

B.5 Down To Earth



Puzzle by: Lachlan Patrick
Difficulty: Hard

cisra Puzzle Competition 2007
<http://puzzle.cisra.com.au>

Having used Google Asteroid Maps to track Dr Glass to his lair – a mile-wide fused shell of silica floating within the asteroid field formerly known as Earth – you wonder nervously if any of the Hrgg’ndz’n destructo-droids are still active, and irrationally reduce your stereo’s volume just in case.

You land the ship, don your “2001: A Space Odyssey” Collector’s Edition space suit, and soon cut a hole in the glassy crust, gasping as your lamp reveals that the air-filled interior holds an enormous crystalline palace. As you leave your ship, something hard strikes your head and you lose consciousness. When you awaken, you hear two raised voices and recognise one as Dr Glass’s.

“You underestimate this droid, Senator,” the doctor shouts, gesturing to a large metallic crab floating nearby. “A self-replicating, invincible, indestructible killing machine. I’ve reprogrammed it to recognise boy-bands as well as girl-bands. We’ll have those record industry executives at our mercy!”

The Senator objects, “Those Tauroids already tried that. We *can’t* control this machine. Destroy it!”

“Ah, I see the spy is awake.” Dr Glass turns to face you. “Just in time to see me gate-crash the premiere of Martian Idol 3007. Quite literally.”

“You monster!” You can’t believe his heinousness.

“I may be a monster, but I pay my debts. I’ve spared you because you once saved my life.”

“I was trying to save the goldfish.”

“This time I can’t allow any interference. This will be must-see TV.” Glass raises an atomiser and points it at you and the Senator. He starts typing words and numbers into a computer, and begins to chuckle as the droid’s eyes light up. “It’s done! Only I know the password to deactivate the droid.”

“You know what they say,” you reply, fidgeting with your spaceship’s stereo remote behind your back. “People who live in glass asteroids...” Turning your spaceship’s speaker volume to maximum, an ancient Spice Girls tune echoes through the asteroid. The droid goes berserk and starts crazily smashing its way towards the surface.

“No! My beautiful palace! My air!” Glass screams. “I won’t forget this,” he promises through gritted teeth, before his jetpack ignites and he flees towards his ship.

The Senator grips your shoulders desperately. “How can we stop it? It’ll destroy everything!” You check the mad professor’s computer. It still displays the sequence Glass typed. But what word will halt the droid’s musically-inspired rampage?

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drop key guava nit out ivy aim tug pal shin pater dug  
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