operating table and do what we could for him. He wouldn't stop talking about what he saw down there. Must have known it was coming. We lost him early this morning. We're transcribing the disks now through the omniwriter.



Rick
Travers

Number one priority is to step up our operation.

What we know now leads me to believe that time is of the essence. Sorting out the facts from the delirium might take all day, but daybreak tomorrow we go for another assault. From what I can discern, we need a completely new approach. I mean, we were wiped out down there. We just can't send in a group and expect them to sneak by, the security is just too good. I'm afraid we're looking at sending in one man at a time.

We've got a good idea of the kind of supplies we need, and we can drop them off so our miniaturization circuitry won't be overloaded.

And we just got a fix on their ship.

Well, I've obviously got to slow down and back up a bit. I've heard so much during the night that it's hard for me not to jump the gun here and assume you know as much. Wish I knew even more, but I expect that will come.

Bottom line--we're regrouping. We've got a new set of Aquanauts flying out from the Afrikan coast. Our flagship is still anchored about four miles south-east of island 13425. Our target (at least our initial target) is 0° 20 minutes due south of the

island. And that initial target is, as far as we can tell, a partially submerged alien ship. We've got the aerial shot here of a shadow of something floating on the surface (though the object itself is invisible and heavily shielded by a super-magnetic field) and our analyses tell us it is not from this planet. It must have flown in, though it appears to be a sea-based vessel now. Not a hundred yards from this thing there are five or six visible cannisters that are showing a heavy radiation content. The cannisters are slowly floating away from the ship which may be to our advantage in the

Shadow
on ocean
bottom



long run. Now, comparing this thing's coordinates with the information Rick gave us last night, it appears that this thing has moved right over the top of the entrance to the labyrinth they discovered. And it doesn't look like we're going to be sneaking by this one; or want to.

I'll be sending some excerpts of the transcripts in just a bit, but the overall scenario is pretty grim. Once the squad made it past the ravenous sharks and swordfish (not to mention the unusually poisonous jellyfish), they discovered an underground labyrinth. They could negotiate it okay, but some of the passages were blocked so it was a good thing they had some dynamite with them. Seems the whole thing is loaded with deadly obstacles, both living and natural. And once Rick got through, it was even worse. Well, here's what seems to be the most important sections of the transcripts.

Transcripts Octo 18-19, 23. Rick Travers, Aquanaut.
Deceased Octo 19, 0527 hours

There's not much time. There's not much time.
Listen very carefully to what I say. Get this down.
Get this all down.

There's a labyrinth of death down there. It is filled with weird forms of life. Some of the

strangest things you ever saw. Couldn't be from this earth. Each one a deadly trap. Bring dynamite. Collect anything we may have dropped. Could help out. Shoot to kill or stay out of the way. Some of our guys emptied their tanks when they knew they were goners. Should be some extra air trapped in there still. You've got to make it all the way, but there isn't enough room for even one man in some places. The whole squad had no chance. Pretty soon we were shooting each other.

You've got to get further and further down. Shoot to kill. Surprise attack. Catch them asleep. Outstare the green one. Get out of there. Out of the mire and into the goop.

There's a city. A city of gold. A city below all this, buried for years and years. It's a prison. It's alien infested. Can't figure it, can't figure it. I was shooting monsters. They got Harley. I got out. I came back. Got to go down and find it all out. Got to get them. Shoot to kill or stay out of the way...

That's it. I'll give you more data on the plan of attack later today. We go in tomorrow.

OPERATION WET FEET

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Report 2 of Octo 19, 23

We are faced with danger we never anticipated when we began this investigation. We count 23 presumed dead, one verified death. Rick T. was killed by the application of a very small amount of poison to his skin. This poison does not appear to be of Earth origin and is absorbed through the skin. If he had been exposed to more than a fraction of an ounce he would have been killed immediately. There is no known antidote, and it does not appear that we can come up with one quickly enough to be of any use.

We have formulated a plan of action to deal with this menace as effectively as we know how. It would appear from Rick's comments that the city below the ocean was at one time on the surface. And that it is functioning as a prison of some kind. Taking this at face value, we've got to save a captive population from these aliens. We are obviously dealing with a very powerful enemy, and if the ship is any indication, they appear to be escalating the battle. If we don't stop them here, it will be much more difficult to contain a mobile attack force. Indeed, if we fail here, I would recommend the use of a deep-sunk fusion bomb to clear the area of all

life forms. This would have to be done in a timely fashion; I suggest that operations be commenced to ready this eventuality.

Granted, this would negatively impact the continent of Afrika, parts of the Mediterranean and Southwest Europe immediately, as well as upset the balance of the great Atlantic, but I believe no other remedy would be effective against our enemy. Even a severely damaged earth would be preferable to subjugation by a vicious alien race.

Here is our PLAN OF ACTION:

First, we will be sending only one man down at a time. He will carry with him his backpack blaster, enough superdeep oxymix to get to the next breatherstop, and miscellaneous tools. Though we can miniaturize certain components for backpack storage, only so many can be stored at one time. To this end, we will continue with drops of storage containers that can be blasted open by the divers to retrieve the materials inside necessary to continue the quest.

One severe drawback to this mission is the fact that we now have only one fully operable backpack/breather system. All others were lost with the first squad. Our workaround for this problem isn't optimum, but it is the best we can do.

We have on board our main ship, stationed about

3.5 miles (below line-of-sight horizon boundaries) east of the operation, a few solar gliders, and the experimental supercold-radon matter transporter. And though the powers of this particular machine are limited, we believe it will be absolutely essential for the success of this project.

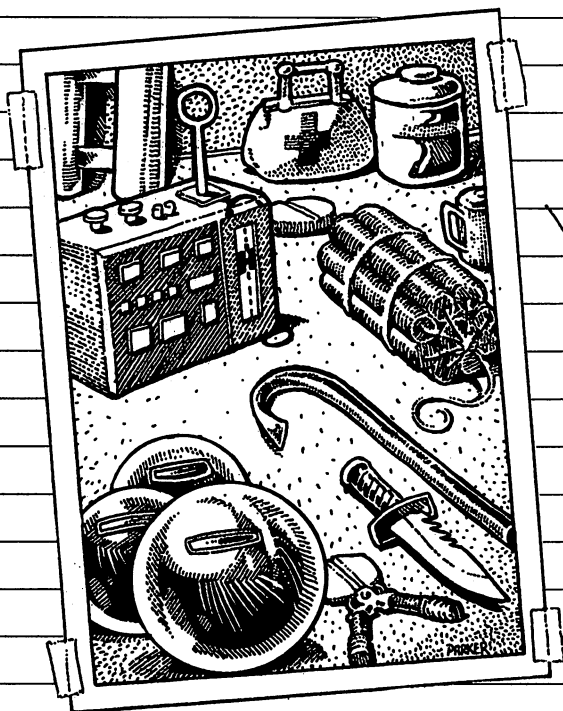
We plan to land our first man near the shore of the nearby island, hopefully escaping detection. From here he will be dropped off by high-speed boat at a safe distance from the alien ship. The first arm of the attack centers around destroying that ship. The main enemies during this phase are the jellyfish, swordfish, and sharks. Our weaponry should make mincemeat out of anything making trouble.

In the event of the death of our active Aquanaut during the Shark Reef stage, the closest solar glider will pull the body out of the water with an electronic/magnetic life rod, quickly exchange equipment with the next ready Aquanaut and launch him back into the water at the same coordinates. Both of our breatherstops will be submerged, so we can't refill the tanks in the solar gliders, but with luck we will save time that way.

In the last leg of the first arm of the attack, the diver will get a plasma bomb in order to blow up the ship. Attaching it to the ship might be tricky, and he may only get one chance, but hope-

fully a weak spot will be found. He will also have a transmitter for detonation. The plasma bomb blast should be somewhat contained, but the immediate area will definitely contain fatal shock waves. If he makes it through, that should open the labyrinth.

Here it gets a little trickier. We know we are up against some kind of alien guardians in this maze of rocks. Not only that, but the area is rather unstable, so we can expect some rockslides and the possibility of minor lava flow activity



Weapons
and
Supplies

(after all, we are getting pretty deep at this point). From what we could decipher from Rick's report, some of the things down there can withstand our blaster fire. The best thing is to try to avoid them. Most of them appear to be organic creatures, though they are definitely of alien origin. With enough firepower, brains, and perseverance we just could make it through. But in case we lose a man here, the replacement is much more delicate.

The plan is to bring in our ship to closer quarters (since their ship will have been destroyed) and closely monitor the Aquanaut's coordinates with the supercold-radon matter transporter so that in the event of a death, we should be able to swap his body with that of a man in the transport chamber up here. Although this machine hasn't been tested in an environment such as this, we feel it is our only hope. We are praying that some of the first squad cut down on the dangers and left us some useable oxymix down there. Because it's a long way to the city.

I'm afraid the data we have about the city itself is sketchy at best. It will also be the most difficult of the obstacles to pass. Our strategy is based on conjecture and interpretation. We found an electronic item in Rick T.'s pocket, though it was too late to ask about it. Our computer team has

determined that it is made of Earth materials and appears to be some type of interpreter. We are now trying to disassemble the code in hopes of discovering more information about the city and its defenses.

Our hope is that at least one of our Aquanauts makes it into the city. There he will have to defend himself and collect as much information he can. We will continue to use the transporter to keep going. Hopefully, the captive population can be found and freed, perhaps aiding in the overthrow of the Alien rulers themselves. There has to be a way to penetrate the computer network to discover more information. Our lack of information will be our downfall. From what we can ascertain, the enemy is heavily armed. One of our strategies is to use their own weapons against them.

We are using the last remnants of our Aquanaut force. May it be enough for our success. I look forward to writing the post-operation report, if you know what I mean.

We must conserve our energy use in order to power the supercold-radon matter transporter adequately. To that end, we are entering a communications blackout period.

Bill, pray for our success. Pray hard.



FUNERAL REPORT

Name: Richard John Travers

DOB: 1990

Cause of Death: Poisoning

Burial At Sea, 0800, Octo 19, 23

Duties performed by Cmdr. T.S. Williams

As with all of our Aquanaut force, Richard John Travers is survived by no living relatives.



SECRET

VEL 10.2