

Dr. Lawrence Bates

“Those who dream by night in the dusty recesses of their minds wake to find that it was vanity: but the dreamers of the day are dangerous men, for they may act their dreams with open eyes, to make it possible.”

-T.E. Lawrence

Alright, now where did you put that photium concentrator? It should have been in the third desk drawer, but all that was in there was a spare pair of shoes. Well, nothing to do but to search the office and see if you can find it. You'll need it to test the radiation emittance of the third phase of transencion.

You have a system for keeping things straight in your office. No one believes you, and only Timmy Carroll, your lab assistant, was able to understand the way that it works. That's what makes it so annoying not to be able to find things. Everyone who leaves something in your office always just leaves it in some place where it doesn't belong, but because they can't figure out *where* it belongs, they just plop it down someplace. It aggravates you to no end. Why, you think you might just complain to the Lead Scientist at the Labs.

No, wait. You *are* the Lead Scientist at the Labs. Oh, well. No point in complaining to yourself, then. Besides, you might not have the time to deal with the complaint, even if it is your own. After all, you're supposed to be overseeing the scientific production of the entire Labs, not to mention being in charge of the Physics Department. It's a hard thing to juggle. What makes it even worse is that you're supposed to report to General Hiram Cork, the ostensible head of the Research Labs, and he knows nothing of science. You can't count the number of times that you started discussing particle physics and the relationship between amino acids and molecular integrity on to receive a blank look from him.

Alright, it's not in your desk. Maybe it's hidden among the papers on the floor. Alright, let's see. Plans for a Marcissian hydro-powered motor, working model of a hydrogen recombinant annihilator, report on the Titanium Alloy Tipped Nuclear Warhead (T.A.T.N.W.)... better hold on to that. Cork's scheduled a presentation on the projects of the Research Labs for five pm tonight, and you're going to have to explain what the T.A.T.N.W. is. If there's anything you hate more than Cork's blank look, it's forty blank looks.

The T.A.T.N.W. was quite a breakthrough, in your humble opinion. You had first come up with the idea for such a warhead five years ago, while toying with the idea of radial symmetry within a spiral arc, which allows the warhead to penetrate over twenty-three feet of steel before exploding. Unfortunately, the creation of such a warhead needed a laser of third variational quantities, which was impossible back then. Even today, you would need an extremely intricately carved ruby of exactly the right dimension in order to

manufacture one. By an incredible stroke of luck, such a ruby was found in India recently, and you pressured General Cork to purchase it in order to allow you to proceed on the T.A.T.N.W. He agreed after you told him the possible destructive powers of it.

Alright, not in your papers. Maybe it was set down by the chalkboard. Better check over there. One of these days, when you've saved up enough money, you'll retire from government science work and start your own laboratory, where no one can interfere with your plans, mess up your system of order, or generally become a nuisance.

Hmm. Bessiwick fragile comprehension meter, Hartford convergence device, missile trajectory amplifier... it has to be around here somewhere. Ah, there it is... no, that isn't it. That's the plans for a Brownian motion compensation device. A quite neat project of yours. Amplifies radio waves in the vicinity of the device, causing a rupture of the reality around it. Intriguing, but you still haven't figured out what it could be used for.

Maybe Dr. Fields borrowed it. The photium concentrator, that is. He's been working on a new rocket fuel based upon a derivative of a compound the Army found in Roswell, New Mexico. A photium concentrator could allow him to re-polarize the activities of the mixture. And if anyone would borrow something without telling you, he would. He's a strange one, hiding out in his Lab all of the time, playing that classical music incessantly. Still, he does good work, so it's best just to leave him alone. Besides, if he wanted to re-polarize the mixture, all he'd have to do is inverse the heat wave sines, which could be accomplished by undoing the macro. He should know how to do that.

Hmm. Not on your desk, not in your papers, not hiding under the chalkboard. Where could it possibly...

Ah. In your pocket. You didn't think that that was your wallet. Well, there you go then.

Now, why were you looking for it?

Stock quote: "Yes, but if we re-calculate the injunction so as to merge with the diffraction, it would result in a hyper-warp hole which fell back upon itself! That's what we want, isn't it?"

Mannerisms: Dr. Bates is the kindly, good-natured man who runs the Physics Department of the Research Labs and is at least in theory in charge of coordinating the efforts of all of the scientist. He is kind, gregarious, extremely brilliant, absent-minded, and given to long tangents of thinking that lead him to a wonderful theory that has nothing to do with what he was thinking about in the first place.

People You Know:

General Hiram Cork: Commander of Ft. Lucas Rita and the adjoining Research Labs. Your boss. The standard gruff, doesn't care how it works so long as it blows up type of man. He's not that bad a guy to work for, although you really need to push him in the right direction at times.

Dr. Marshall Fields: Head of the Chemistry Department at the Labs. One of the most brilliant scientists at the Labs, although extremely secretive about his work. Maybe you should talk to him about his progress with the rocket fuel. Who knows? Maybe it could do wonders when working with the T.A.T.N.W.

Dr. Gerald Forbes: Head of the Biology Department at the Labs. The poor guy. His wife died in a car accident two weeks ago, and he really hasn't been the same since. Maybe you could find some way to cheer him up.

Dr. Sarah Carroll: Head of the Astronomy Department at the Labs. When Dr. Berry, the former Head of Astronomy, retired last week, it took a lot of work to convince General Cork that Dr. Carroll would be the perfect replacement. After all, she's a hard-worker, incredibly intelligent, and devoted to Astronomy. Unfortunately, she's also female, which is why it took so much convincing to get her promoted. You'd better make sure she does a good job; if she messes up in a big way, Cork probably will never listen to you again.

Timmy Carroll: General Lab assistant at the Research Labs. A brilliant young man; he takes after his mother in many ways. Timmy helps out on nearly all of the projects at the Labs, and is invaluable as someone to bounce ideas off of. Usually, he doesn't bounce the idea back in the right direction, but the direction it goes off in usually means a breakthrough on some other project you really hadn't been thinking about.

Goals:

- 1. Keep the Labs running well.** Make sure all of the scientists are working on projects, that their projects are running smoothly, and that everyone is ready for the presentation tonight. After all, you're responsible for the Labs. In addition, if something comes up that the Labs need to work on right away, help organize the effort.