

Although you have a clean conscience with regard to the events at Bio-Imperium, others are not so fortunate... Let's find out what The Cluster have got to say about it. Turn to **401**.

401

'Call that an experiment!'

'What are you talking about? That was perfect control of the humans, and if only it'd gone airborne, I would be the winner of this experiment. The Rubedo clones were a masterful decision on my behalf — ideal recipients for the delegation of responsibility. All it took was some flattery of their meagre, blinkered intellect. I simply allowed them to endlessly explain the science and pontificate, then they were like putty in my hand. Add in a touch of promises to feed their hunger for power and there it was.'

'Clones of Prof Rubedo? They sound like clones of you! Can you hear yourself? Such arrogance!'

There is a moment when it seems like a punch may be thrown, but the bickering pair remember that they are part of The Cluster and therefore, resort to furious tutting, pursed lips and occasional snorts of disapproval.

The Machinator regards both fellow Cluster members and suspects that there may be a touch of jealousy behind this exchange — it was a rather good experiment, after all. It stands and is about to try to diffuse the tension when a curved horn is suddenly flung across the room with the mead sloshing everywhere. It hits the wall and shatters, and amidst this unprecedented vandalism, a chair scrapes back, then a voice pierces the silence.

'We will talk about this later!'

The Machinator gives a slight cough to try to regain the upper hand over these proceedings and says, 'Well, yes, that all sounds very interesting, but according to the schedule, it is actually my turn next, so perhaps we could focus on this. I've got a PowerPoint presentation to walk you through what I have planned in my experiment. It's a little unusual, I think you'll find...'