

01001100 01000001 01010101 01001110 01000011 01001000

THE UPPERCASE PROPHECY

Decoder & Puzzle Pack



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A printable companion to LAUNCH TIME by Michael D. Young

For personal, classroom, and book-club use • Spoiler notes are labeled

Transmission Received

J.D. receives a message in binary after touching a glowing DEM gear. Once decoded, the message becomes an uppercase prophecy - the sort that can reshape entire worlds.

The blue screen approaches for all of existence.
Averting disaster will require persistence.
The ghosts of the past must assemble as one
To inspire a new cast if the job's to be done.
So once you've collected the twelve and the three,
Return with them all to the site of the tree.
And once you are there, you'll know just where to look
Return to the oldest of tricks in the book.
The Singularity comes.
Arrives with Mercury's drums.

Mission: analyze the prophecy without accidentally ending existence.

1. Binary Boot Camp

Computers speak in ones and zeros. Use the 8-bit ASCII key below to decode the test message. The opening chapter title itself is binary.

A	01000001	E	01000101	I	01001001	O	01001111	U	01010101
L	01001100	N	01001110	R	01010010	S	01010011	T	01010100
C	01000011	H	01001000	M	01001101	P	01010000	?	00111111

Decode: 01010001 01010101 01000101 01010011 01010100

Answer: _____

Write a five-letter word and convert it to binary using the key:

Word: _____ Binary: _____

2. Rightbeard's Prophecy Paradigms

List the final word of each paired line. Do the rhymes create a second idea or pattern?

Take the first letter of each of the first eight lines. In the novel, this reveals a planetary destination.

Choose a key word and use its length to sample every nth letter. This is one of Rightbeard's more advanced tests.

Keep the same words but rearrange a selected passage. Does a new instruction emerge?

The rarest method: look for meaning in the "gray areas" - what is implied but never plainly said.

3. The Acrostic

Take the first letters of these eight prophecy lines:

- ___ The blue screen approaches for all of existence.
- ___ Averting disaster will require persistence.
- ___ The ghosts of the past must assemble as one
- ___ To inspire a new cast if the job's to be done.
- ___ So once you've collected the twelve and the three,
- ___ Return with them all to the site of the tree.
- ___ And once you are there, you'll know just where to look
- ___ Return to the oldest of tricks in the book.

Hidden destination: _____

Hint: Gopat recognizes it as a planet.

4. Mercury's Drums

The phrase sounds literal, but the story reveals that Mercury's supplier uses harmonic commands. His insignia is a blue gemstone surrounded by three musical lines.

Pattern Test

Circle the things most likely to function as coded harmonic controls: PANPIPES • CHIMES • DRUMS
• WHISTLES • GUITAR AMP • DOORBELL

Create a four-note command:

Purpose: _____

Rhythm / notes: _____

What safety measure prevents an accidental command? _____

5. Prophecy Tracker

As you read, record what each clue seems to mean and how your interpretation changes.

Clue	First Guess	Later Meaning
blue screen		
ghosts of the past		
new cast		
twelve and three		
site of the tree		
oldest trick		
Singhilarity		
Mercury's drums		

Answer Key / Spoiler Page

Binary chapter title: QUEST. The novel's first eight prophecy-line initials spell TATSRAR. "Mercury's drums" eventually points toward Tiberius Plinth, the Blue Messenger, whose equipment responds to harmonic commands. Keep the remaining clues open as the series continues.

J.D.'s Warning

Uppercase prophecies have a bad habit of sounding clearer after the catastrophe has already begun.