



# QuestBusters™



The Adventurers' Journal  
February, 1988

Vol. V, #2

\$2.00

## Border Zone: From Litzenburg with Love

By William E. Carte

Your mission, should you choose to accept it, is to prevent the assassination of an American diplomat in Litzenburg. Make no mistake about it, your very life will be in danger. One small mistake, one very small mistake, could cost your life and the life of our diplomat. This review will self-destruct in ten seconds....

Marc Blank's first Infocom game since he collaborated with Dave Lebling on *Enchanter*, *Border Zone* is a spy thriller in a *Mission Impossible* setting that would do even James Bond proud. The excitement erupts not in the USA or Russia, but in the Eastern Bloc countries of Frobnia and Litzenburg, where all strangers are suspect and all actions observed. It consists of three acts that are actually different stories, like chapters in a book.

The unique thing is that all three revolve around the same plot, but with the player changing roles in each. In Act One you're an innocent American businessman on a train passing through Frobnia, asked by an intelligence agent working for our side to

help stop the diplomat's assassination. In Act Two you assume the role of that agent, wounded, freezing and running for your life. And in Act Three you'll wear the cloak and dagger of the evil spy, who needs to ensure that the killing takes place—but without it being attributed to his own country. The different stories can be played independently and in any order, but the later ones won't make much sense unless you solve them one, two, three.

### *The Clock is Running*

In addition to the novelty of wearing several hats in the same story, you'll find another special feature unique to the world of Infocom adventures: a built-in clock runs through the game. It can be slowed down but not turned off. This means that while you're thinking of what to do next, the dogs may close in on you and attack, or the guard may burst into your room and search you.

I found this annoying, since it makes it almost impossible to map. Disaster has a way of striking while you pause to draw boxes and lines and write in location names. It's also cumbersome for those who like to thoroughly think through their next move while scrutinizing the current text display. (The ability to print the game text has never been more useful in an adventure than in this one.)

There's certainly no time for that here, though the running clock does add suspense to the story—and it is a thriller, after all, so some people will probably relish the extra challenge and realism that results from the real-time nature of the action.

The puzzles consist mainly of object-oriented puzzles, but there are several characters with whom you must interact successfully for ultimate victory. You don't get points for puzzle-solving, so it's like *A Mind Forever Voyaging* in this sense. The prose, too, is well-written and propels you straight into the world of border guards, passwords and clandestine meetings.

The events are linear, always occur-

ring in the same order. After playing through the scene a few times, you can count the number of turns before the guard always crashes in to search your car on the train. Each story can have various conclusions: If you've done everything right in the first one, you can just hand your contact the item he desires at the end; otherwise you'll have to employ a bit of subterfuge in passing it to him.

Like *Nord and Bert*, *Border Zone* has built-in Invisi-Clues. If the mail we get concerning our walkthroughs is a fair barometer, I suspect this feature will be greeted with mixed feelings. I'm sure many people will resort to the hints the very first time they get stuck and will go on to expose the answer to every tough puzzle, thus ruining the game. If you have the willpower, though, proper use of this feature could prove very helpful. I could certainly have used a built-in clue when stuck for two weeks trying to get past the guard in *Ballyhoo*. This isn't likely to happen in a game where the clues are only a keystroke away.

Documentation is very good, including a background of the story and setting, a Frobnia Tourist Guide containing an English-Frobnian phrase book that serves as copy protection, a map of Frobnia and a discount coupon for *Deadline*,

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## Best Quests of '87

No superfluous fluff here, just a quick list of our Contributing Editors' consensus of the best adventures and role-playing games of last year. (A few that were actually released at the end of 1986 were included because they only reached mainstream distribution in '87.)

- Best Quest of the Year: *Might & Magic*
- Best All-Text Adventure: *Bureaucracy*
- Best Graphic Adventure: *King's Quest III*
- Best Fantasy Role-playing: *Wizardry IV*
- Best Science Fiction Role-playing: *Starflight*
- Best Tactical Role-playing Game: *Eternal Dagger*
- Best Shoot-'em-up-in-a-Maze Game: *Gauntlet*
- Best Conversion: *Bard's Tale*, Amiga
- Best Story Line: *Lurking Horror*
- Best Combat/Magic System: *Legacy of the Ancients*
- Best Logical Puzzles: *Stationfall*
- Best Special Effects: *Maniac Mansion*
- Most Innovative: *Beyond Zork*
- Best VaporQuest: *Ultima V*

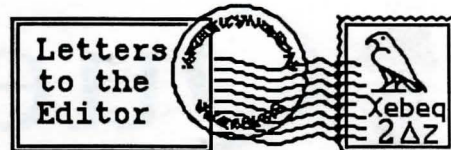


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# Adventure Hotline



## New Adventures

*Deathlord*, the latest from Electronic Arts, is based on the "more is better" philosophy: 157 dungeon levels, 16 character classes, 84 spells...and promises 200+ hours of role-playing. You can create characters for a six-member team, or import existing ones from *Ultima III*, *Bard's Tale I* or *Wizardry I-III*. Infocom's latest is *In Sherlock: The Riddle of the Crown Jewels*, their first Holmes adventure. But you play Watson in the game, which was written by Bob Bates. Sound versions (IIGS, Mac, ST and Amiga) are planned for March. Micro Illusions just released *Romantic Encounters at the Dome*, an adult text adventure for the IBM, plus an enhanced version of the educational space adventure *Discovery* (Amiga) and a mathematics expansion disk. FTL, the *SunDog* people, just released *DungeonMaster* for the ST. *Pirates* is sailing to shore for the IBM and Apple. Origin now says *Ultima V* will ship this month.

## The Latest Conversions

*Ultima IV* is definitely out for the IBM (we actually have a copy). So is the C 64 *Might and Magic* and a clue book for the game. The 64 *Wizardry I: Proving Grounds of the Mad Overlord* is also out there, and SSI says the IBM *Phantasie III* should be in stores this month. The IBM *Guild of Thieves* and *Pawn* are shipping; without EGA, they're all-text. Mac versions of *Silicon Dreams* and *Jewels of Darkness* are also out.

## What Good is a Crimson Borla, Anyway?

For a future article, we're looking for lists of weapons, items, spells and so on that have special uses in a particular role-playing game: the Star Trump Card in *AR: The Dungeon*, for example, or the Diamond Key in *Might and Magic*. Please state the game, the item's name, its use and location. The three people who send in the most verifiable items will be admitted into that most hallowed league, the QuestBusters Guild.

## QuestBusters Survey—and Contest!

We usually run two walkthroughs in each issue, but this month used the space for the second one to do a survey. Besides helping us decide what kind of coverage to

provide in the future, it will also assist in our quest to attract more advertisers (the only way to keep the subscription price at \$16 and continue to expand the Journal). To encourage people to send in the survey, we've also made it a contest: From those that are received by March 31, 1988, we'll pick two winners at random to receive the game of their choice. (Feel free to photocopy the survey if you don't want to rip out the page.) All information will be confidential, and you don't have to answer any questions you don't want to—but the more complete the survey, the better.

## ACS "Tool Kit"

Contributing Editor Mike Bagnall has written *The Second Realm*, a set of utilities that make working with *Adventure Construction Set* far easier on the C 64 (conversions are planned). Features include: print world map, three-line messages, items and creatures; erase world map, selected regions and all graphics; copy graphics, items or creatures to any ACS game, and send a game via modem. It's \$14.95 from Mystic Softworx, RD #1, Box 1025, New Freedom, PA 17349. And the ACS Club's newsletter has a new name—*The ACS Adventurer*. For info on the club (\$5 a year, all ACS versions covered), write: Will Bryant, 9920 Milltrail Dr., Dallas, TX 75238.

## Sierra's On-line Hotline

For 24-hour-a-day help, you can access Sierra's new Bulletin Board: (209) 683-4463. Besides clues to their adventures, it also has free demos of Sierra software, tech support and new product info.

## Dungeon Contest Winners

Intellicreations recently announced the winners of the *Dungeon* Awesome Character contest. Tim Patrick of Hawaii trained the Good winner, Dragon Slayer. Orion, winner in the Evil category, was led astray by Jeff Towich of Pennsylvania. Both were level 13 characters, but the contest was also judged on spells, weapons, quests solved, number of hard-to-find items possessed and other factors. Intellicreations also announced a "buy one, get one free" promotion. Specially marked packages of *The City*, *The Dungeon*, *Dark Lord*, *221 B Baker Street*, *Force 7*, *Black Magic*, *Tomahawk*, *Bismark*, *Tobruk* and *Saracen* contain

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Two recent letters concerned the Swap Shop. The most disturbing one involved someone who bought two Infocom games through an ad, only to get pirated copies. The writer included a letter from the individual that clearly showed he'd been selling pirated software for some time, so you won't be seeing any more ads from him. Another person never got the game for which he had already sent his as a trade.

The Swap Shop, as stated in each issue, is intended for trading and selling original software, complete with documentation and other items included in the package. Most ads we get say this, but since we mention it in each issue, those portions are edited out to make room for more ads.

Other than the loathesome and unrealistic task of maintaining a List of Offenders, there's no way we can police the ads—so the only way to be sure no one advertises pirated software is to kill the Swap Shop. Hopefully it won't come to that, for some people say it's one of their favorite parts of QB. Another possibility is to charge for ads, since people who steal software and resell it are not as likely to do so if they have to actually spend money in the process. We don't want to do that either.

Part of the Survey on page nine will give you a chance to voice your opinions on the Swap Shop, so please let us know how you feel. Meanwhile, the safest policy is to answer a few ads and develop trading relations with someone reliable. Lots of people have reported satisfaction with their Swap Shop dealings, but until you know who you're dealing with, it's a matter of *caveat adventurer*—let the adventurer beware.

## QuestBusters™ The Adventurers' Journal

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QuestBusters is published monthly by the Addams Expedition, POB 525, Southeastern, PA 19939-9968. Annual subs, \$16. Canada, \$22. Int'l, \$32. Intergalactic, 569 ziirgz. Textual contents Copyright Shay Addams, 1988, All Rights Reserved. Copying without express permission is expressly prohibited and punishable by the Wrath of Xuluui.



# Police Quest: In Pursuit of the Death Angel

Me, have fun playing the role of a cop? Sure, pal—I never saw more than five minutes of *Hill Street Blues*, thought *Dragnet* was a drag, and haven't watched *Miami Vice* since the first season. Why should you care about my taste in TV? Because even though I'm no fan of cop shows, *Police Quest* slapped the handcuffs on my attention and kept me prisoner for a week of engrossing entertainment. (Fortunately the QB attorney bailed me out in time to write this review.)

It's the first disk drive detective game in which you must work your way up from uniformed cop to plainclothes officer, and the only one that asks you to deal with an assortment of crimes while working on the main case. *Police Quest* is also the most authentic such scenario, written as it was by former California Highway Patrolman Jim Walls.

## You Have the Right to Get Stuck...

Most "puzzles" focus on following the procedures of a real policeman, such as always reading a prisoner his rights and handcuffing them *behind* the back. Violate a rule and it's "Game Over" time. So the manual, which takes the form of an "Indoctrination Guide" for the Lytton Police Department, is required reading if you hope to last long on the mean streets of this crime-ridden town, let alone stop the rising tide of drugs, murder, prostitution and gambling. Some procedures aren't discussed in the manual, which means you'll get a little on-the-job training.



The story opens as you, Sonny Bonds, attend the morning briefing and learn the suspected kingpin of the local drug scene is a coke dealer known only as the "Death Angel." Busting him is your long range goal. Top score is 245 points, but as usual in a Sierra game you can finish it and still not get them all. (I nailed the Dope Fiend but wound up with just 190.)

Instead of a sword you'll grab a .357 Magnum, and you pack a ticket book in place of a shield. Then you cruise the streets in a patrol car, as the game shifts from the familiar view seen in Sierra's graphic adventures to a top-down map of a small part of the city. Streets aren't named on the screen, but each area is marked (Map D2, A1, etc.). You can learn your exact location by radioing to the dispatcher, and a fold-out map of the seven by eleven block town is included in the package.

Your car is represented by a little oblong

that's maneuvered with joystick, mouse, cursor keys or numeric keypad; by punching a function key you can change speeds: code-1 is normal; code-2, faster; and in code-3 you turn on the siren and race through red lights just like a real cop. Get close enough behind a car in this mode and both cars pull over automatically (unless the driver hasn't broken a law, in which case you'll crash—and guess what?).

If you run a red light when you're not in code-3, the game ends because you've violated police procedures. It also ends if you hit the road without conducting a safety check on your car, or violate any of the countless procedures that I'm sure real cops overlook every day without getting fired. (That's my sole complaint about the realism: In real life you'd at least get a few reprimands before being booted off the force.)

You can pull over and park at buildings with parking spaces out front, places like the Delphoria Hotel, Carol's Caffeine House and the City Jail. The game reverts back to the standard graphics display, and you can get out and guide your animated character in the door to investigate, talk to other characters and snoop around.

After pulling a car over for running a light or some other offense, you'll also see the standard display. There are some nice touches in these scenes, like when you ask to see the driver's license and it appears onscreen, complete with picture. The driver may even be illustrated with animated graphics.

## How Animated Was It?

Helen Hots, for instance, was so animated, her license said she lives at 202 Gyrate Court. In this scene and a few others, the graphics and some text responses get risqué, but the game won't spit out any X-rated pictures or words (though it understands a few and appropriately answers any lewd suggestions you might make (but *you'd* never do that, would you?). Sierra says *Police Quest* is best suited for "mature players," but it's closer to a PG-Rating than an R.

The story unfolds in a linear fashion, with time-triggered radio calls sending you to various locations to investigate a wide mix of situations: rowdy bikers, a car wreck, a stolen Caddie and the like.

In most cases, music alerts you to life-threatening situations. Gradually you learn that Lytton's small-time dealers are getting rubbed out one-by-one, and the clues point toward an out-of-town killer who's working with the Death Angel.

## It's Going Down!

If you're lucky enough to nail him, you'll be assigned to the Narcotics Division and get to work on the Big Case. Then you can drive an unmarked car, wear civilian clothes and make some practical use of the computer in the station. Until this point you won't have found much to look up in the police data base. But be sure to save the game when you get ready to bust someone, for an arrest can have several outcomes depending on your actions—and most of them will end the game, even if you don't get killed by the suspect.

Like real life, *Police Quest* is not all chase scenes and night court. You get to go off-duty for awhile and drive your red Corvette to a surprise birthday party for another cop. The "chicken incident" is amusing and sheds light on the personal side of a cop's life. Several characters, like fellow officers Dooley and Keith and hooker "Sweet Cheeks" Marie, populate this fantasy world and make it more than just a game in which you wander around on your own. There is also a sub-plot, the running story of fellow officer Jack and his doper daughter.

## The Parser Police

Since most of the things you must do to succeed are handled with lively and detailed animated action, the Sierra parser doesn't have to be as powerful as its counterparts in other adventures. Still, the vocabulary leaves a lot to be desired, and the inventory command proves misleading at times, telling you that you've got an item in your inventory even if you actually left it in the car (which makes it hard to write a ticket). After a few hours of playing, though, I got the feel of the parser and communication smoothed out. A plethora of clichéd police jargon is incorporated into the vocabulary, but I have to admit I enjoyed saying "Book him!" and "Freeze, sucker!"

As in previous Sierra games, you've got

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# The Seven Spirits of Ra

By Stephen King

Long famous for their traditional *Wizardry* scenarios, Sir-Tech is expanding their line of games into other realms, first with *Deep Space: Operation Copernicus*, and now with *Seven Spirits*. It's a role-playing fantasy wherein you play the part of Osiris, a member of the ancient Egyptian Pantheon of Gods and legendary first Pharaoh of Egypt.

## Life in the Land of the Dead

In the opening sequence of *Seven Spirits* we find Osiris in the royal barge, where events have proceeded beyond your control. You can move around a bit, but will ultimately be killed by royal guardsmen whom Set, King of the Realms of Darkness, has brainwashed into believing Osiris is evil. After this sequence, Osiris is placed in the Duad, the fabled Egyptian land of the dead. The Duad is said to be a shadow of the world of the living, so you're likely to find creatures and things that correspond to those you might find while alive.

Your ultimate goal is to defeat Set. To do this, you must first recover your body, which has been dismembered and fed to various animals. Gaining back the parts of your body requires that you prevail over each of the five major animal species in battle. Individuals from the various group are scattered throughout the entire game, but you have to defeat specific "masters" of each animal race that can only be found in a single place.

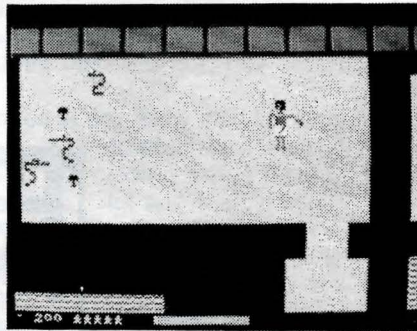
## You're Such an Animal

After defeating the leader of a group of beasts, you'll be able to transform your spirit self into the shape of that particular animal. This gives you abilities far beyond those of mortal men, which proves useful for solving certain puzzles. To gain access to tiny passages, for example, you can turn into a rat. An added advantage of transforming into an animal is that you won't be attacked by members of that group while "wearing" your new shape. In some cases you will not be attacked by other, friendly groups (bats and rats co-exist together nicely, for instance).

## An Exercise in Realism

One of the best things about this game is that a great deal of effort was expended to keep it as authentic as possible. The plot corresponds very closely to all accepted versions of the legend of Osiris as handed down from ancient times. The animals you encounter are only those that were known to be familiar in Egypt of the Pharaohs. Many of the shapes, for

instance Osiris himself and Anubis, are depicted as portrayed in ancient Egyptian art. At certain points in the action, clues turn up in the form of authentic hieroglyphics (don't worry, a Rosetta stone is not necessary to finish the game). In fact, even the geographical layout of The Duad itself was taken from The Book Of The



Dead. Much time was obviously spent to avoid anachronisms.

*The Seven Spirits of RA* is a collaborative effort by Randall Bohrer, Bryan Rossmann & Neal White III, who comprise a company called Macrocom, Inc. Before their association with Sir-Tech, Macrocom wrote and distributed another fantasy role-playing game called *ICON: Quest For The Ring*, in which you played the role of legendary Norse hero Sigfried. Anyone familiar with *ICON* will find many similarities with *Seven Spirits*. Some of the animals look the same, and much of the landscape has a similar square-edged feel to it. You will also find the three weapons look and work as they did in the earlier game. Make no mistake though, this game is not an *ICON* retread.

Much to their credit, Macrocom has not borrowed their game format from any of the other popular role-playing games. I get really tired of seeing new games that are about 80% *Ultima* or *Wizardry*, with the concepts mixed around a bit and an original idea tossed in here and there to avoid lawsuits. *Seven Spirits* has both an original design as well as a unique plot, and it's refreshing to see such a game in the midst of countless clones.

## Hi-Res or not Hi-Res?

The one negative thing I have to say about *Seven Spirits* has to do with graphics. It's billed as hi-res, and special attention is given to the fact that it is the first IBM game capable of displaying up to 60 multi-colored, animated characters onscreen at a time.

In the first place, there are only a handful of still screens that could really be considered hi-res. The rest are of medium resolution with several individual elements even classifying as low-res. I never

saw a screen with 60 animated characters on it at once. But even though I think I saw about 99% of the screens, I don't really doubt that it is possible. The characters are minimal two-frame animations, though: Osiris' legs and arms remain still when he walks about, and if you attack while bare-handed, Osiris' swinging arm and fist are depicted by a single pixel at the end of your arm (which is hanging at your side) moving out a square.

## Glorious Living Color

The one area where *Seven Spirits* really shines graphically is in its flamboyant use of color. I can well remember when I first got my IBM compatible. Almost every game that I could find was in low- to medium-resolution, with only two displayable colors (four if you count black and white). The two colors chosen almost always looked absolutely putrid together. Generally they were bright green and orange. Even though *Seven Spirits* does not seem to take full advantage of EGA and Tandy graphics modes (a practice that has become much more common in the

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FRIENDLY, ARTISTIC, MYTHICAL

## DRAGONS

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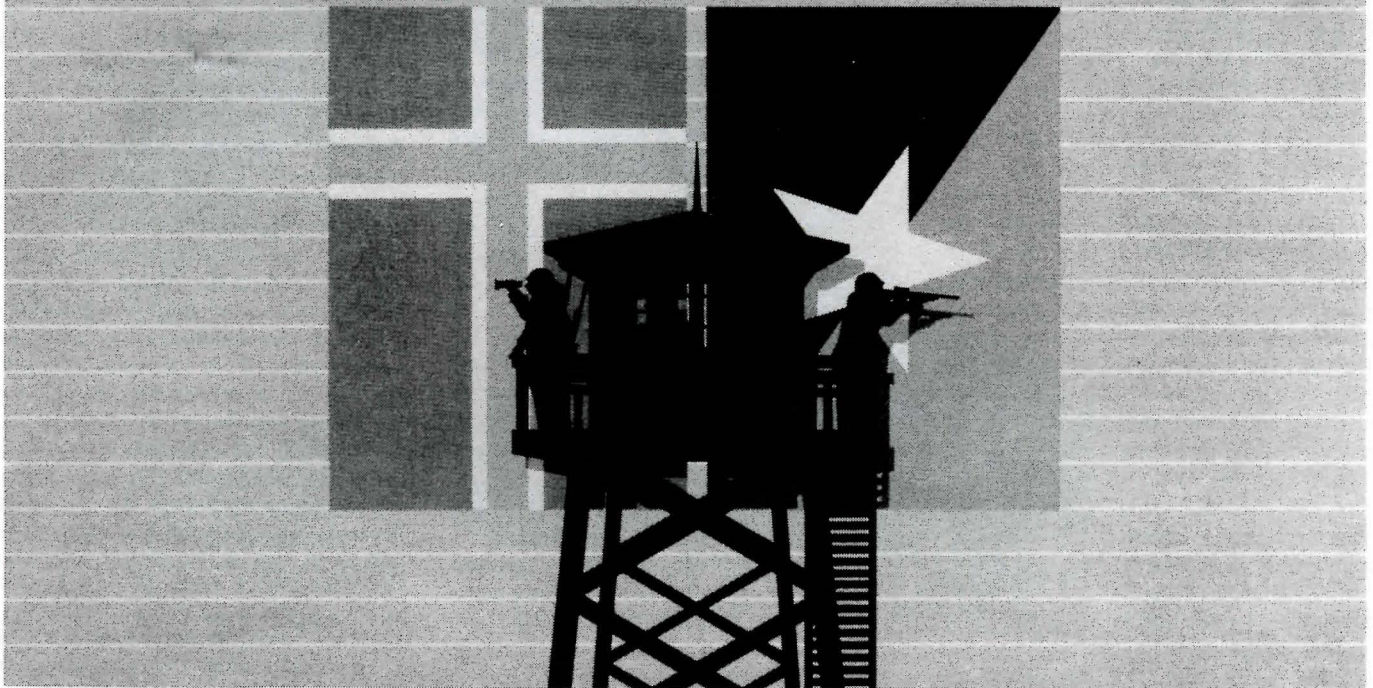


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# BORDER ZONE™



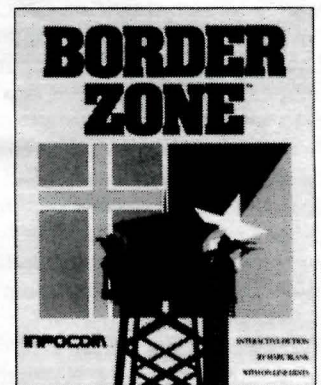
Where the Iron Curtain divides East and West, the frontier is a no man's land between freedom and captivity, a place where moments lost or precautions not taken exact a toll in men's lives. In *Border Zone*, you cross this barrier not once, but three times, as three different characters in a riveting story of international intrigue.

The fast-paced plot involves a headstrong American spy, an easy-going businessman, and a ruthless KGB agent. All three become entangled in the assassination of a diplomat, their lives intertwining as each carries out his perilous assignment. You'll see the story from a different viewpoint in each of the three chapters of *Border Zone*.

The pulse-pounding tension of espionage is heightened by the addition of real time, which ticks on regardless of your actions. As you race against the clock to complete your missions, you'll find yourself caught up in a spine-tingling adventure that's far more suspenseful than any spy thriller you'll ever read.

*Border Zone* contains on-screen hints to help you out. But hints take you only so far. Even when you know exactly what to do, discretion and timing are crucial as you outwit the KGB, evade a snarling pack of search dogs, make a desperate assault on the barbed wire and guard towers of the border, and count down the moments to the assassination.

Infocom's interactive fiction opens up a whole new dimension in storytelling, offering you the leading role in a vividly-descriptive story. In *Border Zone*, author Marc Blank plunges you into the excitement and suspense of a top-notch thriller, made all the more intense by the addition of real time. So steel your nerves, and don't blow your cover, friend. You've a long way to go before you come in from the cold.



## INFOCOM™

125 CambridgePark Drive, Cambridge, MA 02140

*Border Zone* is available for the Apple II series, IBM PC and 100% compatibles, Macintosh, and Commodore 64/128. *Border Zone* is a trademark of Infocom, Inc.



# Fellowship of the Rings Fool's Errand

By Tracie Forman Hines

There are two kinds of computer adventure games: those created as a labor of love by dedicated, fanatic game-players, and those created by some marketing flack to capitalize on existing ideas.

*Fellowship of the Rings* is definitely the latter type. How else could such an absorbing, epic adventure translate to the screen as a lifeless, frustrating mess? The people responsible for this garbage are probably the same ones who decided that what the average American computer owner really needed was a recipe filing program. And we all know how successful *that* concept was!

The recipe filer's—I mean, game's—story line is familiar. Frodo, hobbit nephew of Bilbo, “The Hobbit,” is left a strange magical ring by his uncle, with a mysterious note from the wizard Gandalf urging him to get to Rivendell as soon as he can. With a little help from faithful Samwise, Merry and Pippin, Frodo may even reach his destination, avoiding the wraith-like Black Riders hunting him down on major roads. As anyone who read the Tolkien trilogy knows, Rivendell is but the first stop on a journey that eventually leads to a lava pit in the lair of an evil demigod—the only place where the ring can be destroyed.

## A Wrong Turn at Rivendell

It's hard enough to translate a classic story when you know what you're doing...and in the hands of a great game designer like Lord British, Chris Crawford or even Dan Bunten, this monumental adaptation from book to computer game might have had a chance of success. But left to some hack marketing team, none of whom have probably ever even played *Pac-Man*, let alone *Zork* (“Gee, Jim, I think it's time we opened one of those newfangled computer gaming divisions—the kids just eat that stuff up!”), this is a guaranteed debacle from start to finish.

What's so bad about it? Nothing—if you're judging it by the standards of 1980. The sentence parser is muddled and difficult to communicate with. You can't simply give an item in your possession to another character, for example; instead, you have to actually take it in hand first.

Also, this is an illustrated adventure, but the game is actually played in text mode—when you first move to a new location, you see a picture on the screen, with no text entry point and usually no visual clues as to what you might want to do. Then it reverts to all-text so you can type in a command. It would have been a lot more effective, not to mention aesthetic, if they'd made this an all-text game and simply included a picture book of different locations.

## Attack of the 50-Foot Parser

But even in the text mode, this game is far from up to par, especially when considered against the communications standards of an Infocom or Firebird game. The difficulty players have in communicating with the program leads first to frustration, then to boredom.

Even a professional playtester would be hard-pressed for motivation to play.

The only interesting twist to the game is the fact that players can assume the role of many different characters in the story, meaning that multiple people can play or that solo gamers can experiment with various strategies. Unfortunately, even this innovation isn't enough to make this turkey palatable.

So what *does Rings* have going for it? Great distribution. It's available in a slew of bookstores around the country, making it an easy buy for computer illiterates and well-meaning grandmothers who don't read game reviews. If you were thinking of investing some of your hard-earned cash on *Fellowship*, save your money—and figure you just paid off your QB subscription instead.

**Conclusions:** In a nutshell, folks, don't buy this game. Don't accept it as a gift. If it happens to turn up in your disk collection, bulk the disk and use it for something really important—even recipe files. If you want a really satisfying excursion to Middle Earth, dig out your hard copy of the *Lord of the Rings* trilogy and read it again. It will be a lot cheaper—and a lot more fun.

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**System:** Apple, C 64, IBM  
**Skill Level:** Masochist  
**Protection:** Program  
**Price:** IBM, \$39.95; others, \$34.95  
**Company:** Addison-Wesley

By Steven Payne

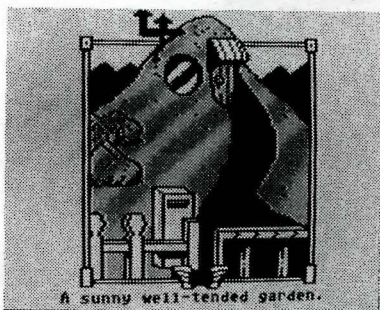
The Land of Tarot is in disarray, and the four kingdoms—Pentacles, Cups, Wands and Swords—are on the verge of war, due to the disappearance of fourteen treasures the evil High Priestess has cleverly hidden throughout the land. Armed only with your wits and a fragmentary map, you have been recruited by the Sun to save the day. Your task, as “The Fool,” is to discover the names of the treasures and inscribe them in the Book of Thoth. A brief animated video gets you started.

Sounds like standard *QuestBusters* fare? Guess again! *Fool's Errand*, by Cliff Johnson, is an adventure game of sorts, but one in which there is no role-playing, no traveling and exploration (at least not of the “go east” type) and no items to discover and manipulate in the usual manner. Instead, you read your way through an 80-part story. Just a few sections are accessible at the outset; more become available as you solve the onscreen puzzles corresponding to particular portions of the text. Each solution also gives you another piece of the Sun's map.

Once all the initial puzzles are solved and the map unscrambled, you're ready to figure out the names of the treasures, based on clues found in the map and story; at this point the program allows you to print out the entire text—all 21 pages—for easy reference. When all the names are correctly inscribed, the program takes you into a final animated sequence in which the High Priestess gets an appropriate comeuppance.

*Fool's Errand* is difficult to categorize. The manufacturer calls it a “fantasy puzzle,” and I suppose that's as good a description as any. The story line is not particularly coherent and often seems to be little more than a convenient hook on which to hang the elaborate verbal and visual puzzles. But it is the puzzles themselves that make the program truly special. There are scrambled pictures and letters, hidden words, mazes (including a tricky “roller-coaster” version), jigsaws, a card game, coded sentences, wandering control buttons—nearly 60 initial puzzles of all kinds before you even reach the end game. Best of all, *Fool's Errand* makes splendid use of the Macintosh interface; the graphics are excellent, and most of the time you can simply point, click, and/or drag to trace lines, select cards, exchange letters and so on.

*Fool's Errand* is not copy-protected and comes on three single-sided disks: one for the game itself, one for the puzzles and one for the animated “preview” and “finale.” After you save a game for the





# Conversion Castle



## IBM Might and Magic

The first conversion of Jon and Michaela Van Caneghen's superlative role-playing game, *Might and Magic* poses a challenging quest to discover the land of Varn's "Secret of the Inner Sanctum." You'll lead a band of six wizards and warriors and call upon an imaginative mix of 94 spells and over 250 magical artifacts and weapons while mapping a vast terrain.

Interiors of towns, castles and dungeons are colorfully illustrated with first-person graphics, and so are the expansive outdoor areas that include forests, oceans and deserts. The interface remains identical to the Apple original (all keyboard and no mouse or joystick support), but you can also use the numeric keypad.

Combat is handled on an all-text screen, after the monsters are depicted with elegant graphics that were especially redesigned for the IBM. All are now in 320 x 200 resolution. Some were ported

first time, the program automatically updates and saves your current position every time you quit. This prevents you from losing your latest achievements, but



can also be annoying if you want to go back to an earlier stage of the game.

In short, this game will not be every QuestBuster's cup of mead. It is definitely not *Zork*- or *Wizardry*-like, involves no killing (of yourself or others), is fairly stingy with clues, and expects you to know how to spell words like "onyx" and "amethyst." But for intermediate to advanced gamers who enjoy jigsaw puzzles, acrostics and so on, *Fool's Errand* could be ideal. The package indicates that this is the first entry in "The Arcanum Series." If Miles Computing can now find a story to match the quality of the puzzles, their next release in this series could be spectacular.

**System:** Mac 512K+  
**Skill Level:** Intermediate/Advanced  
**Price:** \$30  
**Company:** Miles Computing

over, others touched up and many redrawn completely. It's compatible with CGA, Hercules, Tandy 1000 (all 256K minimum) and EGA (512K minimum). The EGA graphics are essentially the CGA set with sixteen colors. Tandys with 256K use CGA mode; with 384K minimum, it shows sixteen colors. The sound effects and brief tunes sound better than in the original game.

It's a two-disk program that requires you to copy the scenario disk and play on it. One or two drives are supported. The program and scenario disk can be copied to a hard disk, and the master program is only needed as a "key disk" when you first start a new session. It also allows you to return to DOS without rebooting. Highly recommended. New World Computing/Activision, \$49.95.

## Mac, Amiga, IIGS Reach for the Stars

This is inherently a strategy game, but the sense of grand adventure that accompanies exploring and conquering the stars makes it enjoyable and engrossing entertainment for adventurers who like science fiction. The focus is on allocating resource points to develop colonies' industry, planetary environment, ship technology and other factors in order to build a fleet capable of taking over more and more planets. Converted from the Apple 2 game, it shows off a fresh interface that streamlines every aspect of game-play.

Besides easy-to-use menus and windows (movable but not resizable), you get a host of new features that reduce the need for paperwork. Instead of scribbling down your discoveries, you can pull down a list of all planets visited and their characteristics. Rather than consult the star map that comes with the game, you can view a full map onscreen—and make selections by clicking on stars. Another new feature offers advice on allocating your resources.

The game can be played by one-four people, and the computer will play any position as a beginner, experienced or veteran. A new Advanced Scenario introduces armies, navigation technology and other new elements while restructuring aspects of some existing mechanics and options (like no scouts!). The entire program loads into RAM on a Mac Plus, and you get color on the Mac 2. (The Amiga and IIGS versions were not available for this review.) Best of all, it's not protected, so you can slip it onto a hard disk or back it up with ease. Anyone who liked the Apple 2 version but now has a new

computer will definitely have fun with this one. (For a feature review of *RFTS*, see the August, 1985, issue.) Electronic Arts, \$47.

## Macintosh Defender of the Crown

Based on the battles between the Normans and Saxons in the days of Robin Hood, CinemaWare's strategy-adventure game has been refined in the latest translation. The most welcome new feature is the ability to save one game in progress, which encouraged me to play it long enough to actually win—something I didn't come close to doing with the admittedly easy Amiga original or the more demanding C 64 rendition. As a result, I became more aware of the importance of developing my character's leadership rating through jousting and was able to master a few fine points of strategy. (It's still a tough one; I played for four hours the next day without a victory.)

### Spies Offer Inside Info

Two more new features are available when you choose to read the map: Spies and Show Lords. The latter simply reminds you of the ratings for leadership, jousting and other abilities of the three computer-controlled Lords. But for a bit of gold, the Spies option reveals the number of soldiers, knights and other valuable intelligence. Other options introduced in the C 64 version, such as the ability to move more freely and to outflank the enemy during battle, are also found here, affording more leeway in mobility and overall strategy than in previous editions.

Most choices are chosen by clicking on radio buttons. To buy troops, you click on an up or down arrow. Graphics are extremely well-done, especially those depicting the castles. During battle, you'll see animated soldiers flailing away at each other and falling to the ground upon defeat. Catapults can use boulders, fire or disease, as in the C 64 game. Sound effects and music are also first-rate, especially the clinking of coins as your treasury grows at the start of each turn.

It requires an 800K drive. A one-click installation option lets you move the game to a hard disk, but only once. (You can remove it, then reinstall it later, though.) If you just copy and run the program without using this option, it calls your copy "unauthorized" and asks you to insert the original program as a key disk before allowing use of the copy. *Defender* is a rewarding experience that has a lot of replay value (I still haven't rescued that damsel in distress!), and CinemaWare is to be congratulated for finally adding a save game feature. (For details on the Amiga and 64 versions, see the August, 1987, issue.) Mindscape, \$49.95.



# Walkthrough: Plundered Hearts

By Marc Manderino

## Cabin

Stand. Wait (repeatedly). Yes (to Jamison's question). Wait.

## Captain's Quarters

Stand. Wait (three times). N. Open ewrdqctf. Enter ewrdqctf.

## Sleep Cupboard

Get all. Undress. Wear breeches. Wear shirt. Leave. (Jamison should have given you the coffer by now.) D. N. N.

## Crew's Quarters

Open coffer. (You should hear Crulley talking.) Get all. S. (Don't worry about flame.) S. S. U. S.

## Captain's Quarters

Get invitation. Throw eqhgt vjtwij ykpfqy. Go vjtwij ykpfqy. Climb ladder. U. U. U. U. [Poop] N. N. N.

## Forecastle

rwnn wr ngxgt. Enter shack.

## Galley

Get dagger. Leave. S. S.

## Quarterdeck

gpvgt ecum. Get rqttn. Climb out. N.

## Main Deck

vggt ftguu. Get uetcr. Dip uetcr in ycvgt. Open hatch. D.

## Hold and Keg

vjtqy uetcr qxgt icvg. U. S.

## Quarterdeck and Beach

gpvgt ecum. eww nkpg. (Wait till you reach shore.) ngcxg ecum. W. [Beach] N. E.

## Folly

Move slat. (Don't worry about Jamison.) Enter hole. N. Open window. W.

## Library

(Save game.) Get jcv. Take vtgcvkug. Touch uv ukpkuvic. Enter rqtvcvk. [Stairwell] D. E. E.

## Guard's Bunkroom

Get all. W. W. S.

## Anteroom

uswggbg dqvng on uncd. Give uncd to etqefkng. (Wait until he falls asleep.) S. W. Unlock door. Open door. N. [Cell] (Follow map to Clearing.)

## Clearing

Climb vine. Get gown. Undress. Wear gown. (Save game.)

## Bedroom and Foyer

N. E. D. [Foyer] Wait. Give invitation to butler. S.

## Ballroom

Dance with Jamison (until music is over). Wait (for Lafond to approach). Yes (to Lafond). Dance (until music is over). N. U. Wait (twice, or until butler tells you to go see Lafond). U. E. S.

## Gallery

wpvkg tqrg. N. (Save.) Open door. N.

## Lafond's Bedroom

Drink wine. uswggbg dqvng in dnwg iqdngv. Pour wine in dnwg iqdngv. Wait. Wait. Yes. Drink wine. Get urkeg. vjtqy urkeg at Lafond. Get all. tghngev nkijv in okttq. S. W. Wait. D.

## Foyer

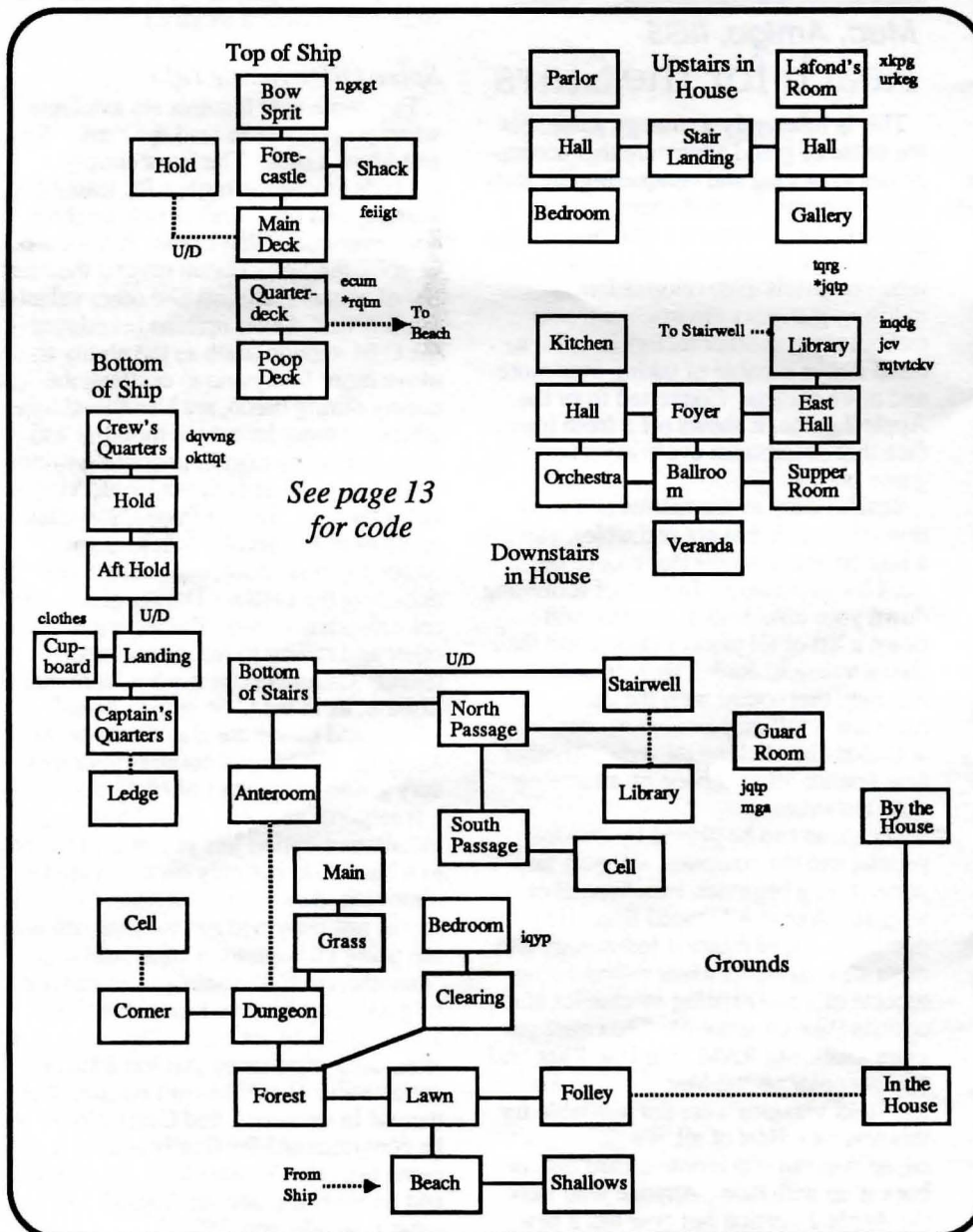
Yes. E. N. Open portrait. Enter portrait. D. S. S.

## Dungeon

igv trkgt. Attack Crulley. Attack Crulley. Close trap door. rkem nqem with dtqej. Give ucnuv to Nicholas. (Follow map to Gallery.)

## Gallery

uykpi fqyp tqrg. Get jqtp. S. S. S. Wait. Wait. Yes. Get rkuvqn. nqcf rkuvqn. ujqqv etwnng.





# QuestBusters Survey

Please help us determine QuestBusters' destiny. Answer all or most of the following questions and you may even win the game of your choice. (See News for contest details.)

Please rate each aspect of QuestBusters from 1 (not important) to 10 (very important)

Reviews     News 1 Keys to the Kingdoms 9 Duffy 2 Walkthrus 10 Swap Shop 10 Interviews 5 Features 7

Do you want walkthrus

Coded     Uncoded     Eliminated     Printed in an obscure foreign language    

Should Swap Shop ads be

Unchanged     Eliminated     Increased     Cut in half     Run every other month     Paid for     Other    

Which online networks (CompuServe, etc.) do you use regularly?    

Would you subscribe to an online version of QB, with brief reviews and news a month or so before the Journal? No

How long have you been playing adventures? 1 1/2 yrs

Do you prefer

Text adventures (like Zork)     Graphic Adventures (like Oo-topos)     Role-playing games (like Ultima)    

Do you also play

Non-computer adventures (like D & D and Traveler)     Play-by-mail games      
Other kinds of computer games     Strategy Simulations     Action     Other (specify)    

How many hours per days do you play adventures? 1-1 1/2

How many adventure games did you buy last year? 2

How many do you expect to buy in the next 12 months? 2

On what kind of computer do you adventure? IBM PC w/ expanded memory

Do you advise other people on which adventures to buy? Yes

How many other people will read this issue of QuestBusters? 2



What influences your decision to buy a game? Rate from 1 (not important) to 10 (very important)

Magazine reviews 5 Magazine Ads 5 Friends 1 Retailers 2 QB reviews 7 QB ads 7 Other (specify) 10 box description

Where do you purchase adventure games?

Retailer     Computer store     Mail order     Manufacturer     Other    

Last Grade of School Completed:

Junior High     Some High School     High School Graduate     Some Postgraduate      
Some College     Some Graduate School     Associate's Degree      
Bachelor's Degree     Some Enchanted Evening     Master's     Doctorate    

Your Job Title

Student     Public Service     Homemaker     Clerical     Managerial     Teacher     Engineering      
Doctor     Lawyer     Indian Chief     Computer Professional     Other (please specify)    

Your Annual Personal Income:     Your Annual Household Income:     Age 111

Do you own or rent (circle one) an  
apartment     co-op     condo     house     castle     cave    

Are you now, or have you ever been, a member of the Frobniian Communist Party? the best time I checked, I

Name: (necessary only to qualify for contest) Alvin Rein



# Force 7: Space Marines to the Rescue!

By Tim Snider

Somewhere in the depths of space, the planet Karis floats silently against a backdrop of stars. The mining colony on this backwater world has existed peacefully for many years, but now things are *too* peaceful. The colony has completely lost contact with Earth, and your squad, Force 7, has been ordered to investigate.

After weeks in hibernation, you awaken to discover that a meteorite has penetrated your ship's storage cabin. All but one life support system has been destroyed! This means that one—and only one—of you can teleport to the surface at a time. As Captain, you decide to go down first. Upon materialization, you find a sight that chills your soul—aliens have taken over the complex and captured all the colonists. These fanged nightmares turn and approach you. There seem to be hundreds of them coming from all directions! (Where's Sigourney Weaver when you need her?)

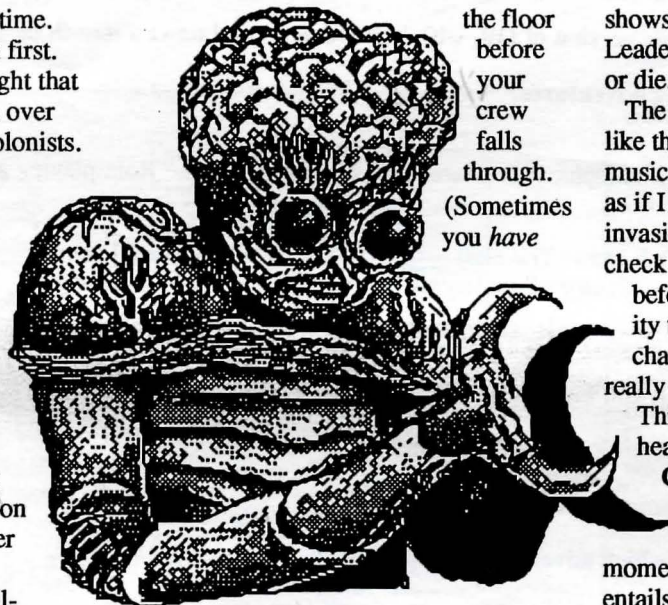
*Force 7* is a challenging action-adventure that puts you in command of the baddest group of Space Marines this side of Alpha Centauri. Each crewmember has a different talent and personality that makes him or her unique. Also, upon booting the program you get to enter your name—the Captain's name is yours! The object of the game is all-out extermination of the menace that has infested the base.

Alien soldiers crawl back and forth keeping watch over their prisoners in the rooms. Living pools of lava ooze across the floor, hoping to catch you in their gooey grip. Beating hearts produce more and more of the soldiers, until you destroy these monster-makers. And if that's not enough, the Alien Leader explodes through the floor—right under your feet—when you least expect it! With all these critters keeping you on your toes, you'll have trouble remembering to free the hostages. Keeping *yourself* alive is difficult enough!

Using the joystick, you maneuver the current character through the labyrinthian maze. The button fires the crewmember's weapon, which varies with the individual:

sub-machineguns to flamethrowers to grenade launchers. Holy Rambo! And believe me, you'll go through every round you've got while fighting your way through these creatures. You'll also find Mobile Battle Units in the complex. Two team members know how to work these death machines, which render the operator invulnerable and can destroy anything they run over—including the humans you hope to rescue, so watch it!

Everyone in your crew isn't packing a regular weapon, though. Your Welding Expert's welder can close up the gaping acid holes in



the floor before your crew falls through. (Sometimes you have

to seal up the holes to reach other areas unharmed.) The Scientist carries a Water Dispenser that can momentarily "freeze" the lava creatures. Since they are invulnerable, this is the only way to pass them without getting burned.

Gameplay resembles *Gauntlet*, with an aerial view enabling you to see what's going on in the surrounding rooms; the display scrolls, and you can find teleport units to reach other levels. You race about destroying the deadly menaces and freeing the captives, receiving points for each. When one of your crew starts getting fatigued or beaten, you can teleport a fresh one down to the complex.

Remember, each has a special talent. And once they die, their skills will be sorely missed. Battle Units are useless without trained drivers, and a certified Blueprint Reader is necessary to access other levels. In this sense *Force 7* is like

a role-playing game, for you must learn the value of each party member's skill and then employ them strategically—so it's more than just another shoot-'em-up.

## *Food, Fatigue and Ammunition*

A bar at the bottom of the screen shows the extent of the current crewmember's injuries and fatigue. By standing still you can regain Fatigue Points, but Health Points are lost forever. Eating food that's scattered about the maze will restore Fatigue Points, and you can also find Ammo to replenish spent rounds. Beside the "Status Info," a small Motion Indicator shows data on the approaching Alien Leader. When he arrives, it's time to fight or die.

The graphics are pretty good for a game like this, and the movie-like background music that plays throughout made me feel as if I were really in the heart of an alien invasion. (After playing *Force 7*, I had to check under my bed for "Facehuggers" before I could sleep at night.) The ability to use the different skills of several characters to stop the roaming horde really kept me on the edge of my seat.

This adventure is *not* for the light of heart.

**Conclusions:** Since this game is tightly based on a popular movie whose name eludes me at the moment [Editor: *Aliens*, perhaps?], it entails all the action and suspense of the film. It's highly recommended for true joystick jockeys who want to do more than just shoot and run.

While a fast trigger is instrumental for success, you've also got to employ your forces according to the immediate situation, bringing in the one with the right skill at the right time. The levels get harder as you progress, so there's no chance of the "getting the hang of it" syndrome; there's also no save feature. You'd better invest in Band-aids to nurse the blisters you'll get while tackling this monster. *Force 7* breeds a new sensation I've never before experienced in an action-adventure...paranoia.

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**System:** C 64  
**Skill Level:** Sharpshooter  
**Protection:** Program  
**Price:** \$19.95  
**Company:** Datasoft



# INTRIGUE

## A Mystery in Black and White

It's not unusual to see a contemporary film done in black and white, but few graphic adventures since *Mystery House* have totally foregone color. Washington, D.C., is the stage for this one-of-a-kind thriller, originally published by Kinemation in 1986 and just reaching mainstream distribution after its recent acquisition by Spectrum HoloByte.

### A Shoe Named Joe

Terrorists have kidnapped your brother Joe the Shoe, with whom you run a detective agency, and locked him in a hideout with a device that is releasing a deadly virus called PF13 into the atmosphere. You must deactivate the machine, free Joe and nail the perpetrator(s), which entails thoughtful interrogation and thorough exploration to gain the necessary information and items. Clues can also be picked up by reading a newspaper in your office during the opening sequence, which may be skipped after you've played it a few times and know all that can be learned here.

The interface consists of a menu of actions that vary in each situation; they usually change after you've chosen one, especially when talking to someone. Most menu-driven adventures suffer because they deprive you of the sense of freedom that accompanies typing in whatever you choose. But this one's variety of imaginative options invokes a greater sense of character interaction than I expected from experience with others of this type.

The first time you meet a certain woman and try to "Put your arm around her," she says "Who are you?" and looks startled. But do so the next time you see her, and, with a friendlier look on her face, she immediately recognizes you. It's also realistic because you must make real-time decisions when interacting with characters, or they'll leave.

### Digitized Art?

When you talk to a person, his picture fills the screen. They're drawn in such detail that they look like digitized graphics, and may even be based on handpainted or drawn artwork. Whatever technique was employed, it really brings black and white to life, creating the atmosphere of an early Bogart film like *The Maltese Falcon* (before Ted Turner got hold of it). Each time you ask or tell something to a character, he moves his head into a new

position, shifts his eyes or changes his facial expression. His remarks are seen in the picture, not below, and occasionally will be italicized for emphasis. Sound effects are above average, with special effects like jangling phones and a different



### Apple version

note for each key you tap.

Graphics of exterior and interior scenes are done in medium-res and show outlines of buildings, streets, trees and other items; your character's name (up to eight letters long) and the location's name is seen in a horizontal bar. A word appears over the direction you're facing, offering your only option there: Search, Talk (if a person is there) or Walk. (You can also take a taxi to location if you happen across one.) By pressing the cursor key (or joystick, paddle or even touch tablet) you can "turn" left or right to view another part of the location, sort of like standing in one location and turning in either direction. A map is included in the manual, so it's not necessary to draw one.

You've got to search for the hideout and a key that will unlock it, as well as a schematic of the PF13 device that is emitting the deadly virus into the air. (Without this, the boobytrapped device will blow up when you try to defuse it.) Sometimes these items turn up after searching a place, but often they're in the possession of a character.

The cast of characters includes a taco vendor, a nurse, the FBI director and a guy who bears a close resemblance to Humphrey Bogart. Naturally there's a dame in the story, and you keep running into this one all over town. You get to question people with options such as: "tell her about your situation," "show her photos" and similar actions. With the right approach you'll gradually collect clues to the identity of the terrorist, whom you

hope to eventually confront and accuse. You can also learn by observing people's movements, listening outside doors and calling your office frequently. (Phones are found in a few places, and you can call many of the characters.)

Locations of the objects, the method for deactivating the device and the identity of the culprit(s) changes with each new game. Combine this with three skill levels—easy, moderate and difficult—and it adds up to extensive replay value. Also, up to four people can play simultaneously. No scoring system is involved. One game can be saved, but it is erased when you restore it. This prevents you from solving the puzzle of defusing the device through trial and error.

### Your Little Black Book

A "Black Book" serves as manual and copy-protection, containing codes that open the safe in your office (without money from the safe, you can't complete the game).

The program is also protected, though for an additional fee you can get an unprotected version that may also be copied to a hard disk. (The registration card says this is true of all Spectrum's software, and it's too bad other companies don't offer this option.) Uniquely, it also has a Spanish-English glossary to facilitate conversing with a taco vendor who occasionally lapses into his mother tongue. And you get a clue sheet for taking notes, and permission to photocopy it.

**Conclusions:** This game makes no attempt to follow the classic formula for a disk drive detective game, so *Deadline* fanatics won't necessarily like *Intrigue*. It does present a different kind of challenge, however, and a well-illustrated one. And the humor consists of more than the usual bad puns: Just watch the soap opera on TV when you wind up in the hospital. At its hardest level *Intrigue* will give the best disk drive detectives the case of their lives, but it is probably best-suited for group games and for one-person quickies when you have a 30 minutes or an hour to kill.

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**System:** Apple (48K+), C 64/128

**Skill Level:** Variable

**Protection:** Software (unprotected version, \$7.50 for 5.25", \$10 for 3.5")

**Price:** \$30

**Company:** Spectrum HoloByte



## Border Zone

Continued from page 1

ZorkMaster Blank's first solo adventure. The parser is exceptional, with a vocabulary of over 800 words. You've got to play the Apple and C 128 versions in an 80-column display, but the C 64 is seen in 40-columns. It can be transferred to a hard disk and copied to make back-ups. **Conclusions:** Some Infocom games are what I consider truly great. They just grab you. You get engrossed in them and don't want to put them down. *Lurking Horror*, *Beyond Zork* and *Hollywood Hijinx* come to mind. *Border Zone* doesn't fall into this category. It's more along the lines of *Stationfall*, a good game that's worth your while if you like the genre. So anyone who enjoys mysteries or spy thrillers, and especially fans of *Deadline*, will definitely like *Border Zone*. [Editor's Note: This game and Infocom's previous release, *Beyond Zork*, both have the same initials. Will we soon see a combined sequel: *Border Zork?*]

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**System:** Apple (64K), C 64, IBM, Mac  
**Skill Level:** Expert  
**Protection:** In Manual  
**Price:** C 64, \$34.95; others, \$39.95  
**Company:** Infocom

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## Police Quest

Continued from page 2

to develop a knack for gambling. This time the game is five card draw, a variation of poker that's a bit more complex than playing *Space Quest's* slot machine or *Leisure Suit Larry's* blackjack. And the goal differs, for you're not out to win enough to buy a necessary object. Instead, you hope to impress one of the other three players enough to advance into the next phase of an undercover operation. The package includes a detailed reference card on the game (which I had fun with even though it wouldn't let me draw four cards to an ace).

The program is not protected, Sierra's first animated adventure to be offered in this manner. You can slide it onto a hard disk or make back-ups and never need insert a key disk as with other Sierra games. Sierra says if it isn't pirated, they'll make this standard with all their adventures. (But they also report the experiment wasn't successful when tried with *Wrath of Denethor*: The number of calls to their customer service line was way out of proportion to the number of games actually sold, so the only conclusion was that lots of people were copying the program.

Three 5.25" disks and two 3.25" disks

12 QuestBusters

are included in the package (that means frequent swaps if you've got one 5.25" drive). It requires 256K and supports Hercules, CGA, EGA, Tandy EX and higher and PCjr color cards; you get sixteen colors in EGA and on the Tandy. IBM's new VGA and MCGA graphics for the PS/2 are also supported.

**Conclusions:** This is more of a simulation than a traditional adventure, for the obstacles to success are situational puzzles that can only be construed as logical problems when viewed from the perspective of a cop trying to follow procedure. I found driving the cars without crashing was the hardest part of the game, which took about 20 hours to complete. But I enjoyed every minute (except the crashes!) because of the story's linear nature, as the events unfold with drama and humor, tension and gratification.

QuestBuster David Heidt, who just joined the Guild by doing a solution for the game, had this to say: "Sorry the walkthrough took so long, but *Police Quest* is like *A Mind Forever Voyaging*—what it lacks in puzzles, it makes up for in length." The only people who might not like it are those who are more concerned with purely logical puzzles than with engaging in true interactive fiction. A sequel is hinted at several times, and you can be sure I'll be there if the Death Angel ever gets out of jail.

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**System:** IBM & Quest-Alikes (256K)  
**Conversions Planned:** Amiga, Mac, IIGS, ST, Apple (128)  
**Skill Level:** Novice  
**Protection:** None  
**Price:** \$49.95  
**Company:** Sierra On-line

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## Seven Spirits of Ra

Continued from page 4

last year), CGA owners will benefit from Macrocom's unique method of display that allows them to splash sixteen different colors onscreen at a time—all of which are more pleasing to the eye than the previously mentioned green and orange.

### Getting Down to Basics

The mechanics of the game are easy enough to handle. Osiris is controlled via joystick or cursor if you don't have a joystick. Several keys (such as A-Attack or S-Status) are mnemonically linked to traditional commands. Joystick owners can use button 1 to attack either bare-handed or with an equipped weapon.

An interesting twist on this is that if Osiris has transformed into one of the five animals when the attack command is issued, his attack is in the form of a bite from said beast. Note that the bite is not

depicted onscreen in animation. The weapons available are a sword and two kinds of magic wands. One shoots fireballs and another fires lightning bolts. Experimentation will show that certain weapons work better on some monsters and not at all on others.

### Two Skill Levels

There are two basic variations, beginner and advanced. The main elements of both games are the same (the manual indicates that monsters are more aggressive on the advanced game), and the main difference is that in the beginner game special objects start out in the same places, while their locations are randomized in the advanced version. In the music department, *Seven Spirits* offers a few of the traditional simple sound effects that we've grown used to in most fantasy games. It also plays an ominous sounding melody as your health status indicator falls into the red. There are one or two other little ditties you'll hear when you first run the game and from time to time during play.

The program comes on a single 5.25" inch disk in a nicely illustrated box. Also included in the box are a two-page quick reference guide and a more substantial player's guide that contains colorful and extensive background on the legend of Osiris. The player's guide also explains your position and goals in the game as well as the mechanics of play. Up to nine games can be saved on your play disk.

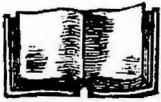
It is copy-protected by the "key disk" method, and there is no problem with hard drive installation. You've got to make a back-up to play from a floppy drive, so the original need only be inserted briefly at the start of each session. Sir-Tech provides a liberal return policy for damaged disks. Free replacement for 30 days or \$7.50 after that with a 24-hour turnaround. **Conclusions:** I've always been curious about mythology in general. *Seven Spirits* went a long way toward satisfying my curiosity about the myths of ancient Egypt. It is as much an educational experience as a game. The bottom line is a little tough. If you have an interest in history or mythology, or if you are a novice gamer who wants to get his feet wet before tackling more complex role-playing games like *Wizardry*, *The Seven Spirits of RA* might be just the thing you have been hoping to find. If you're looking for a graphics Tour de Force or a sonic wonder, then I'm afraid that this won't be the one for you.

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**System:** IBM & Quest-Alikes (128K); PCjr, Tandy (256K)  
**Skill Level:** Beginner/Novice  
**Protection:** Key Disk  
**Price:** \$44.95  
**Company:** Sir-Tech

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# KEYS TO THE KINGDOMS



**Wizardry IV: Return of Werdna**  
From "GLUM" (E-1, N1, Down 8) you'll get a Black Box that allows you to hold 19 extra items.

K. E. Nathan

## Knight Orc

To get lasso from hunter, vjg tqrg to vjipquvu at etquutqcfu, then wait for hunter, then take all. To get reins from Green Knight after he addresses you, vcmg czg then cvvcem jqtug with czg then take all.

Irene Detorakis

## Beyond Zork

You can defeat the slug by applying ucuv to it. By healing the pterodactyl before mounting it, you can get more than the three rides you're allowed by possession of the whistle. (Samantha Kunz) To get through the vague outline on the Plane of Atrii, you need the xciwg qwnkpg from the ugc ejguv in the nkijvwug. (Don Owings) Need a caterpillar? Go to Edge of Storms with grinder, turn dial to clock, wait for dwvvgthnz (on chalice). Put it in grinder, turn crank left. (Lou Tometich) Riddles answers: cliff—nkijvpkpi, rock—aqvvj. (William E. Carte)

## Police Quest

Before taking prisoners in jail, put iwp in nqemgt beside uvgru. To get Marie out of jail, tell her "jgnr me with jqvgn qrgtcvkqp." Cotton Cove is in the uqvwjgcuveqtpgt of town. To ditch Marie in the hotel, call oqticp (dial 411 for number) till he answers, then talk to her. To avoid getting killed by the Death Angel, get tcfkq from eqr who xkukvu your tqgo.

Joe Friday

## Talisman

Dying of hunger? Drink pgevct in ewr found under the twkpu. To get past lion in the pit you need to buy the 24-ecttqv tkpi in Curio Shop. Go to ogcfgy, wait for jctg, give tkpi to him, get jctf, throw it in pit with lion. (And get the two items there.) To get torch out of the Beaver's Dam, get the nqi by the side of the tkxgt and go xruvtgco. Put nqi in tkxgt and go to the tkxgt by ruins. It will destroy dam, causing torch to go downstream. To enter cave, throw tqrg at tree from enkhc cdqxx tree, go down, then uykpi. Be sure to light the lamp *before* finding the genie.

Brian Smith

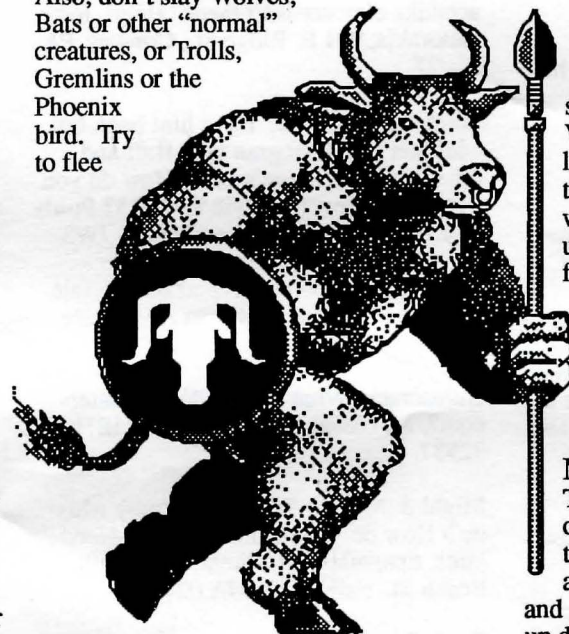
## AutoDuel

To take a car from town to town safely

without using the roads, go to a town with no garage, enter the Truck Stop and buy a bus ticket. When asked if you want to leave your car on the street, hit the space bar—you'll arrive at the destination with your car, a good way to do Courier jobs.

Jayson Hogan

**Alternate Reality: The Dungeon**  
It seems most characters transferred from *The City* turn out evil, so here are some tips to developing a good one from scratch. Only kill when necessary, and *never* kill Sages, Acolytes, Wizards or Apprentices—run from them if necessary. Also, don't slay Wolves, Bats or other "normal" creatures, or Trolls, Gremlins or the Phoenix bird. Try to flee



Noblemen, but hail them first if you have to fight them. You must save a new character to be taken seriously by the program, which needs to adjust your stats by killing you off a few times. Don't worry about it: Some of mine were killed 17-18 times and are none the worse for it. To find out if a creature is evil, hit him with a Destroy Evil spell. If it doesn't hurt him, he's not evil. But never attack anything without hailing it at least once first. One of at least two character will show up if you're carrying too much stuff, the Master Thief or the Devourer. To avoid them, keep inventory down and don't carry duplicates of anything unless you've only got a few things. You need great Strength or magic in the form of Amber, Ruby or Emerald Eye, etc., to defeat them; don't waste time with Spells or Wands. You must treat the Pauper and Healer well; *I always* give them significant sums of money. (But don't overdo it either; make sure you keep enough to live on.) If you find an Ace of

Pentacles, cash it (Use) and put some in your Guild locker. Pray and Hear a Sermon in the Dungeon Chapel (56N, 27E) every couple of days, and never leave without making a donation. Always tip in the Bar & Grille, and occasionally buy a round for the house. Guilds won't accept you till you're level three. Then join the Wizards of Law (49N, 62E) as a full member and others as an associate.

Paul Hill, Jr.

## Eternal Dagger

The door's name in Necromancer's Hold is ytrv; floor's name is kzn; hall's name is tqnh. Work on giving a magic user high dexterity, which is important for getting off the first spells in combat. (Lee Franklin) To defeat large monster groups such as giant roaches, have Wizards continually "quickcast" paralyze spells. On the first island (with the town Green Bay), you can't leave without: Killing the fctiqp (in uqvwjgcuveqtpgt of island) with uyqtf from the tgdgnu (on north side) and slaying the pgetqocpegt. To reach him, keep searching the pqtvjyguveqtpgt of the main island until you find the passage. (Ken Pomaranski)

## Might & Magic

To develop a high-level party overnight, take them to FotoMat. If they don't offer this service in your area, work up a fifth-level Sorcerer and repeat the dummy scam on two back-up disks (see *Keys* in December '87) until one character has just over 16,000,000 gold. Return to main disk and distribute about 2,500,000 to each member of a party that contains one of each character class (give 3,500,000 to the Sorcerer). Then Fly to E-1, enter Dragadune and go through secret door to fountain at 13, 15. Drink from fountain to change each character's gold into experience points. Don't let anyone do so while holding more gold than stated above, or effects of aging set in. (Ed Friedlander) To find Ruby Whistle, first visit Zam in Portsmouth (inside coordinate 12, 2) and Zom in Algary (inside 1, 1). Then go to C-1, 15, 15 for the whistle. Also in C-1 you'll find a Merchant's Pass at 5, 7 (used to enter some castles). Blow whistle three times to enter Ancient Temple at B-3, 19, 2. (John Brearley)

To decode clues, count two letters back: g = e, a = y. Coordinates are not coded.



## Waiting for Duffy

*Duffy's lost in the dungeon (because he doesn't have an Official QuestBusters Cartography Kit), so send in a brief ad if you need help.*

**Knight of Diamonds:** Need help with 1st riddle (on 2nd level). J. Bieber, 3625 Lyndale Dr., Endwell, NY 13760-2439.

**Might & Magic, Bard's Tale 1:** Need maps and help bad. Also need Wizardry 1 super-dudes to get back my dead and out guys from the maze. J. Pinkos, 23 Whitman Rd, Medford, MA 01255

**Gateway:** Where do I find the rifle? Steven MacIntyre, 444 Central Park West, NYC, NY 10025

**Phantasie 3:** Have found Nikademus but have broken wand and can't kill him. SSI's hotline couldn't help—can you? Donald Glinkie, 1900 SE 5 Court, Pompano Beach, FL 33060

**A Mind Forever Voyaging:** How do you keep Ryder from melting you down? C. Williamson, 144 Patricia, San Luis Obispo, CA 93401

**Crimson Crown:** Where do I find shield? **Gemstone Warrior:** Where is entrance to maze? David Estep, 798 Royal Palm Dr, Kissimmee, FL

**Ultima 3:** Desperately need dungeon maps. Anthony Catalano III, 283 Forest Hills Blvd., Naples, FL 33962

**Legacy of Ancients:** Need maps, hints, info. Will pay \$\$ for help. K. Cohen, 37 Preston Lane, Syosset, NY 11791

**Knight Orc:** Want hints on how to get belt from hermit, how to get to Tower. Irene Detorakis, 901 E. Ridge St., Conway, PA 15027

**Elysian Fields:** Need exact answer to Sphinx riddle. How do you get girdle past Amazon? What kills the giant? How to get thunderbolt from Cyclops? Brian Smith, 3035 Montego, Plano, TX 75023.

**Knight of Diamonds:** Need help exploring level six of dungeon. Are there more than four entrances to level six from level five? Ed Boyer, 4550 NE Arlington, Lawton, OK 73507.

**Faery Tale Adventure:** Need help! Michael Pearson, 5918 S. Elizabeth St., Chicago, IL 60636.

**Might & Magic:** Augh! Key Card rejected! S. Kunz, 211 E. Ohio #610, Chicago,

IL 60611. (Attn: Whiz-Bang)

**Might & Magic:** How do you answer access code questions? What are unreadable messages for? Where is ruby whistle? Charles C., Rte 2 Box 13E, Marion, TX 78124.

**Might & Magic:** Need maps and clues badly. Have Wizardry 103 maps, clues and character equipment to trade. Bard's Tale 1-2 maps, clues also. Cowbird, 3511 N. Home Place, Sugarland, TX 77479.

**Crimestopper:** How do you open locker N-7 and leave suitcase of ransom money at Bus Terminal? What is statue from my safe used for? How do you use elevator in south Lobby of Sizemore Building during party? Got in building ok with hat, but it acts like elevator isn't there. Help! Irene Detorakis, 901 E. Ridge St., Conway, PA 15027

**Hitchhiker's Guide:** Have hint book but can't get off Damogran with fluff and other items. **Dragon's Lair:** How do you get past 5th level? Kevin Rice, 133 Purdy Ave, Moncton, N.B., Canada E1C 7W3

Need help in Suspended and Bard's Tale 2. Mark Pfaff, 260 Hoffman Ave., State College, PA 16801

**Bureacracy:** What do you do with intercom? M. Novak, 305 School Rd, IBH, FL 32937.

**Might & Magic:** Where's the ruby whistle? How do you read messages? Need hints, tips, maps. R. Pitera, 451 South Beach St., Fall River, MA 02724

**Seastalker:** How do I get the snark to come to the aquadome? D. Munoz, 1312 Titania Lane, McLean, VA 22102

**Eternal Dagger & Realms of Darkness:** Desperately seeking help. Respond immediately or the world will end. B. Kinman, 510 Laurel Rd., Easley, SC 29640

**Eternal Dagger:** How do I find name of hallway on 2nd level of 1st dungeon? M. Lain, 4518 Pine St., Hammond, IN 46327

**Dragonworld:** How do I get flute from monkey? Open sealed door after room of broken mirror? W.H. Chissom, Rd 1, Box 275, Cleveland, NY 13042

**Wizardry 2:** Am stuck on 1st riddle. J. Bieber, 401 W Main St., Apt 27, Endicott, NY 13760

How do I pass last level of Goonies? Where should guard be when I enter safe in Hacker 2? C. Becker, 744 Padilla Hgts Rd., Anacortes, WA 98221

*Wizardry IV:*

## Return of Werdna

How can I tell when a game is great? When I forget to eat dinner! That's what happened when I sat down to play *Werdna* "just enough" to do a follow-up review on Ron Wartow's look at a beta version in September.

The first thing I noticed, and my only criticism, was that the mazes are done with the same graphic scheme used in *Wizardry III*. But after an hour on the first level, I was having too much fun to even care about the graphics. It's the first time in years I've felt compelled to actually complete a maze in a single (lengthy) session. That's because it looks so easy but turns out to be a down-to-the-wire finish, even if you know what you're doing.

### *No Busboys in this Party!*

Central to success is the discovery of magic Pentagrams, squares where you get promoted to higher levels and summon three monster groups to join your party. Fiends from the previous games are available, and part of the challenge is choosing the right monsters for the situation. They cast and fight on their own, so it plays like a one-character game. Gameplay differs drastically from most RPGs: You won't reach level two character status until you've completed the first maze and enter the next; that prevents you from kicking orcs around in an easy maze to advance your character several levels.

Without the ability to save eight games on the play disk, I wouldn't have pressed on, but this option makes the experience comparable to solving an Infocom game. You can quit, save, then jump right back into the action in seconds without rebooting the program—easily the best save feature of any RPG. This encourages experimentation and simplifies mapping. All six disks are unprotected. You type in a code number from an impossible to Xerox list when moving between levels.

Puzzles and clues are logical and fair, but far from easy. (However, I'm still wondering why Tower Guards and Sentries are stationed in the Catacombs.) Everything you've learned in previous games will prove vital, not just useful, and you'll be the butt of the program's jokes if you do something dumb like prowl the maze with all your inventory slots filled. And it's the kind of game that forces you to think before entering the maze after your first defeat. Balance is important in any RPG, and *Werdna* is tightly put together. Maybe that's why I like it so much: The battles that take you down to your last hit point and lone party member are the most satisfying to win. Highly recommended. Apple (64K), Sir-Tech, \$59.95.





# Swap Shop

Trade or sell your old adventures with a free ad. Original software with complete docs only, limit of 10 games per ad. Please state system.

## APPLE

Trade/sell: \$20@ or make offer: Trinity & Mind Forever Voyaging (both 128K), Elite. Write 1st. M. Ruth, 269 Georgetown Ct., Albany, NY 12203

Trade/sell: \$20 @: AutoDuel, Bard 1, Ultima 2 & 4. \$10 @: Mask of Sun, Murder on Zinderneuf. \$5 @: cluebooks for Bard 1 & 2, Ultima 4, Hitchhiker, Zork 3. Wanted: Wrath of Denethenor, Realms of Darkness, Ultima 1 (new version). Write 1st. Jayson Hogan, 502 N 75, Seattle, WA 98103

Super editors for Bard 1 and Ultima 4 let you change gold, hit points, weapons, etc. of characters. U4 editor has map of Abyss. \$3.50 @ if you send disk to put it

Continued from page 2  
coupons good for a free: *Neverending Story*, *Gunslinger*, *Zorro*, *Mercenary*, *Theatre Europe*, *Crosscheck* or *Mind Pursuit*.

## In the Offing

*Dondra: A New Beginning* will be the first in Spectrum HoloByte's *Questmaster* series (Apple and C 64). *Sherwood Forest* fans should be pleased to hear that it's illustrated by Rick Incrocci. They're also doing something called *Bermuda Project*, set in the Triangle of the same name. Look for a *Legend of Zelda* sequel called *The Adventure of Link* (Nintendo). Don't expect *Bard's Tale III* or *Return to Atlantis* until March or *Wastelands* till summer.

## Black Magic Strikes

Due to an Ancient Curse on the editor, Ted Aicher's byline for the *Black Magic* clues in the January *Keys* vanished in a cloud of smoke while the issue was at the printer. Ancient Curses notwithstanding, it is our policy to give credit to all clue contributors, so thanks, Ted.

## Contest Winners

Douglas Glemby, who recently won the random drawing, chose *Wizardry IV* for his prize. Winner of the *Keys* drawing

on; \$4.50 otherwise. Trade/sell: Zork 1, Bard 1, Moonmist, Wizard & Princess, Creature Venture, Amnesia, Might & Magic. Want Ultima 1-3, Moebius, Bard 2, Infocom. Send list. Scott Jones, 4821 Schoolview Dr., Kernersville, NC 27284

Sell/trade: Realms of Darkness, Eternal Dagger, Space Quest, King's Quest 1-2, Moebius, Rings of Zilfin & more. Want Knight of Diamonds. Brad Kinman, 510 Laurel Rd., Easley, SC 29640

\$16 @: Ultima 4, Might & Magic, Moebius. \$12 @: Wizard's Crown, Eternal Dagger, King's Quest 2, Phantasia 3. \$8 @: Ring Quest, Ultima 1, Sorcerer. Write 1st. Richard Robillard, 52 S. Main St., Baldwinville, MA 01436

Sell/trade: Enchanter, Sorcerer, Spellbreaker, AMFV, Hitchhiker's, Infidel, Moonmist, Leather Goddesses, Bureacracy. \$20 @ or trade for any Infocom or Might & Magic. K. Gamache, RFD #4 Box 1091, Augusta, ME 04330

\$20 @: King's Quest 1-2. \$10 @: Aztec, Castle Wolfenstein & Beyond Castle Wolf., Karateka, Capt. Goodnight Island of Fear. Will trade for Wizardry 1-4, Bard

was Irene Detorakis, who got *Deja Vu*, and the random drawing prize went to Patrick Vaughn, who'll get the game of his choice. Marc Manderino got *Police Quest* for his *Plundered Hearts* solution. The Unknown Winner in the crossword puzzle contest was Dan Heffron, who sent a handwriting sample and other evidence of his claim; he'll get *Beyond Zork*.

## Welcome Aboard!

This month you'll find reviews from two new writers, Trace Foreman Hines and Steven Payne. Steven comes to us by way of the Apple PI Users Group in Washington DC, apparently a breeding ground for adventurers—since it's also the origin of Charles Don Hall and our first Contributing Editor, Ron Wartow. Tracie's work has appeared in *Electronic Games*, where she was also an editor, and assorted computer magazines.

## Quest For Clues

Several people have asked what happened to the clue book we've been working on. It is being published by Origin Systems, which plans to have in on the shelves sometime this month. It will feature complete solutions and maps to about 50 adventures and role-playing games, many of which have never appeared in *QuestBusters*. So if you're planning to get a clue book soon, this is definitely worth holding out for.

1-2, King's Quest 3, Beyond Zork. Don Kellogg, 15195 Marcellus Hwy, Three Rivers, MI 49093

Trade/sell: Zork 1. Want anything that will take awhile to solve. Luke Weisman, 142 Hartford St, San Francisco, CA 94114

## COMMODORE

Have most Infocoms, Bard 1 & 2, Legacy of Ancients, Questron, Nine Princes, PSI-5 Trading Company, both Gemstones, Shard of Spring, Ogre, Labyrinth, Maniac Mansion, The Pawn, Phantasies and more. Send lits. Tom Helton, 6723 Harris, Raytown, MO 64133.

Amiga: Mindshadow, Borrowed Time, Temple of Aphai, Rogue, Pawn, Deep Space, Phantasia 3. T. Ellison, 407 N. Division, Lowell, MI 49331.

Trade/sell: Bard 2, Gauntlet, AutoDuel, Realm of Impossibility, 7 Cities of Gold, Ultimate Wizard, Legacy of Ancients, Rendezvous with Rama, Bard 2 supercharacters & clue book. Want Wrath of Denethenor, A. Reality: City, Ultima 1,3,4, Phantasia 1,2, Leather Goddesses, Might & Magic, Realms of Darkness. J. Uberti, 101 Fennerton Rd, Paoli, PA 19301

Want to buy or trade for Amiga & C 64 software w/docs. Have Defender of Crown, S.D.I. & more. Send your list or write for mine. Michael Pearson, 5918 S. Elizabeth, Chicago, IL 60636.

Ultima 4, \$20. \$15 @: Trinity, Labyrinth, Ultima 1, Moonmist. \$10 @: Wishbringer, Deadline, Oo-topos, Seastalker, Zork 1. Write 1st: Craig Konecnik, 873 Yorkshire Lane, Crystal Lake, IL 60014.

Have Bard 1 & 2, Legacy of Ancients. Will seel or trade for Roadwar 2000, AutoDuel, ACS, Star Treks and/or Infocom. Send list: Eric Mikula, 47 Raymerville Dr., Markham, Ont., Canada L3P 4S2.

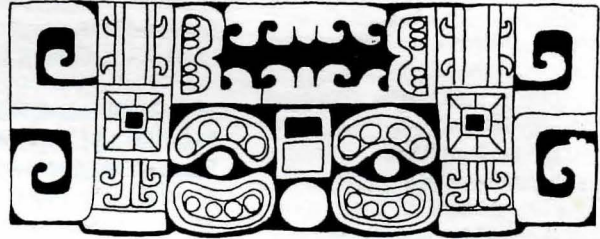
\$15 @: Bard's Tale II, Ultima 4. \$10 @: Phantasia, Wizard's Crown, Zork 1, Rings of Zilfin, Gemstone Warrior, Brimstone & more. Write for list. K. A. Anderson, 117 Montcalm Ave., Plattsburgh, NY 12901

Trade: Elite, new, for new or used Psi 5, Pirates or other RPG. Ken St. André, 3421 E Yale, Phoenix, AZ 85008.

## IBM & QUEST-ALIKES

Trade: King's Quest 3, Space Quest, Leisure Suit Larry, Ultima 3-4, Wizardry 1, Rogue, Planetfall, Cutthroats, Amazon, 9 Princes, many more. Todd Draper, POB 4366, South Bend, IN 46634.





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Trade: Starflight, King's Quest 1 for Wizard's Crown, Roadwar, The Pawn. M. George, 510 Pinchbeck St., Quesnel, B.C., Canada V2J 1N5.

Sell/trade: Roadwar 2000 & Ultima 4 w/clue book. Want Starflight, Might & Magic, Bard 1-2, Starfleet 2. Chan Weng Yie, 811 Quince Orchard Blvd., Gaithersburg, MD 20878.

Wizard's Crown, \$25. J. Kim, 2050 Anza Ave, Apt 184, Torrance, CA 371-8378

Trade/sell: Plundered Hearts, Lurking Horror, King's Quest 3, Leisure Suit Larry, Ultima 3 & more. Marc Manderino, 104 Lagoon Rd SE, Winterhaven, FL 33884

\$18 @: King's Quest 1-3, Space Quest.  
\$20 @: Leisure Suit Larry, Wizardry,

Starflight w/cluebook. C. Boggess, 3190 Cottonwood Ct., Millersport, OH 43046

## ATARI

ST: \$20 for Leisure Suit Larry, or will trade for AutoDuel. M. Ruth, 269 Georgetown Ct., Albany, NY 12203.

ST: Starfleet 1, Rogue, Space Quest, others. \$15 @. Jim Hollingworth, POB 27, Kelso, WA 98626.

800XL/XE, trade/sell (\$15 @): Zork 2, Starcross, Planetfall, Hitchhiker, Spellbreaker, Enchanter, Sorcerer. Seastalker, \$10. Mindwheel (requires 2 drives), \$25. Dan Mahoney, POB 1531, Sandusky, OH 44870.

8-bit games for sale. Jupiter Mission 1999 Part 1 & 2, both for \$10. Alternate Reality: The City, \$15. Greg Watanabe, 3203 N. Alpine Rd., Stockton, CA 95205.

ST, sell/trade: Defender of Crown, \$30. \$25 @: Phantasia 1, Roadwar 2000, Sundog, Rogue. \$20 @: Mercenary, Tass Times. \$15 @: Book of Adventure 1 & 2. Daryn, Belden, 13125 W. Honey Lane, New Berlin, WI 53151

Deadline, Starfleet 1, Questron. More. Sell/ trade for ST Infocoms. R. Olsen, 6818 Winterberry Cr., Wichita, KS 67226.

## Passport to Adventure

*For a 10%-20% discount on NEW games, order from QB—and get 3 extra issues of the Journal for each game you buy. If you don't see what you want, write for a price.*

Wizardry IV: Apple, \$44.95  
Ultima IV: (Advance orders), \$44.95  
Border Zone: C 64, \$32; others, \$35  
Police Quest: IBM, \$45  
Reach for the Stars: Mac, \$36  
Defender of the Crown: Mac, \$43  
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Wizardry III: IBM, \$47  
Ultima IV: IBM, \$50  
Ultima I: IBM, \$35  
Pawn, Guild of Thieves: IBM, \$40 each  
Phantasia III: AP, C, \$45; Amiga, IBM, \$40.  
Beyond Zork: C, \$40; others, \$45  
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