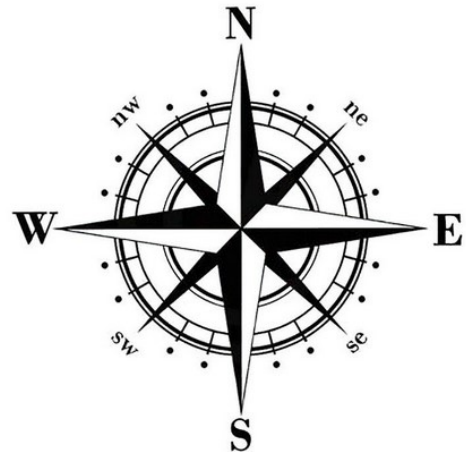


Compass Points



The Liberty III starcraft "Probe 6", on approach to Alpha Centauri in 1980, passed through some radioactive turbulence. Navigator Edward Jones activated the automatic homing device but the command capsule, freed of the FTL (faster than light) power drive when the homing device was activated, entered a time warp (<https://www.goingfaster.com/icarus/qvirdonwarp.htm>) and returned to Earth post 3085AD. It touched down only 100 miles south of its intended destination, where Edwards Air Force Base had once been, near the quartz mining town of Chalo.



The noise and appearance of the starcraft's command capsule attracted the attention of both local human Farrow and local ape Arno. Jones was found dead in the capsule but two others were missing. Local prefect Veska sent a messenger to the High Council with the news. Zaius despatched Galen with Urko to find the 2 missing humans and escort them 30 miles north to Central City. Farrow having taken Commander Alan Virdon and Major Pete Burke to safety, brought them food, quartz and flint, and a change of clothing and showed them a 2503AD book which confirmed they were on Earth. On return to the command capsule the two astronauts found the chronometer dated 21 March 3085AD. Alan picked up a photo of his family but failed to take it with him when he rushed out at the sound of a gunshot.

Captured and taken to Central City, the astronauts were subject to a kangaroo court. They were placed in a holding cell after questioning, while their fates were determined. Galen visited the astronauts to discuss the 2503AD book and was outraged at Alan's suggestion that he help them escape. Returning later, Galen stumbled upon a trap laid by Urko. He accidentally killed a prison guard and Alan and Pete ran off. Galen was arrested and charged with heresy, a crime for which death was the penalty. Returning with a grenade stolen from Zaius' office, Alan and Pete freed Galen and took him with them. They returned to the command capsule to retrieve the magnetic flight recorder disk, and escaped just as Urko and Zaius arrived. Soldiers were sent inside to check the ship and retrieved Alan's family photo. As the soldiers destroyed the command capsule, the fugitive trio hiked away together.



Trekking west the trio came upon the settlement of Kaymak, headed by Prefect Barlow who used gladiatorial fights to dissipate the aggressive urges of the human workers. Pete's impulsive defense of an apparent underdog outside Kaymak led to a fight wherein Alan dropped the magnetic disk. It was later found and taken by Barlow. Pete was unhappy about pursuing recovery of the disk but Alan insisted as it provided a potential return to his own time. Galen insisted that he be allowed to try to retrieve the disk as they were friends and the disk was important to Alan. He introduced himself to Barlow as Galen but failed to retrieve the disk. Urko's Lieutenant Jason arrived, hunting for the trio.

Pete and Alan were captured by the gorillas and Pete was pitted in an arena fight against village champion Tolar, who he defeated but refused to kill. Pete and Galen escaped, so Alan was to be pitted against Tolar's son Dalton in the arena in a replacement match. Alan hoped his friends had departed instead of risking their safety to save him. Instead, Tolar helped Pete and Galen spring Alan from the prison cell, then struggled with Jason and both were killed. Barlow gave the magnetic disk to Alan and the trio hiked south.

Jason's report led to Barlow later being reassigned to another village, Venta in the north, as punishment for his mismanagement via the gladiatorial games.



Hiking south along the coast, the trio came across an old man named Gahto lashed to a raft in the shallows. In the process of rescuing him, Alan dropped the magnetic disk and it was several days before he noticed it missing. Then he had no way of knowing where he'd dropped it so it was lost for evermore.

Alan was appalled that anyone would discard an old man on the sea. After they rescued Gahto, Galen voiced the observation that many humans would be better off dead. Alan became annoyed at Galen's attitude so he and Pete went looking for Gahto's family. Captured by a gorilla guard and taken to Prefect Hurton in the labor centre, Pete lied that they were fishermen and Alan embellished the story. Alan and Pete then proved themselves to be adept pole-spear fishermen and hence were about to be banded as that for life. Galen arrived and passed himself off as Zuma, claiming ownership of Alan and Pete as his escaped servants. Hurton however refused to allow Galen to take them away. With new agricultural production areas being opened up for crops, pressure was being applied for the provision of fish as fertiliser inputs, and Hurton was way behind on quotas.

Upon the arrival of district supervisor Bandor and his subsequent determination that Hurton should retain Alan and Pete, it became necessary to devise a way for the three fugitives to escape while restoring Gahto to his family and the village. They brought back Gahto as a fishing net guru, and distracted the apes long enough for the three to make off to sea on a raft.



Travelling south east, inland from the ocean, the trio stopped for a week in the isolated farming village of Trion, with Talbert and his daughter Amy. This home reminded Alan of his family and he became fond of Amy. Talbert was a doting father and Amy was 16, only a few years older than Alan's son Chris. Alan felt comfortable confiding in Amy that he had come from another time. He was dismayed when he went to tell her they were about to leave, and she declared she had fallen in love with him and wanted him to stay. While she was approaching marriageable age according to local custom, Alan was 38, had no intention of settling there and remained focussed on returning to his family. Alan also did not want to antagonise Talbert. He was relieved to hear Talbert calmly acknowledge that he knew his daughter well enough to have expected this and that Amy would get over her infatuation.

Galen was angry that night because Alan's paternal feelings had led to him confiding the truth to Amy and hence compromised the safety of all of them. Galen became angry again the next day when they received news that Trion was quarantined because of a plague that was killing humans and that Alan intended to return to assist in some way. Pete too was angry at the thought of putting themselves in danger. However they both chose to return to Trion with Alan, with Galen having an increased appreciation of their loyalty and courage.



Upon their return to Trion they discovered that the plague was malaria. Trion was only 2 days ride from Central City so Zaius and Urko along with the High Council and a contingent of Urko's security forces were already encamped there. Urko wanted to burn the village and kill all the humans while Zaius and Dr Zoran wanted to use them as experimental subjects in medical treatment.

Talbert had been one of the first to die of malaria and Amy was now left with no family. Additionally Amy became gravely ill and in her delirium, spoke of Alan's story about time travel to Dr Zoran. Under Alan's leadership, villagers collected Cinchona bark, ground it to make quinine, and distributed to all the sick while Galen supervised draining the swamp. Pete's derisive attitude towards the apes medical knowledge was balanced out by his plain speaking to Dr Zoran, who quickly came to appreciate these humans knowledge of malaria.

When the gorilla soldier Kava became sick, the threat of malaria to apes increased Urko's determination to have the village burned and all the occupants killed. Alan took quinine to Kava under cover of darkness, saying his pain was no different from that of the sick humans. It was Kava's recovery due to that medicine that gave Zaius reason to stop Urko from destroying the village.

Upon departing Alan told Amy that "a lot of things that seem real" turn out not to be and that he hoped she would be happy.



South of Trion they came upon the ruins of the San Diego naval dockyard and this geographic identifier enabled them to orient themselves for future travel. The trio continued generally east for about two weeks, navigating around semi-arid scrubland and patches of desert when they could and crossing at night when avoidance wasn't possible. In general, Alan was aiming for Houston more than 1,200 miles away but he had no idea if that target was achievable.

They were relieved to enter hills of dry woodland with small water courses. At this point they encountered a fleeing human, and assisted Klim to escape his gorilla pursuers. Alan and Pete were then taken prisoner by the humans of Borak who had an agreement to provide human slaves to the ape-held mines to the southwest. Klim was taken to an old temple where he died without being touched while Alan and Pete were caged outside the village. Galen could do nothing to convince Brun to release his humans and he became captive as well.

Alan and Pete entreated the humans to fight back against the gorillas, to no avail. Pete tried but failed to persuade Talia to release them. However saving the life of the badly injured Miro and agreeing to take Talia with them to safety led to their covert release by Miro. Upon escaping they discovered that the old temple housed an acidic spring which gave off toxic fumes and that Brun, Borak's leader was bottling those fumes into bombs with a view to attacking the ape townships. While Alan and Pete tried to reason with Brun about the dangers of the bombs, Galen became agitated at the thought of mass slaughter of apes and triggered an explosion, thus destroying the temple and inadvertently killing Brun.



Further east of Borak, they encountered the Forbidden Zone. From the crest of a low hill, they could see nothing but orange-red flat caked dirt to the horizon. No vegetation. No circling scavengers in the sky. No clouds. Just a heat mirage in the far distance. If there was a Fata Morgana, even it didn't show anything over the horizon. Alan reluctantly turned and led them northwest rather than risk any of their lives on a suicide mission. For the first time, he began to consider if he really was stranded and would never see his wife and son again.

After a month of trekking they were east of Central City where they could again forage for a wide variety of fruit, small birds and eggs. Alan found a damaged compass near a watercourse and salvaged the baseplate and needle to assist him with navigation.

Pursued west by gorillas, Galen fell one night and was badly injured, necessitating a stay for two weeks on the farm of the poor cropper Polar and his family. The free human labor was a counterbalance to eldest son Anto's concern that they might harm the pregnant cow or the calf she carried. Alan helped the cow deliver twin bull calves, while Pete's clear thinking and rapport with younger son Remus kept Anto calm during the problematic delivery. Pete was unable to assist during the calving because of his haematophobia ("queasy in the operating room").

Polar's family protected the fugitives when Urko and his soldiers arrived searching for them, and the trio headed west that night.



Staying out of sight they made west to the coast where they stayed with Jasko, but became embroiled in the masked dragoons attacks on humans when Jasko was killed. The dragoons were killing humans to keep them in line after blind female chimp Fauna's father Lucian had been killed, allegedly by 2 humans. Fauna thus hated and feared all humans. To solve this problem they met with Fauna. Galen constructed a ruse whereby Fauna believed the 3 fugitives to be apes, but this was then complicated when Fauna fell in love with the ape she believed Pete to be. This caused friction between Pete and Galen as Galen blamed Pete for "making her fall in love" with him and Pete said it was Galen's fault for creating the story in the first place.

Meanwhile Galen passed himself off to Fauna's uncle Sestus as Phoebus with a backstory of being a farmer from another region where humans had also been killed by apes to keep them in line. Reassured, Sestus had Phoebus inducted into the dragoons, with Galen hoping to identify the ringleaders.

With help from the trio, head of the local security force, Perdix, learned that the leader of the dragoons was none other than his trusted 2-I-C Zon. Meanwhile, distraught at learning her three new friends were soon to depart Fauna fell off the cliff into the ocean and had to be rescued by the two humans whom she thought were apes. The revelation that they were in fact humans precipitated hysteria in Fauna. Eventually Sestus admitted that Lucian had actually been killed in an argument when Sestus and Zon tried to convince him to stop helping the local humans.



Headed north, but with gorillas searching all around for them, the trio ended up further inland than they intended. When Alan was shot, they sought the help of Galen's ex fiancée Dr Kira in having the bullet extracted at a medical centre just outside Central City. Alan was reluctant to agree to this because doing so would put all of them in danger; however both Pete and Galen insisted on him getting surgical help. Galen constructed a ruse of being Dr Adrian, surgeon, with a borrowed surgical gown. Kira expressed revulsion at Galen choosing to run with humans, to which Galen replied they were now his brothers.

Urko had been planning a trip north under the pretext of inspecting the new territories being opened up for agriculture but upon being told the three fugitives were nearby he postponed it to hunt for them.

Alan was also reluctant to be a bother in the human accommodation but Pete insisted on putting him in a private room. 'Dr Adrian' and Pete gained access under a medical pretext to Zaius' office to retrieve a human-era book about surgery on humans. Pete got to know the humans and their history and relationships. He was able to conduct blood typing of the humans, despite his haematophobia. He also established rapport with Travin and his daughter, who provided blood for transfusion during the later surgery. Pete assisted with surgery by avoiding active participation in the incision, instead working on the ventilator and reading instructive text from the book.

Dr Leander discovered the real identities of Dr Adrian and his 2 'orderlies' but concealed their presence in order to retain the surgical book. Alan's recovery required carriage travel and a three week stay at the farm of friends of Travin in what had been the San Fernando Valley.



A short distance after departing Travin's friend's farm, the trio were pursued by mounted gorillas and Pete was netted and taken to Crystal Cavern, a secure facility just outside Central City. Alan's only concern was rescuing Pete and all their efforts were put to that end. Alan and Galen ran to Central City, stole an ox cart to deceive the roadblock guards, stayed with Galen's parents, and broke into the jail to find Pete. When they realised he wasn't there, they broke into Urko's office and spent the night rifling through Urko's papers to find where he was being kept. Galen's father Yalu was antagonistic towards humans and opposed Galen's friendship with them.

Pete was subjected to torture techniques over 4 days by Dr Wanda in an effort to break him to enable her to brainwash him. However his combined medical and astronaut training enabled him to resist and eventually Wanda relented and agreed to let Urko take him for a lobotomy.

Alan and Galen, having gained the assistance of Galen's supportive mother Ann, were able to break Pete out of the hospital and evade capture. They returned to Galen's parents' house and after Urko had attended, threatened and departed, Galen said Urko thought they were long gone and would not be back.



Galen's prediction proved right. Over the next two weeks, as the fugitives hid out at Yalu and Ann's home, Urko and his troops sought them everywhere in the surrounding city and countryside, undertaking thorough searches of every home and outbuilding. Pete rested and recovered, dealing with the nightmares and panic attacks arising from sensory overload, sleep deprivation, debilitation and exhaustion. Fortunately he had not been subject to the torture for long enough to have reached breaking point so he was able to recover with time and care.

Galen's mother Ann was solicitous and paid particular attention to Pete's rest and diet, and it was from Pete that she learned the story of Galen's injury and their time on Polar's farm. She was astounded to realise these humans could have abandoned her son in the darkened forest or at the farm, but chose to carry him, to find nursing care and to work for their keep, with each and every action risking their own safety. Their genuine concern for Galen's well-being reassured her. In turn she told Pete of Galen's childhood:

- *that he had always wanted brothers to play with but had to settle for occasional visits with cousins in the country,
- *that he was ostracised at school for his interest in gadgets, and
- *that his willingness to entertain a wide variety of ideas had clashed with his father's conservatism and his peer group's self-interest.

After two weeks, Yalu and Ann took their carriage on a rambling five day holiday along the coastline south west of Central City.



Near a gorilla garrison along the coast, the trio saw Leuric flying in a primitive hang glider. They rescued Leuric from the crashed glider before the gorillas located him. Garrison Commander Konag rode to report the capture of the hang glider personally to the High Council and Urko. Dr Carsia travelled from Central City with High Council permission to study the glider. Meanwhile, Alan, Pete and Galen attempted to build a working glider for Leuric.

Leuric was captured and Carsia encouraged him to build a new glider to demonstrate that he could get air-borne. Galen constructed another ruse, this time being Protus and wanting to find out about the 'flying reptile'. Galen and Carsia subsequently began a flirtation that led to Carsia revealing she wanted gliders so that "we" (it was never revealed who comprised "we") could launch an air-borne attack on the High Council and Security Headquarters, to take power from the gorillas and orangutans. Carsia was incensed when Protus was captured trying to spring Leuric from the holding cell. She arranged to have him take the glider aloft in the test flight, with the injured Leuric giving directions.

After Galen faked his death and that of Leuric and destroyed the prototype glider, the events were reported back to the Council so the involvement and last known whereabouts of Galen, Alan and Pete were known to Urko and Zaius.



Urko began his delayed northern tour, to inspect the new agricultural areas and security garrisons, in combination with his personal horse match racing circuit. In Venta, Galen was stung by a scorpion and young Gregor rode into town to get antidote to save Galen's life. Gregor was later arrested for breaking the law against humans riding horses. With Galen recovered, the three fugitives then approached Prefect Barlow (formerly of Kaymak) seeking release for Gregor.

Urko's horse was to race against Barlow's horse Woda, but Woda had never been ridden and was a known killer. Pete told Barlow that Alan could ride any horse but Alan declined upon seeing Woda in action. He said he had no reason to risk himself on that horse. The three turned together to leave but Barlow called them back. The three turned back together; this was a powerful statement of their solidarity. When Alan agreed to the offer to have Gregor released if he won the match race on Woda, bureaucratic Galen intervened to obtain an agreed outcome on what would happen if he lost instead.

Galen and Pete worked together to hold off Urko's racing fixing efforts while Alan rode Woda to victory. Urko and the gorillas chased Woda and the prison cart out of town to no avail. Barlow, having won his bet with Urko, rode out of Venta heading south to Kaymak. Barlow met the trio with Martin and Gregor, and Galen said farewell to his new friend Gregor. Barlow took Martin and his son Gregor with him to return to Kaymak while the fugitive trio headed north west.



Urko's inspection tour continued north to the remote outpost of Hathor where he met his old academy friend, District Chief Aboro. Unknown to Urko, Aboro had a scheme going whereby he raised grain taxes on the local human farmers and used that to buy gold from mines in the Sierra Nevada. The gold was being used to buy influence in Central City, as Aboro wanted to be Prefect of Hathor.

The fugitives became involved when their hosts Janor and his younger brother Mikal had the last of their grain taken as taxes. Stealing back the stolen grain shipment brought the gorillas down on their hosts and Mikal was killed. Galen's cousin Augustus was the Prefect of Hathor but he then received orders he'd been reassigned elsewhere as Aboro had just been appointed as the Prefect.

Galen's acting skills were now highly advanced. He masqueraded as Zaius' assistant Octavio with speech and mannerisms to suit, complete with limp and cane, and arrived resplendent in an original Pete Burke-sewn collar. Aboro was surprised at this visit and even more surprised when Octavio told him Zaius wanted him to assist with removing Urko from power, with a promise to replace Urko with Aboro as Chief of Security. Aboro sought confirmation that Octavio was legitimate, and once satisfied, agreed to frame Urko for corruption.

However Aboro seized the opportunity and decided instead to assassinate Urko, using a human assassin, well known to him but who could not be linked to him. When the fugitives discovered this they attempted to warn Urko (Galen reusing the Dragoons mask). When that failed they took Urko with them to let him see for himself that Aboro was ready to deal with the assassin (to be played by Pete).



This backfired as Aboro had arranged to bomb his office with Urko inside after leaving it himself. Hence when the alleged assassin arrived he denied any knowledge of the deal, so the watching Urko captured Pete and Galen. When Aboro attempted to leave the room (to avoid the bomb) he found both doors locked. Panic-stricken he admitted the impending bomb to Urko, only to have Alan arrive and free Pete and Galen after having defused the bomb. Urko took Aboro into custody and returned to Central City to arrange his prosecution.

It had now become apparent to Urko that the fugitive trio were heading generally north, into more remote territory. Taking Zaius and a detachment of soldiers with him, Urko then rode north, pursuing the fugitives.

The trio saw a ruined city, from high in hills around Mt Diablo. For the first time since Kaymak Alan had hope he may find a way to return to his own time. In the Oakland Science Institute, the fugitives discovered all human knowledge was stored somewhere in the city, but they needed battery power to learn where.

Trying to find battery power sources, the fugitives were sighted and pursued by gorillas. Alan instructed them to get the battery going and find the knowledge store and that if anyone wasn't back in 24 hours, to assume they weren't coming back. In the ensuing chase his right leg was injured and he was captured by the gorillas.

With Alan missing, Galen became anxious because Pete's priority was getting the battery working, not finding and rescuing Alan. This was in contrast to Alan's priority when Pete was captured; however Pete was focussed on obeying the last order his CO had given him. Urko and Zaius were heliographed in, being in the proximity. Zaius had brought Alan's family photo, and hoped to use it to create a fake family that Alan would become attached to and perhaps confide in. Zaius also intended to use Alan as bait to lure Pete and Galen and capture them. Alan was confined to an old mansion with a woman Arn and boy Kraik who strongly resembled his own wife and son.



Alan initially stalled for time, hoping his two friends had got the battery repaired, found the information store and departed for their own safety. Later Alan, Arn and Kraik escaped, and reunited with Pete and Galen, but they all fled when the apes arrived and destroyed the entire information store. The trio took Arn and Kraik out of town to a family farm, and Alan poignantly watched as the two walked away from him, towards a new life in a new home.

Urko and his soldiers were only an hour away from the fugitives. Taking a heliograph station, the three sent a false message to Urko advising him they had been seen on a different route. The trio then travelled south to the settlement of Numai, known to be sympathetic to outlaws.

They found the residents with electrical and computer parts and were told of a city nearby from which these had been scavenged. Following directions to locate the city they found San Francisco, barely 12 miles west of the Oakland Science Institute, across the San Francisco Bay. Urko and his soldiers closed in on them in the city streets so they separated and ran for cover.

Urko roped Pete and the two engaged in a tug-of-war, with Pete pulling Urko off his horse. At that moment an earthquake occurred and the ground opened up beneath Pete, and when he fell through the opening, he dragged Urko with him. A slab of concrete fell across the open hole, sealing and concealing it.

Only Galen had witnessed this event so he told Alan the sorry news that he thought Pete was dead. Alan was shocked at the thought his only human friend, the only one who shared memories of their earlier life, was now dead. Upon questioning Galen, he concluded Pete may still be alive. Urko's soldiers were confused as where Urko was, so Galen and Alan spoke to them loudly, out of sight from the safety of the buildings and negotiated a truce to rescue both Pete and Urko. Galen, Alan and Captain Zako agreed that they would work together to rescue both and that in return the trio would be allowed to go free.

Pete regained consciousness first in the remains of the underground subway. He was brutally assaulted and nearly killed by Urko when the gorilla also regained consciousness. Pete told Urko that the subway and its contents were pre-Holocaust¹ from the time when humans were the dominant species but had to change his story to calm the enraged gorilla down and instead told him it was all pre-Holocaust ape artefacts. The two then had to work together to confirm they were alive to the mixed group working above them, and to try to assist their own recovery. Much of this work involved Pete trying to keep his own fear under control, keeping Urko calm and occupied, and communicating with those above ground via coded tapping, while Urko was soothing his own ego.

With difficulty, the concrete slab was removed and at that point Urko told Pete he would not let him leave alive. As Urko lunged at Pete with a knife, Pete held the solar

¹ Holocaust: original meaning is "burnt offering" but has come to mean any event which results in large-scale loss of human life.

powered subway light up and the ensuing electric shock left Urko unconscious. Pete slipped a rope around him and had the apes haul Urko up first, then Pete was hauled up. Once above ground, Urko briefly recovered and ordered Zako to kill the three fugitives. Zako refused and when Urko passed out again, Zako had the soldiers put Urko on his horse and take him away to obtain medical assistance. When the soldiers were out of sight Zako told the three fugitives to leave and then fired 3 shots in the air to fake their execution. The soldiers, out of sight, heard the 3 shots so only Zako knew they departed alive.

Later, Galen voiced the distress he'd felt when he thought Pete was dead and his relief that the three of them were all still alive and still together.

Now they were free to travel north out of the Californian apelands, with no apes in pursuit.



(ends)