

# SPACE STATION SHECKLEY

## Introduction

This is a **beginner-level comedic LARP for four people**, written specifically as an intro to the form. It's intended to be fun and semi-competitive, with opportunities for good role-play. It pretty much runs itself, with minimal GM direction needed; just hand out the character sheets and go.

It's suitable for **players of any age**. It helps to be slightly familiar with basic SF and IT concepts, but there's nothing advanced or difficult.

## Setup

The remainder of this document should be printed and **a character page distributed to each player**.

The scenario takes place in a space station consisting of **an airlock** and **a main bridge area**. It might be helpful if a separate room was also available, for use as a brig or private meeting area, etc.

The airlock area should contain three chairs in a triangle, to represent the docked shuttle.

## Software

You need to download the (very simple!) control panel software and run it on a Windows PC during the game.



**NB** Use Alt-F4 to close the control panel, as the standard Close buttons have been removed for in-game purposes.

## Props

Captain Huckleberry has a gun (e.g. a toy gun) and a pair of handcuffs (a scarf will do). A hat would help too.

There's also a box containing another gun, locked with the access code 0404 (draw a keypad on it, and tell the player if they enter the correct code). This is Robinson's gift to Bill. Unless Friday hides it in the first few minutes, it's lying around the station bridge, labelled with Robinson's name.

The computer is locked with the same access code, 0404. It relocks after a few minutes of inactivity, requiring the code to be re-entered. Self-destruct requires the code to be entered again, as does SD cancel.

A name badge or sticker also helps the players settle into their characters.

## The Access Code

The access code is 0404. Bill can work this out from knowing his own birthday, once it's revealed that Robinson set the code.

## Shuttle

Only the captain can fly the shuttle. The shuttle is not armed. It can only hold three people.

## Events

1. After 30 mins, **a meteor storm approaches the station**. If the shields are not activated within five mins, the station will be destroyed.
2. After 60 mins, **Robinson's corpse**, which has assumed a regular orbit around the station, **will float past the station windows**. Alternatively this could just be a series of suspicious bumping noises outside. It can be pursued and retrieved in the shuttle. There is room for only a pilot (Captain Huckleberry) and one other person on that trip. That mini-mission will take 10 minutes. Once back on the spaceship, it will become clear that Robinson was murdered with a kitchen knife, which is still stuck in his back.
3. After 90 mins, **an Ilwrath fleet** attacks the station. If the weapon systems are not activated within five mins, the station will be destroyed.

These timescales could be compressed if necessary, for example to 10, 20 and 30 minutes.

## Sample playthrough

This LARP went very well the first time, with four young players who'd never LARPed before.

The shuttle arrived at the station and Friday, who had not hidden Robinson's gift to Bill, gave the suspicious captain some vague line about an accident. He then got caught in a lie about when exactly the communications went down.

Jim meanwhile was questioned a bit about his pill-taking but convincingly explained that they were for a medical condition.

All four then tried to get into the locked computer for a while before Friday remembered to mention that Robinson reset the access code. Bill was too busy grieving at first to realise he had the necessary info (his birthdate) required to unlock both the computer and his gift. Once he did, they got the shields up and were protected from the meteor storm (Event 1). With the gift open, the second gun was now in Bill's possession.

They then explored the other computer functions for a while but didn't (fully) initiate self-destruct. Then there were bumping noises on the outside of the station (Event 2); Capt. Huckleberry and Jim went to investigate. In their absence, Bill drew out some more of Friday's increasingly threadbare story about how Robinson died.

The captain and Jim returned with Robinson's frozen corpse (a large teddy bear) and discovered the knife in his back. The captain and Bill interrogated Friday at gunpoint and the former's gun was fired, apparently killing Friday. While they were distracted, Jim succeeded in his mission of setting off the self-destruct, having watched Bill enter the code earlier.

Panicking and unaware that the self-destruct could be halted, Captain Huckleberry and Bill fled to the shuttle, followed by Jim, whom they promptly shot dead for his actions, causing him to assume his true alien shape. Back in the station, Friday returned to consciousness to find the countdown in progress and frantically tried to cancel it. Unfortunately, unlike Jim, he had not paid enough attention and didn't quite remember the code.

On the fleeing shuttle, Bill decided to take one of Jim's pills as an experiment, seeing this as the right self-sacrificing military action to take. His head promptly exploded, at about the same time as the station, leaving Captain Huckleberry the sole survivor. In terms of objectives however, both he and Jim had achieved their goals, with the latter arguably the "winner".

## CHARACTER 1 – CAPTAIN HUCKLEBERRY

### Setting

The lonely **Space Station Sheckley**, where a crew of two human fleet officers keep constant watch over the border between Earth space and Ilwrath space.

Each pair of officers serve for one year before a shuttle arrives to drop off their replacements and take them back to Earth.

Our story takes place as the latest relief shuttle is approaching the Station and preparing to dock...

### Instructions

*Please read your descriptions carefully – and more than once. There may be relevant clues in the text,*

*Do not let other players read your character info. Do not share any details “out of character”. Try to role-play your character as described – don’t try to do anything ridiculous or unrealistic.*

*Remember, you want to achieve the goals described. Look for opportunities to do so.*

*If any combat occurs, it’s settled by a game of rock-paper-scissors (three rounds). Two people will automatically beat one. Losers are stunned/disabled for ten minutes.*

*Characters in handcuffs cannot fight, fly the shuttle, or operate the Station computer.*

*One character has a gun. If a shot is fired, the shooter can say if he is shooting to kill or wound. Shots automatically succeed. If killed, the player is out of the game. If wounded, the character is incapacitated and must sit for the remainder of the game. They cannot fight.*

### Character

You are **Captain Huckleberry**, pilot of the shuttle bringing the two new officers (Jim and Bill) and collecting the two returning officers (Robinson and Friday).

**All decisions regarding shuttle flights** and arrival/departure are yours. You have **total authority** on the shuttle, although Jim will technically be in charge on the station. You are **sensible and mature**, which is good, because **you’re carrying the only gun** on this trip. You’re smart and you notice things, like for example that **Jim acts kind of weird** sometimes

**You want a good clean mission** with no difficulties. If possible, you also want to **find out why there haven’t been any communications** from Space Station Sheckley for the past month – checking the Station computer might be a good start.

Possessions: gun, handcuffs.

Skills: you can fly the shuttle.

## CHARACTER 2 – FRIDAY

### Setting

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### Character

You are **Friday**, the junior officer on the Space Station Sheckley. It’s been a rotten year, and you think you might be going crazy. **One month ago, you killed the other guy, Robinson**, and ejected his body into space. You’re not sure why - it was during an argument over a card game. But hell, that guy could be such a pain in the neck! He even **changed the access code on the computer** and wouldn't tell you the new one! You’ve been locked out of all systems ever since.

You urgently need to **prepare a good story to tell the new guys about how Robinson died** in an accident. Maybe radiation from the nuclear core, or a mishap in the airlock.

You also need to **explain what happened to the station's communications** after the "accident" (you broke the satellite uplink so that you wouldn't have to confess, but don't tell them that!)

**You want to get off this stinking space station! And you don't want to go to jail!**

Possessions: none. There’s a code-locked storage case belonging to Robinson lying around the station somewhere, but apart from that, nothing.

## CHARACTER 3 – JIM

### Setting

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### Character

You are **Jim, the senior replacement officer** arriving for a year’s service on Space Station Sheckley. But not really. Nobody knows, but **you are in fact controlled by Gorgon, a shape-changing Ilwrath alien mind parasite.**

The ways of these hu-mans are strange to you; sometimes you say "it" instead of "he", or "scum" instead of "you". Also, every ten minutes you need to take a pill to maintain your appearance. Do not forget! Do not take more than one pill every ten minutes! In either case, the head of this host body may explode!

**You want to activate the self-destruct on the station**, and you want to do it in the next 90 minutes, before a fleet of Ilwrath attach ships is scheduled to arrive. Alternatively, you’ll settle for **disabling the weapons** systems before then, so the Station can’t fight back. **You don’t care what happens to you** if you can achieve one of these goals.

Possessions: bottle of pills.

Skills: If you are alone with someone else for more than a minute, and defeat them in combat, you can take over their mind, i.e, the alien switches bodies. If this happens, the other player takes over the role of Gorgon – **give them these instructions**. Note that you (the original player character) will be a mindless drooling idiot for the remainder of the game.

## CHARACTER 4 – BILL

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### Character

You are **Bill, junior replacement officer** arriving for a year’s service on Space Station Sheckley.

You come from a space fleet family. You love serving in space fleet. You love obeying orders, although you do have a tendency to ask a lot of questions.

But most of all, you can't wait to see **your brother Robinson!** It'll only be for a few minutes, because you're taking over his job for the next year in the remote space outpost, and he'll be leaving on the shuttle that brings you in. But in his last communication **he said he had a birthday present for you.**

Sure, he's very bossy, and he could be a pain sometimes, but Robinson is a great big brother, and **never forgets your birthday, April 4th.**