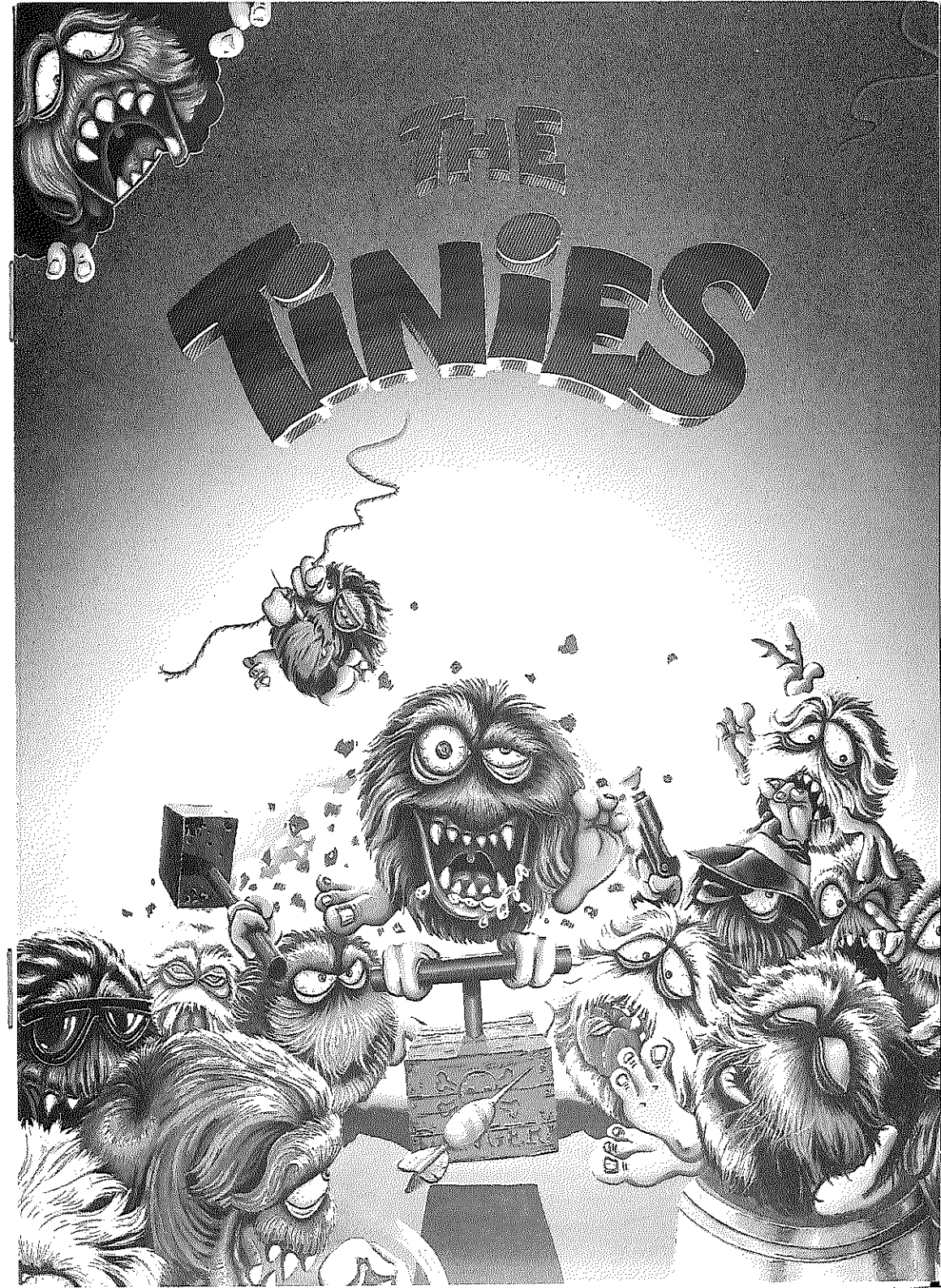




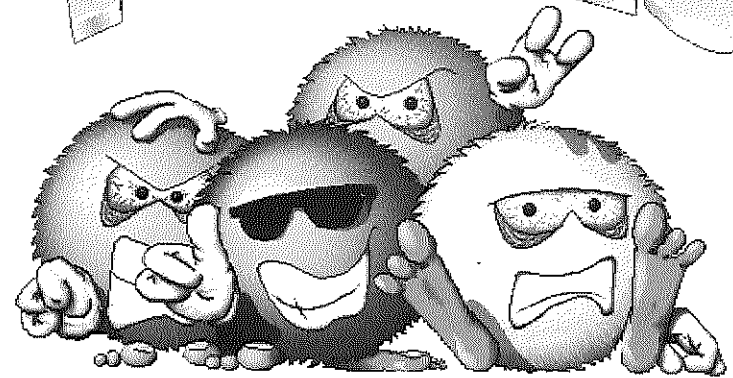
KALISTO

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AMICRE CHARLES JACQUES

THE TINIERS



KALISTO™

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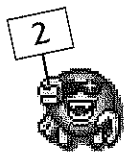
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The Great Separation.

Beyond the universe, where only the eternal night's black velvet remains... Beyond the known frontiers, where everything is still, dark and empty... Who could ever predict something may exist there? No one...

Still, more than 53 light years away from the Camelopardalis Constellation, a strange thing is floating in space, one of these natural phenomenons which could only be created by a drunken or stressed god: a flat planet... This planet is Sklumph, and apart from this stupid name, it is also the home of the strangest, the most fascinating and the most narrow-minded life form in the whole galaxy: the Tinies.

The origin of these strange creatures is unknown. But a long time ago, when calendars did not even exist, something strange happened on this flat disk, a major event probably caused by the weird effects of the centrifugical force: a dreadful danger zone appeared in the center of the planet. The scared Tinies moved towards the planet's edges, running away from what they called the "Great Boisterousness", and stayed there, praying the Gods to be saved from this cataclysm.

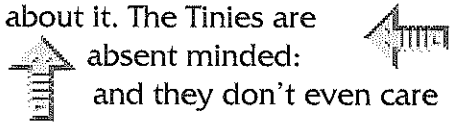
42 years later, fate decreed that the Great Boisterousness should disappear. The Tinies, after many years of hard struggle against the elements, could finally return to their homes. But radiations, natural selection and genetic hazards had some strange effects on the Tinies: they used to all wear the same pale grey hair, but the northern Tinies slowly turned to blue, the western Tinies to red, the southern Tinies to green, and the eastern Tinies to yellow.



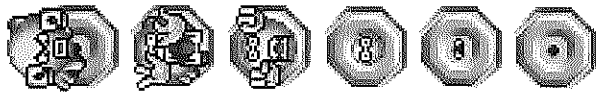
Indeed, it was very strange to see all this coloured Tinies mixed together, but life went on with no further problems. The only reminder of those tragic times was the multicoloured races scattered all over the planet.

Despite all the problems they encountered, the Tinies developed an advanced technology, and worked hard for many centuries to improve it. They created the energy arrows, and placed them all over the planet.

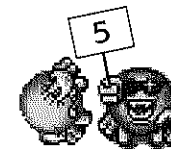
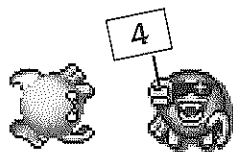
They are used to avoid a wall or any obstacle blocking the way, so the Tinies do not even have to care about it. The Tinies are stubborn, headstrong and totally absent minded: they will eat or read while walking, and they don't even care about what might block their path.



The Sklumph planet could have been a model to the galaxy. If only the Tinies were not so obstinate, so lazy, and better at creating a mess than at organizing their social life! Just take a look at their teleporters: they are a perfect mix of their advanced technology and their extreme laziness.



Imagine this : You just have to step on a teleportation cap, and you will be instantly transported to another place! This device was really a great discovery, but the Tinies misused it.




They were soon many teleporter jams, and a lot of problems due to a general overuse. The teleporters were tearing the body atoms apart to recreate the physical structure in another place, and they started to produce a strange and ridiculous patchwork of multicolored Tinies. Seeing this, the government decided to modify some of the settings. To avoid this kind of problems, designers created four different teleporter types, one for each Tinies colour.

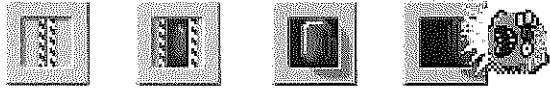
The Tinies could only use a specific colored cap, according to their own colour. The new system worked perfectly, and was later implemented on the sleepers, used by the Tinies to rest and regenerate, and also on the switches, activated as soon as they stepped on them. Life was perfect in a perfect world.




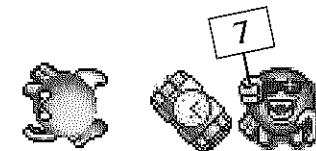
The General Joke Era

After the Great Separation, there was no more laughter on the Skumph planet for a long time. Then, one day, a green Tiny created a bomb programmed to explode when a blue Tiny would walk by. The experience was a success, and all the Tinies were finally happy: what a funny and clever  idea to use the colors code and create all kinds of funny traps!

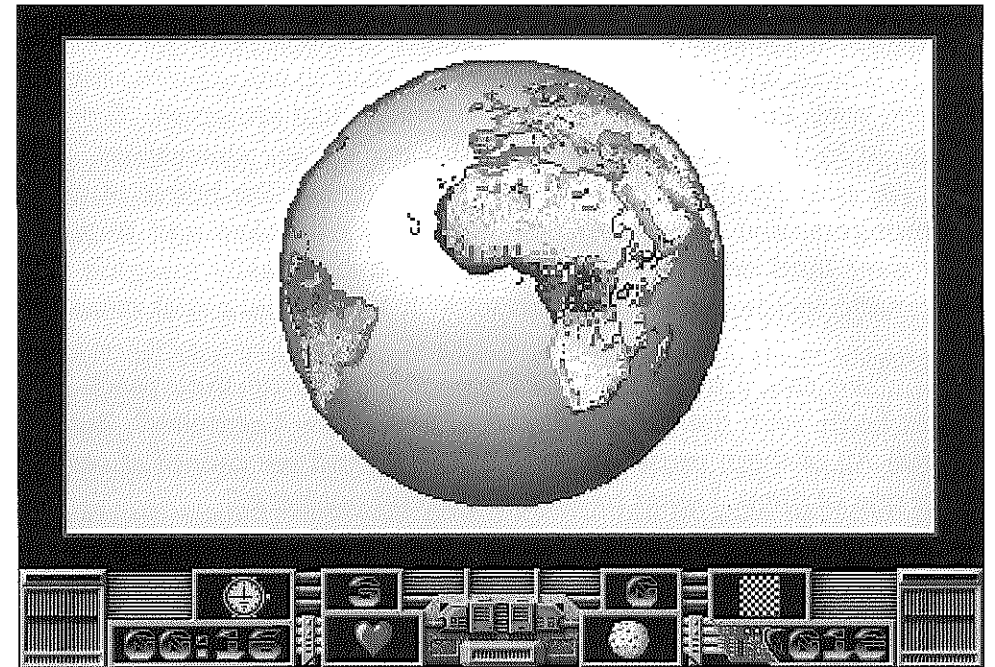
After the blue, red, yellow and green bombs, they invented the Punchers, hidden in the walls, and hitting anyone who would walk too close. Some Tinies even moved the energy arrows so their victims would go straight into the obstacles, or walk on a bomb, instead of avoiding it. What started as an innocent joke soon became their main hobby, and a radical cure against the general moodiness of the planet. Sklumph was now full of hysterics laughters and deafening explosions.



The King of the Tinies, one of the rare wise men left on the planet, decided with some of his advisers to solve this problem with  resurrection eggs scattered all over the planet. These devices were made to save some victims from their terrible fate, and were equipped with colored doors, corresponding to each Tinies colour.



But it did not work at all. Some foolish Tinies even discovered a spaceship built secretly for the King. But before he could do anything, his most advanced spaceship, the "Tiny Controller", was flying through space, looking for a new planet to have some fun! The central computer programmed a random landing on a small blue planet...Earth!



The King's Prayer

Sitting comfortably on his concave throne, the King was examining his advisers with a dismal look. Even behind his palace's thick walls, he could hear the explosions and the screams outside the castle.

"My kingdom is falling to pieces..." whined the King.

"Your Majesty", said the First Chamberlain,

"We finally found the person you were looking for."

"Ah, really?", said the King.

"Well, well..."

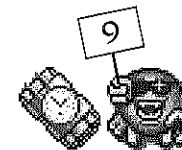
He looked at you and waved his sceptre.

"Come on, come closer! I am really glad to see you, my friend. As you may know, we are faced with a critical situation. A small group of fools discovered one of our new survey spaceships, and they are now heading to the Earth. This planet is the home of cruel warmongers, and I fear they will not enjoy our jokes and tricks. If they ever land on this planet, I think you can easily imagine the diplomatic incident they will provoke. It would be a real disaster!

"We can, I mean, you can stop them before they reach the planet Earth, with the help of our wonderful "Tiny Controller". But be careful! All of them must return here safely, and we cannot afford to lose one of them. I want to avoid a general riot here."

An adviser stepped forward, bowed to the king and said:

"As soon as these agitators are neutralized, we will be able to control the spaceship from here. You will then have to bring them to their sleepers with the Tiny Controller. You will put them asleep one by one. But there is still a little problem..."



"They know we want to stop them, and they said they would destroy the spaceship if we try anything against them. As soon as we start to intervene, they will activate the spaceship destruction countdown. If the countdown reaches the end, the spaceship will explode into space, killing all the Tinies on board. A complete disaster!"

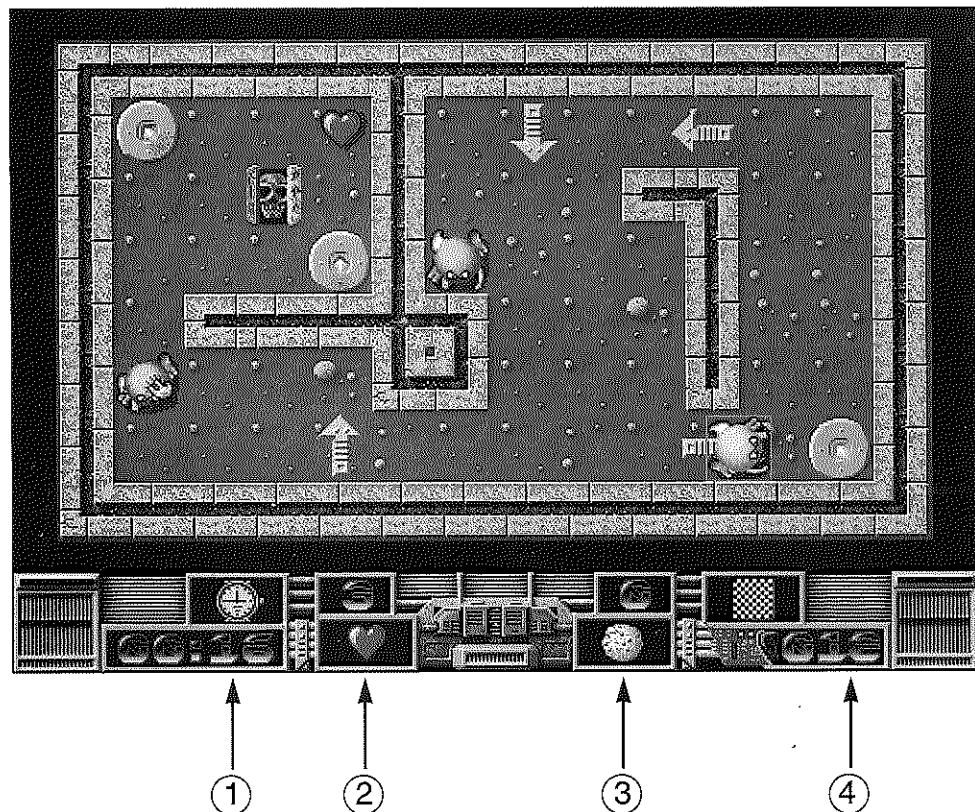
He looked down with a sad smile, and after a long pause, asked another clever looking adviser to come and explain the details of the mission.


"This spaceship is equipped with a brand new powerful computer. To get the travellers used to their future environment, holograms of the planet's landscapes and environment are displayed permanently. You will probably find a different type of environment in each level. There are 10 levels in all, each with the same amount of rooms on each floor."

"This will be a tough mission. You will have to visit each room to find all the Tinies, then bring them back to their sleepers. Your Controller is directly connected to the board computer, and emits powerful paralysing waves, but they are limited to the current room. As soon as you enter the room, the Tinies will be held in suspended animation and they will not be able to move until you hit one of them with your controller. He will then be under your control: tell him where to move, and he will obey. When you placed the Tiny in the desired place (the final goal is to bring him back to a sleeper), your influence will stop and he will be paralysed again."


“You will check the Controller functions through a screen displaying the board cameras recordings. At the bottom of this screen, various informations about your progress will be displayed. Do you want me to show you how it works? Yes? OK.”


The Tiny Controller



“The time is displayed in (1). As I explained, the Tinies said they will destroy the spaceship, and I know they will do it! You must  move the Tinies in a room before the time elapses. Sometimes the computer will help you to get some extra time: in the various rooms, you will find special watches. If a Tiny walks on a watch, you will get a time bonus, and he will not even notice it!”

“The number of available time warps is displayed in (2). The Controller is a very powerful system, which allows you to travel in the past. If you could not bring all the Tinies back to their sleepers in time, you can use a time warp and restart the same room, with the Tinies at the same places. But be careful, because a time warp takes a lot of energy, and you can only use it from time to time, as indicated on this meter. The computer is equipped with a similar system (normally used to prevent any accident), but it can only be accessed from the inside.”

“If you see a heart symbol  on the screen, send your Tiny to it, and you will collect a new time warp. It will be displayed on your meter, and you can use it later, whenever you want.”

“The number of available resurrection eggs  is displayed in (3). The spaceship is a complete mess, and we suppose that the eggs previously stocked in the sick bay have been scattered all over the place. If you see an egg on the screen, send a Tiny to it: he will stock it in a safe place, and your meter will show the current number of available resurrection eggs. If, by any chance, a Tiny dies during your mission, you can instantly bring him back to life with one of your eggs. But be careful: eggs can be used only once. Do not waste them!”



“And finally, the room number registered in the computer is displayed in (4). Remember that the spaceship is made of ten levels, with 10 rooms in each level. You must explore each room one after the other. The next room will only be accessible when all the Tinies in the current room are all on their sleepers. Once the room is cleaned, the computer will give you a password to open the next one. You can also use this password to go directly in a selected room. You will use this option if you want to rest for a while and continue your mission later.”

The King hold up his head, and talked again, this time with a deep voice:

“Now you know about our desperate situation, and you also know how to save us. Please hurry up, and bring back our brothers alive before it’s too late! Our fate lies in your hands...”

