

## MAUDE MOLD

#14

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### LOGIC OF ACCUMULATION

tags: 1961, mars2, plinth\_mold

31 October.

Authority is contextual. Mold Industries, Inc., had occupied a full hangar at the test site since the middle 1950s. Increased operations tempo had paid dividends, and today the corporation's real estate holdings on Mars exceeded its competitors by a substantial margin. Just as well, security requirements at the test site had called for even more space than would otherwise have been strictly possible, given the dimensions of the Federal land withdrawal, in order to sustain compartmentalization of diverse projects. By now the process of authorizing Mold Industries land for official use had streamlined appreciably.

Plinth Mold sat at his desk in the center of his company's original—now empty—hangar. Big orange jack-o'-lantern full of candy placed on the desk in front of him. Both front and back doors had been rolled completely open, and he stared hard at the horizon, miles distant, as the sun began to set, and a chill breeze harried the back of his neck. Children both bewilderingly young and questionably old trudged along the runway in front of his hangar, collectively disguised in a dizzying panoply of official merch and self-made cosplay, nary an employee in sight.

Plinth tapped the sign on his desk, and presently a larger-scale version of the same thing illuminated outside his hangar.

RECYCLE CENTER, it read, just below the familiar Möbius strip designed in 1970 and trucked back to 1961 especially for use here, on Plinth's building.

None of the children stopped by for treats, or even seemed to notice him sitting there.

But Plinth had another trick up his sleeve.