

# The Pentagon

—SHA-3 (Sam, Han, Adib)

Having assembled the crystalline structure, you, the Bananas, the Teddies and Rat dash through a maze of tunnels and rooms to reach the balustrade upon which Bin Drinken delivered his spirited oration. Upon reaching the crystal staircase, you all take a moment to catch your breath, while B1 and B2, who don't have lungs, greet the crowd of eager faces below. Still resolute in saving Melbourne from becoming a giant banana split, the seven of you soldier on, placing the transparent sculpture upon the crystalline receptacle.

Opalescent colours break forth and dance about the room as pure white light beams are split apart by the crystal key, and an indoors Aurora Australis shimmers across the navy ceiling. Light pours out from a newly opened entrance, and you step in to the *CONTROL ROOM (OF DOOM)* - as named by the cardboard sign stuck up by Ossie Bin Drinken.

The room is clinical, clean, cleared of all furniture and equipment save for a desk, a chair and a MacBook laptop. Swinging his chair about dramatically and deliberately, Ossie proclaims: "I was not expecting you."

"In any case," he stands up and starts pacing about the room, "It is too late. My plans are in motion, and this time, they're perfect. I have set the Big Banana to blow up Melbourne in precisely one hour, modulo the time it has taken for me to swing my chair around and talk to you. There are no passwords, no *warez* you may employ to thwart my machinations. And the timer is hard-wired into the bomb itself, any attempt to disable it will trigger—" and with those words still ringing through the air, Bin Drinken propels himself down the emergency staircase. The whole speech was just to stall you and to prevent you from catching him! You ready yourself for another mad dash, but are halted by big fruity hands placed on your shoulders.

"Don't you worry about catching him. B1 and I'll get him. After all, running down stairs and catching people unawares is our specialty. You just try and stop the missile!"

You heed their advice and get right on the Mac. After forty minutes worth of furious typing, you come to the sad conclusion that Bin Drinken was right. There's nothing any man or beast can do to stop this bomb from blowing up. In your renewed air of depression, the remaining five of you sit in reflective reminiscence. Even if you tell your family and friends now, there's no way that they could get out of Melbourne in time. It looks like the only option you have is to tell the boys and girls to evacuate the Big Banana and trigger the bomb yourself, hoping that if the point of impact for the warhead is on the inside of the Big Banana, then perhaps the space-time singularity will absorb most of the unleashed energy and radiation. Just as you're about to present your idea to the Teddies, Lulu suddenly stands up.

"Wait! I remember a long time ago at a barbeque, the Bananas were a little bit tipsy and they told me this story about a legendary pair of golden bananas that would never become over-ripe. I think that they said something about it being able to turn any banana alive! Yes! I'm beginning to remember... they also said that there is this secret mystic golden compass you could use to find it. Maybe if we could find these golden bananas, then we could convince the Big Banana to not blow up Melbourne?"

You smile weakly at Lulu's last minute delusions. Even if this old wives tale should prove to be true, there's no way you'd be able to find these *mystic bananas* in the twenty or so minutes before the Big Banana launches. You resolve once more to present your much more pragmatic solution, when the Bananas return with a very tied up and gagged Bin Drinken. At their arrival, Lulu pounces upon them and asks if they know how to find the golden bananas. They're stunned by her knowledge of this most sacred lore among banana-kins and sheepishly produce the aforementioned golden compass.

"Our father, the king of Banana Republic passed this heirloom unto us when he departed from this world. But we've never been able to figure out how to use it."

You quickly run up to the Bananas and grab this needle-less compass off them. You focus all your mental capacity on the happenings of these last few days and as your thoughts spin around your head, you start to see a pattern in all these things. Perhaps, just perhaps, there is hope yet for a happy ending.



