



# QuestBusters™



The Adventurers' Journal

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## Questron II: The Evil Book Bounces Back!

By Michael R. Bagnall

Evil Wizards, Brothers of Evil Wizards, Return of Evil Wizards—I've seen lots of interesting things in all my years of adventuring, but *never* before have I seen a prequel to an adventure. The story takes place in

Landor, where you've been whisked

back in time to the days before the Book of Evil Magic (the hard-sought goal of *Questron*) was created. It turns out that even though you defeated Mantor at the conclusion of the first game, the Evil Book still exists!

Though you try, there seems to be no way to destroy the Book, which means you must prevent it from being created in the first place. Your good friend Mesron sends you back into the past to find and destroy Mantor before he can create the book, which effectively eliminates the purpose of solving the first quest!

Spanning two continents, the quest revolves around a central base called the Hall of Visions, the place you go to communicate with Mesron. The Hall is in the castle on Landor, and you need a gold key to enter it. This reminded me of the Museum and Gatekeeper in *Legacy of the Ancients*. You still use a joystick to choose options that are listed on the side of the screen, and the basic differences between this and the first *Questron* are very slight as far as game-play is concerned. *Questron II* simply looks so much better and has a few new features.

### Sharper Graphics

*Questron II's* graphics are much sharper than those in *Questron*, whose main aerial view display looked like a larger version of an *Ultima*-style map. These are

more reminiscent of *Legacy of the Ancients*. [For the record, *Legacy* was written and programmed by the authors of *Questron*, who designed *Questron II*; Westwood did the actual programming of the sequel. This should either clear things up—or leave you as confused as we are.]

The colorful display uses the

same basic set-up as the first game.

One very obvious improvement is the superior music and sound effects. Other than snaps, bleeps and blips, there was no real music or sound in the original game. But in *Questron II* you'll hear explosions, alarms and the slashing and clanging of weapons and armor.

You still get an overhead view of Landor's ocean, forests, towns and the like. In the tombs, you have a restricted overhead view:

you can only see down the passage you're in. In towns and castles you have the same style of top-down view seen on the main map. But towns and dungeons differ drastically from

*Questron I*. Instead of seeing the whole town and moving a little cursor that represents your party (as in *Ultima I*), you explore the town as you would on the main map.

When you enter a dungeon, the top-down view is replaced with a 3-D, first person picture of the dungeon, shown in sharp detail on the left side of the screen. Monsters are first seen in the distance and grow larger as they approach, finally filling the left window. Other items, like

chests and coffins, also get bigger as you draw near.

On the right, the auto-mapping feature draws a map of the dungeon as you battle your way through it. This is extremely nice, because it eliminates all that tedious mapping that can drive even the best adventure into an early burn-out.

### That Magic Moment

Magic hasn't changed much. You've got your basic spells, such as Magic Missile and Fire-Bolt, along with new ones like Time Sap (stops time) and Sonic Whine. I can't tell you what this does, since the program never let me use it successfully (though I managed to complete the quest without it). You can also use the Evil Book to cast spells, but I advise against it. You lose hit points for doing so.

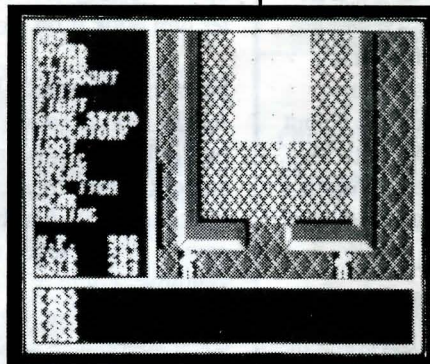
I like this magic system because it doesn't have any "junk magic," as I like to call it. There is a healing element

called the Bread of Life; this must be obtained through the cathedrals, though you'll need a gift for the Holy Ones (found in the first castle). And even then they won't sell it to you if you have more than 700 Hit Points.

Dungeons are eight-level affairs that are filled with traps. Castles, where you'll find heavily guarded chests, are the key to success in Landor and the Realm of Sorcerers. Cathedrals are also useful in some ways. The tombs within them are very large and tricky, not to mention hard to map. Naturally that's where you find numerous sub-quests, such as finding Keys that are vital to solve the game.

Two things disturbed me about the game. First is what I call "pop quiz"

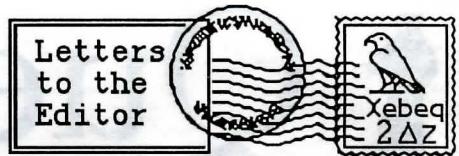
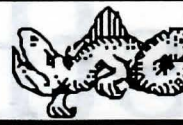
**Type:** Fantasy Role-playing game  
**Systems:** C 64, 39.95; Apple 2, IBM (256K) 44.95  
**Planned Conversions:** GS, ST, Amiga, 49.95 (July)



Continued on page 12



# Adventure Hotline



## New Releases

We're moving into summer—the “dead zone” for computer games—so there are few new releases. First Row has a religious graphic adventure, *Moses*, and their *Twilight Zone* should be out by now. *Gauntlet: The Deeper Dungeons* (C 64) requires the *Gauntlet* disk.

## Conversions

GS versions of *King's Quest* and *Police Quest*, with new graphics and sound, are out, and the Apple 2 (128K) *King's Quest III* will ship any minute now. *Gauntlet* for the Apple 2 and GS is on the shelves.

## From the Dungeon to the Stars

One of the creators of *Wizardry*, Andrew Greenberg, has a new company and a new game—STAR SAGA: ONE *Beyond the Boundary*. Programmed primarily by Mike Massimilla, it allows one to six people to play the roles of any of six characters with individual goals to fulfill while achieving the long-range mission. After you punch in your moves, the “computer game-master” directs you to the appropriate passage in an elaborate 585-page story. As the press release tells it, “instead of filling up the computer's memory with lengthy code for graphics or text, STAR SAGA uses the space to hold the maximum number of twists and turns in the story line....” It also employs a game board. From MasterPlay, it should be out in June for the Apple and IBM, with Mac, C 64, Amiga and Atari later on. (And it's the first installment of a trilogy.)

## ACS Club Update

There are now 40 Amiga *Adventure Construction Set* games, and one has come in for the IBM. Apple and C 64 games are also available for \$5 each (Amiga and IBM are slightly higher), or you can trade one you've written for two in the library. For full details on membership and addresses of the various ACS libraries, write Ken St. André, ACS Club, 3421 E. Yale, Phoenix, AZ 85008.

## Walkthroughs & Keys Wanted

Clues for *Keys to the Kingdoms* should be for games released in the past three months, preferably tips that will help peo-

ple get past the “game-stoppers.” Don't send in clues for games whose solutions have already published in *Quest for Clues* or in *QB* walkthrus. If you want to do a walkthrough, write first with the name of the game. You'll get the assignment—and game of your choice—if no one else is working on it. If you're the second person to volunteer, we might want to use yours to verify the first one, in which case you'll also get a game. Here are some titles for which we need solutions: *Bard's Tale III*, *Ultima V*, *Guild of Thieves*, *Wizardry IV* (last three levels only), *Wasteland*, *Star Command*, *Jinxter*, *Dungeon Master*, *Star Trek III*, *Dr. Dumont*, *Alien Fires*. We already have all Infocom and Sierra (through *Space Quest II*) games, *Questron II*, *Legacy of the Ancients*, *Tower of Myraglen* and *Dream Zone*.

## Dungeon Master II?

FTL says they're not sure if the next game (planned for the fall) will be a sequel to *Dungeon Master*, but it will use the same game system. By June or July, they'll release a mini-adventure that consists of a three to five-level dungeon requiring the *Dungeon Master* disk. It includes a character editor that lets you redraw and touch up your characters. And a *Dungeon Master* hint book is on the way for \$12.95.

## Firebird Flames Out

All the British games previously imported by Firebird are now marketed under the name Rainbird by Activision, who recently acquired US distribution rights for the games. They picked up these Firebird adventures: *Guild of Thieves*, *The Pawn*, *Knight Orc*, *Elite*, *Golden Path*, and *Jinxter*. Others, such as *Silicon Dreams* and *Jewels of Darkness*, are no longer being distributed, though they are still available in some stores (especially the Electronic Boutique chain).

## Contest Winners

George Politis won the *Keys* contest, and Chris Cillo's name was drawn in the Random Drawing. Each gets the game of their choice. So do Eric Mitchell and Thomas Zybd for the *Eternal Dagger* solution. (Mitchell's maps and solution was verified by comparing them with Zybd's.)

Dear QuestBusters:

I think you should consider reviewing a war game once in awhile. Three out of four people I've trade with via the Swap Shop are also wargamers! And since Duffy is pretty worthless (most people get by with by reading the *Keys*), by removing Duffy you would have space to review a war game. Think about it!

James Bumgardner

*We have cut Duffy down to a single column, but are using the extra space for reviews and clues for adventures. While the February survey indicated many of our readers do play war games, Computer Gaming World already provides in-depth coverage of that field. Perhaps someday when QuestBusters rules the world we might cover other kinds of computer games, but right now we're satisfied with the Realm of Adventure.*

Dear QuestBusters:

I ordered some back issues with my *Quest for Clues*. The book arrived last week, but no back issues. What gives?

Andy Schultz

*If more than one or two back issues ordered are temporarily out of print, we hold the order and send them all at once. The rest of a multiple order, especially for the clue book, is sent ahead. This also applies to map kits, but not as frequently.*

# QuestBusters™

The Adventurers' Journal

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# Dondra: A New Beginning...

By William E. Carte

All is not well in the mystical land of Dondra. A despicable creature named Colnar has seized control and destroyed everyone dwelling in the main city of the Elders. Just before the last wisemen were slain, they telepathically summoned you to defend them—here you go again...

A unique graphic adventure, *Dondra* is the first in Spectrum Holobyte's "QuestMaster" series. Though you won't be able to complete the series' long-range goal in this scenario, you will be able to acquire several items that have no use in this game—but may prove valuable in later ones. After waiting two years for the second game in the *Alternate Reality* series, I was initially turned off by this idea.

But *Dondra*, unlike the first *Reality*, does provide a mission to complete in the opening chapter: Find the Crystal Prism of Heheutotol and return it to the place where you began the quest. Upon doing so, you'll be rewarded with a new power that can be used in future QuestMasters.

After typing in the name of your character, you're immediately confronted with a "locked room" puzzle. Unless you solve this one, you won't be going anywhere! In the room you find a throbbing hexagon containing a key that's too hot to hold. Naturally, this key opens the door that leads to freedom. But which one? There are four doors (leading one to suspect that the others will be accessed in future installments).

## Zooming in on the Sights

On the far side of the correct door, you'll meet many amazing and amusing creatures—among them a scarecrow, a wildebeast, a lioness and some sludge-spraying monsters. Encounters in this otherwise charming fantasy world are often deadly. Linger too long in the equipment room, for example, and a bunch of green aliens arrive and slice you to ribbons. Not only is the game rich in puzzles, but you'll also have to unravel a three-part riddle—answer correctly or die.

Very good graphics and spot animation illustrate the colorful world of *Dondra*.

They were drawn by Rick Incrocci, who did the classic *Sherwood Forest*, and are painted in his inimitable cartoon style. In some scenes, a fast-paced series of pictures produce the effect of zooming in for a close-up. This novel effect dramatizes encounters with monsters and other characters.

**Type:** Graphic Adventure  
**Systems:** Apple 2 (48K), GS, C 64  
**Conversions Planned:** IBM, Mac, Mac 2, Amiga (all in late summer)

Though the GS version was not out in time for this review, the more highly detailed screen shots from that version are seen on the package. Even on the Apple II, however, the graphics are not only very good but also fast—no painful waiting while each new screen is slowly drawn and colored in.

## Real-Time Action

Many events occur in real-time, which means the action continues to unfold while you're looking over the location or deciding what to do. I've never been a big fan of real-time, simply because I like to take my time and think about my next move—especially when I'm stuck. GS owners will be able to play in fast mode, but the game can't be won in fast mode because of the real-time feature.

For example, you have three minutes of real-time before the green aliens mentioned slay you in the equipment room. That three minutes is greatly reduced in GS fast mode, making it impossible to do everything you have to accomplish there before they show up. Therefore you will always be killed before you're finished in that room.

The parser is exceptional, understanding the most advanced commands. It also accepts multiple commands and is easy to communicate with. Documentation consists of an excellent fourteen-page booklet that proves a manual doesn't have to be an inch thick to do the job well. The program is protected, but registered owners can get an unprotected version for \$7.50.

## A Unique Scoring System

It is the scoring system that distinguishes *Dondra* from other puzzle-oriented adventures. Each point attained by puzzle-solving also constitutes an experience point, so your total score at the end of the game represents the amount of experience you've earned for use in future installments. The final score is modified by four factors: number of times you saved the game, number of times you were killed, number of objects acquired, and elapsed time. Two people who solve the same puzzles in exactly the same way will have different scores if one of them saved more frequently or was killed more often than the other. These factors are also saved if you get killed and have to start over. But you can reset them to zero if you want a completely fresh start.

**Conclusions:** I highly recommend *Dondra*, whose graphics, puzzles and innovative scoring system will entertain experts and novices alike. GS owners should wait for the conversion.

**Skill Level:** Intermediate

**Protection:** Unprotected version available for \$7.50 to registered owners

**Price:** Apple, C 64, \$39.95; GS, \$49.95

**Company:** Spectrum Holobyte

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# Dungeon Master: Breakfast of Champions

By A. Bruce Lotts

In *Dungeon Master* your role is that of Theron, who is not a character in the game but the unseen controller of the four who do the actual work. Theron is the apprentice to the former Grey Lord, whose unsuccessful attempt to retrieve an item called the Power Gem triggered a great catastrophe. This disaster caused the Grey Lord to be split into two personalities: Librasulus (now banished to Limbo) and his "dark side," Chaos, who is in possession of Grey Lord's dungeon.

Librasulus has instructed you, Theron, to revive the spirits of four brave adventurers, plunge into the dungeon and acquire the Firestaff. Only with the Firestaff can Librasulus return to this plane. Then Librasulus can obtain the Power Gem and defeat Chaos.

## *Dungeon Master Champions*

You begin by winding your way through a small and simple maze to the Hall of Champions, where 24 pre-generated characters await. From these you choose four as your party. Each is a low-level character in one or more of four classes: Fighter, Ninja, Priest, Wizard.

The three main physical attributes are Health, Stamina and Mana (magical energy). Six others round out a character: Strength, Dexterity, Wisdom, Vitality, Anti-Magic and Anti-Fire. The three main ones change frequently, moving from zero up to maximums that increase with new character levels. The other ones are boosted with new levels and can be temporarily affected by certain potions and spells. Depending on his actions in the dungeon, each champion may be advanced to higher levels in any one or all four classes.

After reviewing the potential candidates, you may either resurrect or reincarnate any four. Resurrection revives the champion at the class level already attained. But reincarnation increases some or all of the six minor attributes, starts him over at the lowest level of his class and enables you to rename him.

Now you enter a gate located in a corner of the Hall and begin gathering weapons, food and other items. As you go along, you perform all actions with the mouse, and some restricted actions (such as movement) via the keyboard.

## *Real-Time Rough Stuff*

In your first encounter with a monster you will discover the major difference between

**Type:** Fantasy Role-playing Game  
**Systems:** Atari ST  
**Planned Conversions:** Amiga (June), GS

and other role-

playing games—you're playing in real-time. Reasonably quick thinking is required in combat, especially when your characters are weak and can't take much damage. (At least you can hit the escape key to pause the action.)

Fortunately, only moderate dexterity and no aiming ability are necessary during combat: when a Champion swings his sword, the chances of a hit or miss are determined purely by his current Fighter and Dexterity levels. This is also true for any weapon a Ninja throws or shoots.

If you listen carefully and watch, you won't be surprised often by monsters, whose presence is indicated by an audio or visual clue. When you meet one, your options are simply to fight or run. Except for movement, all combat actions are executed by clicking the mouse on various weapon icons and then selecting an action from a menu. Only one character can use a specific weapon at any time, though as Champions attain fairly high levels and you become proficient with the combat system, an almost continuous series of blows can be maintained.

Weapons can be switched during combat, using the mouse to drag the new one to a character's "active hand" icon. You can easily change the party's marching order. If one or more characters is killed, you just retrieve his bones and take them

to the nearest altar for revival at no cost.

## *Let's Have Lunch!*

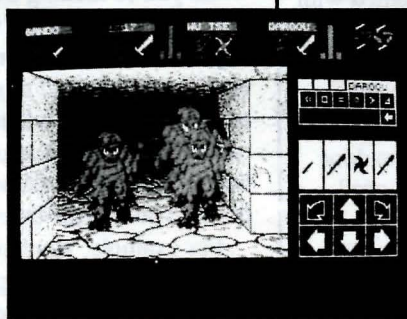
Food and water are critical factors. As noted, the game occurs in real-time. Unless you pause the action, your characters grow hungry and thirsty as time passes. It's easy to use the mouse or function key to check each Champion's relative hunger or thirst. Eating and drinking are easily (and cleverly) performed by dragging pieces of food or full water-skins to a character's mouth icon. Water is usually obtained by filling the skins from fountains, while food may be found or "created" by killing certain monsters and eating the remaining chunks.

## *Runes and Scrolls*

There are two spellcasting types: Priests and Wizards. Each has its own set of spells that can't be cast by the other, but they do cast them in a virtually identical manner. Three horizontal rows appear in the upper right-hand part of the screen. The first is used to select the spellcaster. The second row consists of four sets, each containing six "runes."

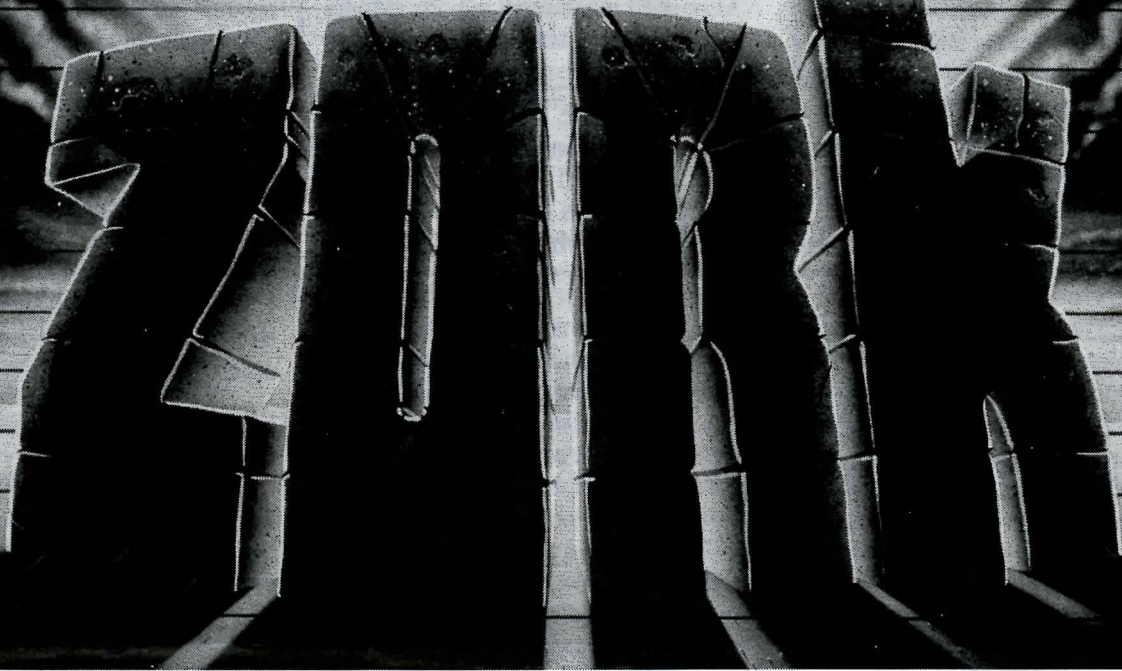
The sets of runes are displayed in a fixed order. A selected rune appears in the third row. You must pick several to form a combination that enables you to cast a spell, sort of like combining words to construct a sentence. Once selected, the combination of runes fills the third row and may be left there as long as desired. When you want to cast that spell (or use a selected potion), you just click on the third row. (You've also got to keep an empty flask in the spellcaster's "active hand" to cast a spell.)

To discover the proper combination of runes for the 26 various spells, you must find scrolls in the dungeon. Some spells are combat-related; a few are almost essential when fighting specific creatures. Most often, however, spells fulfill utility functions such as providing light and creating healing potions.



Continued on page 15

# BEYOND



The *Zork Trilogy* has become a legend in its time, selling nearly one million copies! Now the legend continues with an extraordinary new Zorkian universe that breaks ground in computer gaming. For the first time, the character-building and combat of role-playing games joins the masterly prose and puzzles of Infocom's interactive fiction.

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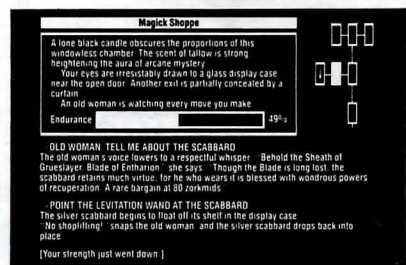
Challenge yourself to a quest that's far beyond anything you've ever experienced. *Beyond Zork*. The incredible new interactive story from the master storytellers at Infocom.

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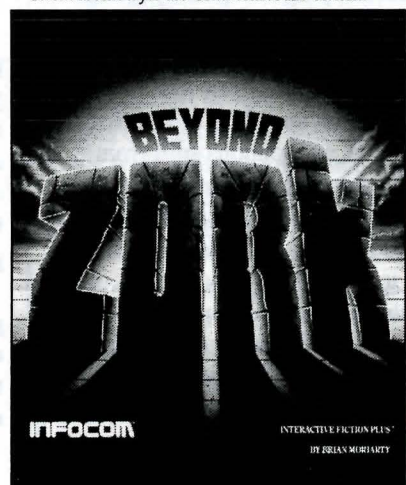
*Beyond Zork* is available at your local dealer for the Apple II series, Macintosh, Commodore 128, Amiga, IBM PC and 100% compatibles, and Atari ST. To order direct, call 1-800-262-6868. Coming soon: Apple IIGS.

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One glance at *Beyond Zork* will show you that it's unlike any interactive story you've seen before. On-screen mapping. Window displays. A character that grows in strength and power. You get all the excitement of role-playing games, skillfully blended with the fabulous puzzles and award-winning prose of Infocom's interactive fiction.

Screen shown is for the Commodore 128 version.



# Jinxter—Magnetic Scrolls is on a Roll

By Robert Guerra

Set in Aquitania—a land plagued by horrible weather, a shortage of good cheddar cheese and generally poor luck—*Jinxter* is a humorous adventure from the British outfit that did *The Pawn* and *Guild of Thieves*. The reason for the unfortunate state of affairs in Aquitania is Jannedor, a nasty green witch who has induced members of the general public to hide a number of charms originally attached to the magical “Bracelet of Turani.”

The bracelet’s main power, aside from keeping the activities of the green witches in check, was to preserve the luck in Aquitania. Naturally, to set things right again and restore Aquitania’s luck, you must find the missing charms, reassemble the bracelet and use its power against the witches.

## *On the Bus or Off the Bus*

The story begins with your arrival via bus at your beautiful home in Aquitania. It’s the end of the day and, although you’d like to relax, you quickly get the sense that the chances of a relaxing evening are unlikely. First, you hear doors slamming in other parts of the house. A chef appears in your kitchen just long enough to bury a meat cleaver in your skull. The books in your library spontaneously attack you. Seven dwarfs show up in your bedroom. Even your own bathroom turns against you!

Through it all, the text is well-written, imaginative and sometimes shockingly descriptive: “Without warning the lavatory lid starts flapping as a ghastly stench and raucous laughter fills the room. The washbasin belches blood as, with mounting horror, you see the claw foot of the bathtub reach out and slash at your leg. Muscles, veins and tendons spill from your ripped trousers, and just as you are beginning to think that this is all a bit over the top, the scene fades, returning you and the room to normal.”

From this attention-getting start, throughout your search for the charms and on to the final showdown with Jannedor, *Jinxter* is a nightmarish but often funny

story of misfortune and bad luck. Not surprisingly, the story and the humor (or perhaps I should spell it humour) are unmistakably British. Like England, for instance, Aquitania is a land where it’s almost always foggy, cloudy or raining.

Also, like other British imports (Monty Python and Benny Hill come immediately

**Type:** Graphic Adventure

**Systems:** C 64, Apple 2 (no graphics), ST, MS-DOS (256K) required; EGA and 640K required for graphics), Tandy (same specs as MS-DOS), Amiga

**Planned Conversions:** Macintosh (May/June)

to mind), *Jinxter*’s comedy ranges from subtle word play and dry wit to situations that are totally outrageous and absurd. You may even occasionally feel that some of the jokes would be easier to understand if you were British, but unless your funny bone has been surgically removed, *Jinxter* should still provide you with plenty of chuckles.

This game is really best described as an illustrated text adventure. Although the graphics that accompany the text are of uniformly good quality (with extremely detailed versions for the Amiga and other 16-bit machines), not all scenes or locations described in the text are illustrated.

In fact, the first graphic you see, an interior of the bus you take home from work, remains on the screen until after you’ve gotten off the bus, met one of the Guardians of Aquitania and arrived in your own front yard. Similarly, the picture of your yard stays in place while you enter the house and move through several of the rooms (only three of the seven interior locations are illustrated).

The limited use of graphics isn’t a problem, however. After all, wouldn’t you rather see a small number of quality illustrations than a museum full of poorly drawn graphics? And *Jinxter* is such an enjoyable, offbeat adventure, it’s a lot of fun even if you turn the graphics off completely at the outset.

There are also a number of special graphic effects: the “cameo” option reduces the current picture so it fills just the top-right corner, allowing you to read the entire screen of text, and function keys

enable you to scroll the picture up or down when you need to review the game’s most recent textual revelations. [The only serious drawback will be encountered by Commodore adventurers, who will wait 10-25 seconds for each disk access—even if a new picture is not loaded.] Commonly used commands may be executed with the mouse on the

16-bit versions.

*Jinxter* comes with two non-copy-protected disks, a beer coaster, a Magnetic Scrolls Adventure Guide, and a funny memo from the Department of Guardians, Office of Internal Administrative Liaison, outlining the background and objectives of the game.

## *Give us Five Minutes and We’ll Give You Aquitania*

You also get a copy of “The Independent Guardian”—a small newspaper about the same size as *QuestBusters*. Bearing the motto: Quality News For The Hard Of Thinking, “The Guardian” is a bizarre collection of news stories about guys named Len, processed cheddar cheese, herringbone coats and the general decline in the quality of life in Aquitania.

A careful perusal of this paper also reveals the types of sentences and commands that are easily interpreted by the game’s sophisticated parser, as well as acceptable abbreviations.

In addition, it offers four-and-a-half pages of encoded clues to help you through some of the tougher puzzles. When you get stuck in the adventure, you simply type HINT; the computer will prompt you to enter one of the clues. The clue is then be decoded and displayed. Perhaps most importantly, “The Guardian” is the key to the game’s copy-protection scheme. When restoring a saved game, you will be asked to enter a word found on a specified page, column, and line.

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**Skill Level:** Intermediate

**Protection:** Type in words from manual

**Price:** Apple, C 64, \$34.95; others, \$39.95

**Company:** Magnetic Scrolls/Rainbird

# Star Trek III: Rebel Universe

By Matt Hillman

"Space—The final frontier!"  
Captain James Kirk

Thus begins *Star Trek III*, which has absolutely nothing to do with the third *Star Trek* movie. Instead, it captures much of the flavor of the TV series—yet is still not completely satisfying as a game. A joint effort of Firebird and Simon & Schuster, it's the first of the *Star Trek* adventures to employ graphics.

You control the crew of the starship Enterprise, including Captain Kirk, on a mission to stop a Klingon conspiracy that threatens the Federation. The Klingons have developed a substance called dilithium delta 6; linked with a strong power source, it can telepathically subdue most sentient beings. The Klingons, of course, plan to use this "psmitter" to rule the galaxy.

As the game commences, the Klingons already dominate a region of space known as the Quarantine Zone. The Federation plans to send in the Enterprise, then seal off the entire zone inside an impenetrable Klein sphere. The Enterprise and crew must defeat the conspiracy within five years or be trapped forever when the sphere becomes permanent.

This is accomplished by traveling among hundreds of star systems, each containing planets of varying types. The Enterprise's entire crew—the main characters from the TV show, at least—is at your command. With a unique MultiVision interface (as the manual calls it), you control the ship's systems through Kirk, Spock, McCoy, Sulu, Uhura, Chekov and Scotty.

The screen is divided into eight windows: a large one covers most of the screen, and seven smaller ones surround it. At the outset, the bridge of the Enterprise appears in the main window. Pictures of the crew fill the smaller ones. By clicking the mouse or joystick button on a small window, you can bring that crewmember's picture into the large window. Then you can click on certain control

points in these pictures to access the ship's systems and other information, which causes additional screens to appear.

The Multivision interface makes the Enterprise fairly easy to control. Sulu and Chekov play the most important roles, controlling respectively the drive and weapon systems. With Sulu's screens, you will rely on the three-dimensional "Starglobe" to plot courses from star to star, then hit the warp engines to travel to a destination. Once inside a system, you'll access another screen that enables you to reach each planet with your impulse engines.

Due to the Klingons' telepathic powers, enemy ships may appear in any system—even those controlled by the Federation. Chekov has three screens for controlling battles: one lets you select your weapon (photon torpedoes or one to four phaser banks), another is for targeting a specific enemy ship, and with the third you "lock on" to a target and fire away.

Spock is also very important, providing information on your ship's damage, the nationality of the star systems, and each planet's type. This data is vital, since some planets have special effects on the Enterprise. If you enter a system containing catastrophe pods, for example, you must find an orbital discontinuum (another type of planet) before the killer vegetable eats through the ship's hull.

In a Federation system, the Enterprise can refuel, get repairs or restock the ship on certain planets. Energy refineries, repair docks, weapons dumps and dilithium mining complexes all provide useful services. There are many other "special" planets as well.

The screens of Uhura, Scotty and Dr. McCoy simply offer information rather than access to other screens. Uhura re-

ceives messages from planetary bases such as tracking stations and archive complexes, which tell you how many ships are in the area, for example. Scotty's screen shows the status of the warp and impulse engines, and McCoy's screens lists each crewmember's health status—which can drop severely during expeditions onto planets.

All remaining options are accessed from Captain Kirk's screen. Here you can enter the transporter for beaming down to a planet, and access the ship's stores so you can distribute objects among the crew for use on the planet surface. Once you beam down, a different system (described below) is used to control the characters. From Kirk's screen, you can also save and load games-in-progress or pause the game.

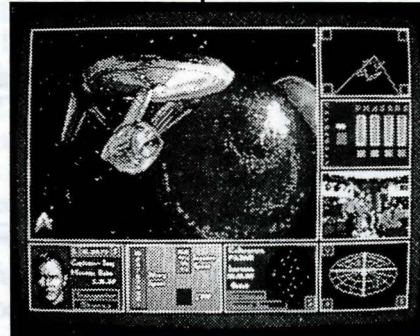
## Graphics and Sound

The game is obviously complex—but is it well done? Many aspects are, particularly the excellent graphics and sound. Different crewmembers are easily recognizable in the small windows, and appear in superb detail in the large screen. Shots of the bridge, the ship's exterior and enemy ships are also quite good, as are many other screens.

Much of the animation is equally well executed. The three-dimensional battle scenes are especially pleasing, as the enemy ship rotates and grows in size convincingly. The Starglobe is also well done, but the planet approach sequence is less flashy. *Star Trek III's* only real graphic disappointment is that you don't get to see people beaming down to the planets—though you will hear the sound effect.

And sound effects are another strong point. The game offers the standard combat noises, such as warning shots and phaser blasts, and the opening theme (from the TV show) is also excellent. But the real standouts are the digitized voices. Travel too long at a high warp speed, for

Continued on page 10



**Type:** Graphic Adventure/Strategy  
**System:** Atari ST  
**Planned Conversions:** C 64 (Sept.), IBM (CGA, July; EGA, Oct.)

# Walkthru: Eternal Dagger, Part 2

By Eric Mitchell and Thomas Zdyb

Numbers correspond with those on the appropriate dungeon map. Dungeons are labeled as described in the game disk's Utility section. (See previous issue for tips on character development, combat and other aspects of the game.)

## The First Island

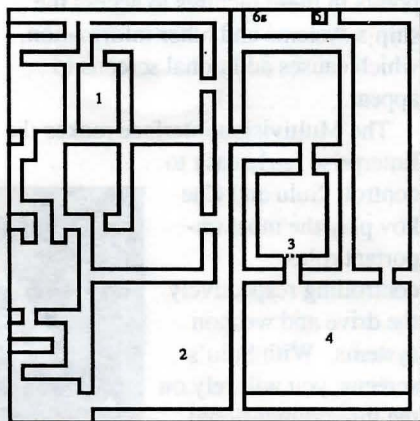
Head for the only Temple/Town on the island and fight off/run from the monsters guarding it. Stay in the area until your characters can handle the Undead effortlessly, then march on the Rebel Base. Try to avoid the island's southeast quadrant and swamp/forest east of the town's swamps, the lair of the Dragon. Unless your characters are faring very badly and need more magical weapons, don't fight the monsters at the treasure areas shown on the map; they'll still be there after the island returns to normal. Meanwhile, you can't sell anything because the island is still enchanted; furthermore, your carrying capacity is severely limited.

The only weapon you can get without a fight is the Dragonslaying Sword from the Rebels (Group of Armed Men). (T)alk to them. Get it immediately, because the Rebels and Sword vanish after the island returns to normal. If your party can hold out, don't get the Holy Morningstar from the Dragon's horde until after the Necromancer is destroyed, for the horde contains a great treasure you can sell later on. But this Morningstar is the most effective weapon against the Necromancer, so you may want to go ahead and grab it.

## Dungeon A: Necromancer's Cave, Level 1

Prerequisites: Dragon's Teeth (for Level 2) if you have slain the Dragon. You can also buy them in this dungeon for ten Life Forces each. This dungeon cannot be entered after you destroy the real Necromancer, so take only the best equipment you can find.

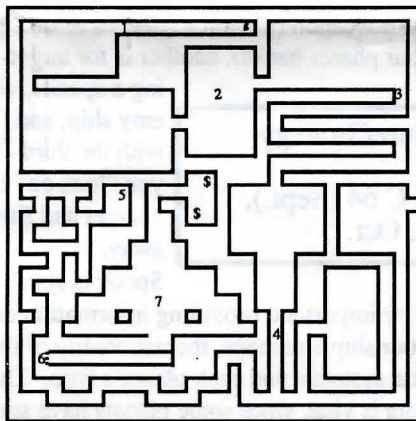
Search the island's northwest tip for the tunnel to the Necromancer's island. Inside the dungeon, your party appears at the stairs on the northwest corner of the map. (1) The door's name: **xoqu**. (2)



The floor's name: **jym**. (E)xamine at (3) to open the door. In (4) you find the false Necromancer and a necklace. (5) Dragon's Teeth are sold here. (If you buy them, return to the Temple to restore Life Forces before continuing.) Head for the stairs at (6).

## Dungeon B: Necromancer's Cave, Level 2

Your party appears at the north central part of the map. (1) Use the Dragon's



Teeth. The chests at (2) contain only spices and bandages. (3) Remember the door's name? **xoqu**. At (4), you need the floor's name: **jym**. (5) To learn the hall's name, each character must pay 20 Life Forces. Speak the hall's name (**spmg**) at (6), enter and fight the real Necromancer (7).

## Outdoors Again

When the Necromancer is destroyed the island changes. Go to town, sell your treasures, then get all the remaining treasures on the island. Buy passage to Elven Isle (in town).

## Elven Isle

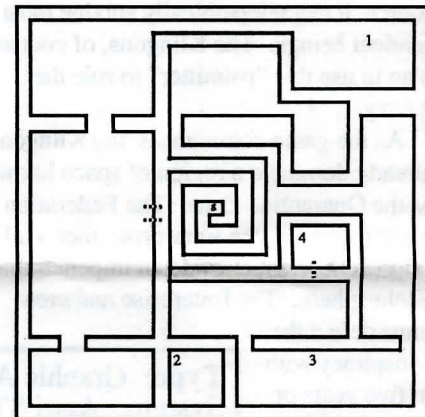
To save time, visit the dungeons in the following order.

## Dungeon E: Magoomba's Grove

No map is provided, since there are no walls. You've got to be quite powerful to take on Magoomba, but vanquish him and you'll get the Living Dagger. (Lightning and Magic Blasts are effective.)

## Dungeon H: Dungeon of Koruy

Your party appears dead-center of the map. (1) Examine this spot for skeleton key. It's not necessary to go to (2) unless you want money. To open the door into (2), pull the lever at (3). Use the skeleton



key from (1) to release the Princess at (4). She'll turn the Living Dagger into the Eternal Dagger.

## Dungeon G: Waddling Turtle's Hut

No map needed. If you rescued his daughter, Turtle gives you a map for Dungeon F.

## Dungeon F: The Aerie

Prerequisites: A 50-foot rope. Upon seeing the map (from Turtle), Gray Eagle will give you the Bag of Winds, the only way to enter Avlis' Tower.

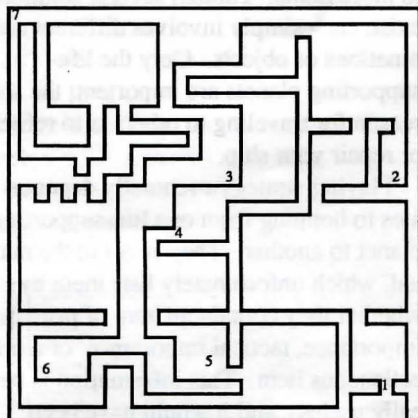
## Dungeon C: Avlis' Tower, Level 1

Prerequisites: The Bag of Winds (from the Aerie) and 20 copper pieces. If you have both, save the game at this point—but not in the dungeon, since you can't escape it until completing both levels. (If you lose the Bag of Winds after doing everything up to Dungeon G above, return



to Dungeon F and you'll get another one.)

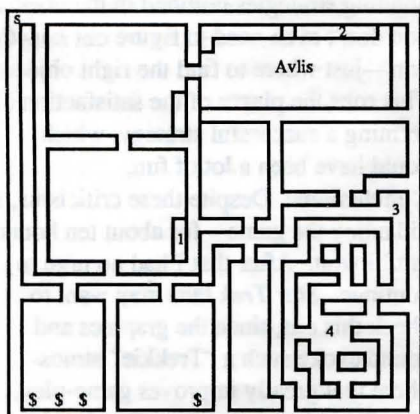
Your party appears in the southeast corner of the map. At (1) you must pay up. You'll find a +7 Greatsword at (2). The answer at (3) is **tfwfo**. If you can't unscramble the puzzles at (4), the answer is **uiff kftufst gsjhiufo fbtjzmz**. It's a hint for the most effective spell to use in the next room. The answer at (5) is gorillas. Pull the lever at (6). This room is meant to intimidate you. Just move back and



forth and the doors will open. Go up the stairs at (7).

**Dungeon D: Avis's, Level 2**

Get the Bag of Winds at (1) if you want to return to this place. The goal here is to get the Feathered Cloak at (2) and escape



the maze. To escape, go south past the statues at (3), close all the doors (except the one immediately after you pass the three statues on the way to this maze) and enter the flame (4) in the square room. Don't pass through any flame *twice* or your characters will be injured and teleported to the stairs. Here's what happens if you follow the advice of the three statues at (3). Left stat-

ue: You're teleported to the stairs at the northwest corner of this dungeon. Middle statue: Teleports you to the dungeon's southwest corner. Right statue: You'll exit the tower.

**Dwarven Island**

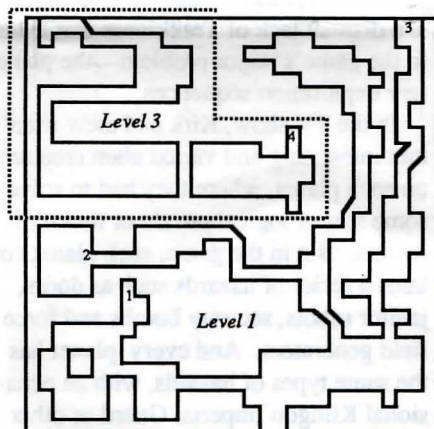
Dungeon I, Sri's Lair, is in the center of the island, approached from the south. You don't need to talk to the natives for clues. Fight the Dwarven Patrol when you meet them. Dwarf soldiers are the best source of treasure and magic items. It costs one gold piece to enter the Temple and ten to return to the Elven Island, so plan your buying and enchanting accordingly. Monsters are extremely tough, so don't wander too far on your first day here.

**Dungeon I & J: Sri's Lair**

Prerequisite for Level 3: Enough space for three items. Holy Weapons +5 are useful on all levels.

**Level 1**

You'll find copper pieces at (1). If you mine for silver at (2), your crew will become exhausted. Take stairs at (3) to



Level 2.

**Level 2**

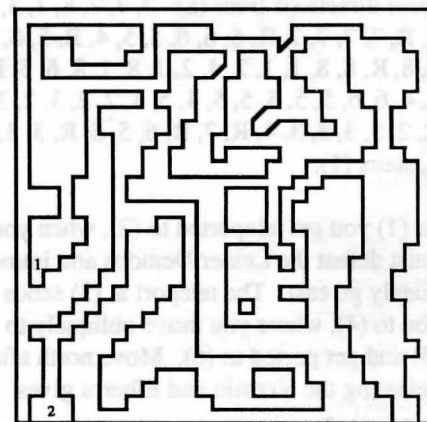
You'll find silver at (1) and stairs to Level 3 at (2).

**Level 3**

Get the Dwarven Helmets at (4).

**The Elven Isle**

Return here after obtaining the eight Helmets. Save the game here and make a copy of the disk if you want to continue adventuring on this plane, because you can't turn back after visiting Grey Eagle.



Dungeon J: Sri's Lair, Level 2

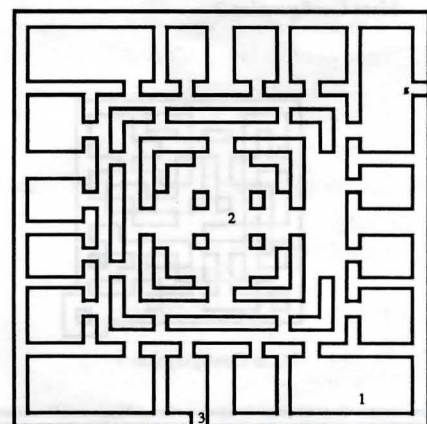
Also remember to heal all wounds and visit the Temple before going on. If you have the Feathered Cloak and the Eternal Dagger (preferably enchanted to +6), go on to Dungeon F, The Aerie, again; Grey Eagle will fly you to the next maze.

**Above the Underwater Dungeon**

Rest here. There's nothing else to do but search. Wear the helms.

**Dungeon K: Underwater Dungeon (Enolho)**

You'll get Wizard's Plate +6 at (1), though monsters are formidable. It's not necessary, but you can examine tables at (2) for an interesting message. The gate to the Demon World is at (3). You must drop all but the Eternal Dagger.



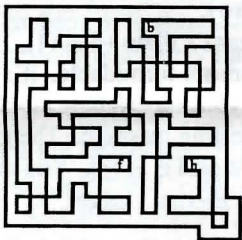
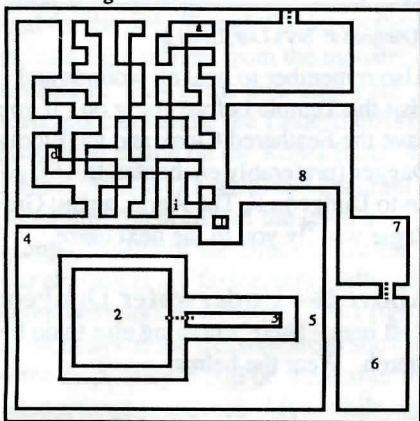
**Dungeon L: Demon World**

The maze configuration shifts due to rolling boulders, but there are only three variations. Follow the path mark by a-h on the maze maps. When , heading toward the next boulder, avoid any other boulder in your path. If , this is confusing, type

Continued on next page

these directions from (a): 7, 7, 7, 8, 1, 3, 3, R, 7, 7, 7, R, 6, 6, 6, 5, 5, 4, R, 5, 6, 6, 6, 8, R, 8, 8, 1, 1, 2, 4, 2, 1, 8, 1, 8, 6, 5, R, 3, 4, 6, 6, 5, 5, 5, 5, 4, 5, 4, 2, 2, 3, 2, 3, R, 2, 3, 3, 3, 4, R, 7, R, 6, 5, 5, R, 3, 3, 4, stairs (1).

At (1) you get teleported to (2), when you must defeat the Lesser Demons and immediately go east. The teleport at (3) sends you to (4), where you move obliquely to (5) and get ported to (6). Move north after defeating the Vermin and Elharra gives



Maze Configuration 2

some advice at (7). Plunge the Eternal Dagger into the device at (8).



Maze Configuration 3

## We're Not Like Other Magazines!

When your sub expires, we'll remind you, but will not send you a series of cards pestering you to renew your sub—when it's over, it's over. So renew today to make sure you don't miss a single issue.

## Star Trek III

Continued from page 7

example, and Scotty pipes up with, "If we keep up this speed, we'll blow up any minute now!" in his clearly recognizable accent. Kirk, Sulu and Spock also "talk."

### Multiple Solutions

You can win in at least eight different ways. The first time I won by delivering a dilithium delta 7 crystal to the Federation research psimmitter console, so the Federation could build its own psimmitter and neutralize the Klingon's psimmitter. Other victory strategies include capturing the Klingon admiral, delivering an antidote to Federation commanders, and destroying the Klingon psimmitter. Unfortunately, the manual describes the different ways to win, ruining any suspense and satisfaction that might have come with discovering them yourself.

The game profits immensely from its "Trekkiness," evoking the atmosphere of the TV show in several ways that are mainly accomplished with graphics and sound effects as well as by adhering to the "reality" of the Enterprise, with warp drives and weapon systems that function as they do on the TV show. However, it is a distinct lack of Trekkiness that leads to the game's major problem—the planetary exploration sequences.

In the TV show, Kirk and crew usually met interesting and varied alien creatures on each planet, where they had to solve some sort of logical puzzle or moral dilemma. But in the game, each planet contains a series of hazards such as doors, janitor robots, security bombs and force field generators. And every planet has the same types of hazards, with an occasional Klingon Imperial Guard or other special barrier tossed in now and then. You must successfully navigate the hazards by using items from other planets, or by relying on the abilities of your crew. This is even less exciting than it sounds.

Each crewmember has at least one special ability: faced with a hazard, Uhura can usually "beam signals at it," while Sulu can "fire phaser at it." (These are selected from the character's screen; there is no type-in parser.) No matter what the hazard, your crews' abilities and options never change. The worst part is that the solutions seem completely random, solvable only through trial and error.

When confronted with a force field

generator, for example, I had Spock "analyze it" and was informed that "It sparks and injures person." I then had McCoy "walk towards it," which led to "It is deactivated." No logic here. Each object and hazard is depicted with a simple line drawing, contributing nothing of interest to this portion of the game.

After hours of playing, I concluded that the game is mostly a glorified scavenger hunt. You travel from planet to planet and use certain objects to gain other objects or to obtain information leading to more items. Though several solutions exist, each simply involves different combinations of objects. Only the life-supporting planets are important; the sole reason for traveling to others is to refuel or repair your ship.

Playing strategy eventually degenerates to hopping from one life-supporting planet to another. They're all in the manual, which unfortunately lists them by whether they contain an item of principal importance, tactical importance or a miscellaneous item. This information is basically useless, and it would have been better if the planets were listed in simple alphabetical order.

I finally stumbled upon victory by discovering several important items. There is no way to plan to win by following a specific strategy, for the method of victory will probably depend on which items you happen to find first. With all the winning strategies outlined in the manual, you don't even need to figure out *how* to win—just where to find the right objects. This robs the player of the satisfaction of forming a successful strategy, which could have been a lot of fun.

**Conclusions:** Despite these criticisms, I did enjoy the game—for about ten hours, until I won. After that I had no urge to continue. *Star Trek* fans may want to check this out, since the graphics and sound evoke such a "Trekkie" atmosphere that greatly improves game-play. Non-Trekkies may even enjoy the game because it's based on the show. If it were not a *Star Trek*, this program wouldn't stand out at all. But the graphics, sound, interface and *Star Trek* name partially compensate for the mediocre gameplay.

**Skill Level:** Intermediate

**Protection:** Program

**Price:** \$39.95

**Company:** Firebird/Simon & Schuster

# Silicon Dreams



By William E. Carte

This British collection of three science fiction games attempts to catapult you into an exciting, futuristic space adventure. Unfortunately, it fails so miserably that one suspects Morton-Thiokol had a hand in it.

A single disk contains three complete and separate games in which you are secret agent Kim

Kimberley.

You can play them in any order, but the only

way to attain the highest ranking is to completely solve them 1-2-3.

The first is *Snowball*, in which your mission is to safeguard the interstellar transport, Snowball 9. As the game begins, you awaken from hibernation (yes, hibernation) in a freezer-coffin. You must get to the main control room and prevent the ship from crashing.

In *Return to Eden*, you have just arrived via stratoglider on the planet Eden. You've got to reach the city of Enoch and stop some robots from destroying the Snowball 9. Finally, we have *Worm in Paradise*, which asks you to explore Enoch, acquire money and become a member of the local governing party. Then you'll get the chance to save the world.

Though these plots may be acceptable—some even interesting—they lose their appeal almost immediately after you boot the program. First of all, the graphics are among the poorest I've ever seen. Some are completely indistinguishable, looking like colored blobs on the screen.

So inferior are the graphics in *Silicon Dreams*, they would have been deemed bad by the standards of four or five years ago. And even the 16-bit versions use the same shoddy graphics seen on the Apple. The text is fluid and readable, and the designers [using the word very loosely] should have left these as the text-only games they once were instead of attempting to dress them up with illustrations and doing such a bad job.

"Overkill" best describes the documentation—a very attractive 50-page booklet mainly filled with story background.

(Only three pages in the manual actually deal with game play. That's right: three pages out of 50!) This one gets my vote as the most boring and overdone manual I've ever seen. Evidently they didn't bother to revise it from the original British version: the Loading Section gives instructions for cassette tapes, which are only available overseas where (especially in England) disk drives are uncommon.

The parser is good in some respects, accepting full sentences, but is poor in

many others. Lots of simple commands are not understood. I tried to "get on slab," for example, and learned this was impossible. When I succeeded with "examine slab," I was told it was just scenery [the response you get upon examining almost anything]. And it only supports one drive for saving games.

But what about the good points? Well, the three separate programs are handled nicely in the initial boot-up. You get an immediate choice as to which game you want to play [on the Amiga you can switch back and forth between two that run simultaneously]. There are also some innovative features, such as RAM SAVE, which saves your game in RAM instead of on disk. It also has the OOPs feature, so you can back up one move (great if you just made a terrible mistake). You can even step back through several moves if your computer has enough memory. What confounds me is how such a game that's so outdated graphically and in other areas can boast such innovative features as these.

**Conclusions:** This program is simply prehistoric, and I can't recommend it to anyone. Until recently, Firebird had a good reputation for quality games with good graphics. The best thing about *Silicon Dreams* is the attractive picture of the gun-toting robot and wrecked spacecraft of the cover of the package.

**Skill Level:** Advanced

**Protection:** Program

**Price:** \$29.95

**Company:** Firebird/Activision.

**Type:** Text Adventure with illustrations  
**Systems:** Apple 2, C 64, IBM, Amiga

# The Quest Heads West!

We liked *Wasteland* so much, we decided to move there...to the Southwest, at least, somewhere in the desert around Tucson, Arizona. If this is a sample issue and you decide to subscribe, write to our new Arizona address on the enclosed invoice—not to the PA address. If you sent anything to the old address during or after the last ten days of April, your order will likely be delayed while it's being forwarded. (Fortunately, a real person, not the Postal Service, is doing this for a month or so.) The move is also the reason this issue may be a bit late. By July or August, your subscription should be back on schedule and arrive about the first of the month. (Unless you upgraded to an "Adventure Express" sub, which will show up two weeks sooner.)

## Moving Too?

And if you are planning to move, be sure to let us know the new address as soon as possible. Right now your issues will *not* be forwarded, so you must send us the new address (along with the old one, to make it easier to look it up in the data base). By July, we'll have a new postal set-up to eliminate this glitch.

## New Sub Rates

Due to the recent postal rate hike (which increased our costs 25%) and escalating paper prices coming this fall, the new sub rate is \$18 a year for US delivery. The Canadian price inches up to \$23, and overseas airmail delivery remains \$32 (both US \$). US subscribers who want to get QB two weeks sooner should upgrade to the "Adventure Express" sub, which also arrives unfolded and in an envelope. That now costs \$23 for a year or 50¢ for each issue left in your sub (check the label on this one to find out how many). Due to the way military post offices handle bulk mail, this is strongly recommended for those with APO and FPO addresses.

*You can still renew at your current sub rate—for one year only—if your letter is post-marked no later than June 30, 1988.*

# Romantic Encounters at the Dome

By Stephen King

*Romantic Encounters* is not a typical adventure game. In fact, it's really not an adventure game at all in the classic sense, but more of a "single's club simulator."

## Under the Dome

The Dome is a posh "members only" club where people go to meet members of the opposite sex. During the course of an evening, you'll have several opportunities to meet women (or men), talk to them, dance, buy them drinks and if you get lucky enough, be invited to their room.

The game begins by requesting your sex to determine whether to present the male or female viewpoint. There is a third category called "Other" that I thought might refer to transvestites, but when I chose this option I was presented with a brief quiz and returned to the menu. Next you type in a password from the manual: one for men and another for women. These never change, so I'm not sure about their purpose except as copy protection.

As in real life, you can opt for "random destiny"—or you can go to a menu of encounters and initiate one anywhere you want. I found the reference to "real life" somewhat funny, given the fact that in many cases I could approach the same woman again after a failed attempt and go through the identical steps without her even recognizing me. After signing in, you wait in the lobby while the game shifts to impulse mode. This means that brief snatches of conversation and impressions will flash on the screen continually until you are curious enough to act on one. Your primary purpose on floor one is to make your way to the elevator.

## An Elevating Experience

Inside the elevator, you'll find the panel has been hidden from view until you try to touch it. This leads to initial confusion and maybe an amusing circumstance the first time, but becomes merely tedious upon subsequent visits to the elevator. While inside, you have a choice of going to the Underground parking facility, the

Mezzanine on level 2, the Psychological department on level 3, or the Penthouse on level 7. Levels 4 and 5 are living quarters and are not accessible without an invitation. Level 6 is the administrative section, which is supposed to tie into a planned sequel.

I stopped off briefly at level 3 and took the Love Capacity test, which gave a brief but realistic account of itself, then went to the Penthouse to find my own romantic encounter. In the beginning I had a lot of trouble making progress. I soon got the idea that the parser understands only a small fraction of your probable responses, so I started limiting mine by basing them on some examples in the manual.

The parser is less than adequate, so I usually had the impression that I was dealing with a fifteen-word vocabulary. From the start, your actions are pretty much limited to yes and no answers to questions posed by your prospective partner. On rare occasions you'll have an opportunity to take some initiative in an encounter. The omnipotent computer (or maybe your conscience) might say she's ready to do whatever you want. Your response is generally discarded by the program as though it doesn't really matter.

Another drawback is that everyone you meet has a two-dimensional personality and a one track mind, severely limiting your course of action with any single partner. The Dome contains an abundance of stereotyped characters, which I suppose simulates the atmosphere in a real singles club. I had a curt encounter with an aggressive business woman of great ego and medium aptitude, a more extended interlude with a grasping type who became suicidal if I didn't tell her I loved her shortly after we met, and finally, my most promising tete-a-tete with a beautiful and sensitive woman whose boyfriend packed a gun. I found little subtlety in my own "romantic encounters."

The program comes in the record album style package made popular by Electronic arts. It contains three disks: one is the program disk, and the other two hold male and female data respectively. The

brief manual is mostly filled with sample encounters. Text and the simple IBM line graphics used to display maps of the room or the elevator panel display are shown in blue and white and yellow; there are no sound effects. All three disks can be copied to a hard drive and run without a key disk; you just have to type in the password when you first run the disk.

**Conclusions:** I can't really say that I enjoyed playing *The Dome*, but then, I'm not the type of person who frequents bars and singles clubs. If you're a person who enjoys accelerated relationships with stereotyped partners in depressing situations, this may be the game for you.

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**Skill Level:** Not Applicable

**Protection:** Password

**Price:** \$39.95

**Company:** Micro Illusions/EA

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## Questron II

Continued from page 1

copy-protection. Intermittently your game will be interrupted by a question about the manual. Miss two questions in a row and the game crashes. I find this a very *cheap* form of copy-protection and hope it is eliminated in future games. Also, the documentation is very sloppy, and the brief story it contains is not satisfying. The best thing about it is the description of creatures. It comes with a quick-reference card that explains more about the game than does the manual!

**Conclusions:** A very good game, *Questron II* will be enjoyed by everyone who liked the first game or *Legacy of the Ancients*. Because no mapping is required, it held my attention for many hours at a time. This is the best RPG system I've seen since *Wizardry* and *Bard's Tale*—and a must for those who like pen and paper RPGs like *Dungeons and Dragons* and *Tunnels and Trolls*.

---

**Skill Level:** Intermediate

**Protection:** Program; also type in words from manual

**Price:** C 64, \$39.95; Apple 2, IBM, \$44.95; others, \$49.95

**Company:** Strategic Simulations

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**Type:** Adult Text "Adventure"  
**System:** MS-DOS (256K)

## Waiting for Duffy

Duffy is waxing the QuestMobile, so write these people if you can help. And send in a brief ad if you are stuck.

Bard's Tale 3: Need help with Geldia. Might & Magic: Where is code key? What is Thundranium for? Dan Heffron, 2 Lavelle Lane, Framingham, MA 01701

Alternate Reality, The Dungeon: What time is midnight? I tried 12:00 and 12:30. Mark Lain, 4518 Pine St., Hammond, IN 46327

Guild of Thieves: How do I get lute? Don't have enough money to buy. Might & Magic: Need maps, help, supermen. Michael Parkin, 5 Old Lantern Rd., Danbury, CT 06810

Phantasie 3: Needs maps bad, also clues. Guild of Thieves: How do I enter village, windmill, wine cellar? Also need maps. Tom Bray, Box 838, Houston, BC, Canada V0J 1Z0

Dungeon Master: After Test of Strength on 6th level, where is key to locked door? Somewhere around 13th level, where is key to fit hole next to Ir symbol? What do you do where it says "When a rock is not a rock"? Tom Page, 96 Haddon Pl, Upper Montclair, NJ 07043

Knight Orc: How do I use the jump spell to find secret room? Need exact wording. Redden Byrd IV, PSC Box 1139, MAFB, ND 58705

Dondra: Need all the hints, answers I can get. Doug Sherman, 10285 Tujunga, Canyon Blvd, Tujunga, CA 91042

Might & Magic: Where is Telegoran and canine? What is secret of Portsmouth? What are messages for? Faith Hersey, Rd. 5, Clark Ave., St Clairsville, OH 43950. Where are Idols to restore Og's sight? Need help with riddle of ruby. Michael Arnott, 10274-129 A St., Surrey, BC, Canada V3T 3K3.

Dungeon Master: Need maps, hi-power killing spells. What does Neta potion do? T. Page, 96 Haddon Pl, Upper Montclair, NJ 07043

Suspended: How do I salvage parts from FRED? Repair weather monitors? AMFV: How do I keep Ryder from melting me down? Garrett Raines, 2706 Pine Club Dr, Plant City, FL 33566

# Infocomics: Lane Mastodon vs. the Blubbermen

By Shay Addams

No puzzles, no mapping, no game—that's what they promised and that's what you'll get in this, the first *Infocomics* title. (And "no review" is what you'd get if it were not from Infocom.)

Originating with Tom Snyder Productions, the concept and program was sold to Activision and eventually published under the Infocom label for reasons Infocom Joel Berez explained in last month's issue. It's a one-disk program that uses both sides of the disk. You get no manual or docs; everything you need to know is explained in the story's introduction.

### Refugees from a Fat Farm

The plot: Blubbermen from Jupiter are blasting Earth with a Mutation Ray in preparation for an invasion, and only Lane Mastodon can save the day. The cast: Lane; his fifteen-year-old sidekick Lambert; Ivory (Lambert's older sister); Zabor (head of the Earth Defense League) and assorted villains.

The action: push keys to freeze the current display, fast-forward or reverse, save your place in the story, or switch to view the next sequence from another character's perspective. The slant: a takeoff on the science fiction tales of the Fifties, in the tradition of *Leather Goddesses of Phobos*, minus the lewdity.

Simple line drawings, nicely colored and animated, are bolstered by effective use of cinematic techniques such as zooming in/out and panning across the room or horizon. In comic book fashion, character's dialogue appears in the picture (but not in balloons), while other text is seen below. Pictures fill the screen rather than appearing in individual cartoon panels as in *Accolade's Comics*. Sound effects are also effectively employed, along with a few simple tunes.

### Changing Perspectives

When a marker materializes in the upper right-hand corner, you can punch the return key to shift perspectives. After Lambert is captured by the Blubbermen, you may go along with him or remain

with Lane and Ivory. While this gives you a certain unique kind of "interaction," it doesn't mean you are completely free to view the story exactly as you wish—not if you hope to fully comprehend what's going on. Only by "rewinding" and bouncing back and forth could I make sense of all the various events.

I went to sleep halfway through the first session, but luckily hit my head on the "B" key (Bookmark) and saved my place. A week later I "finished" it between frequent glances at the morning paper.

Maybe if I were fourteen I would have enjoyed it. But I'm not so sure my advanced age is the reason I didn't—I still read comics (*Heavy Metal*, *Ronin*, etc.) from time to time and cover to cover.

One problem is that these graphics can't compare with those in comic books. Another lies in the program's premise: why seek passive entertainment in a computer program, when you can get better quality in other non-interactive media? If I want to fast-forward and back through something, it will be a tape of *RoboCop*. **Conclusions:** Infocom says this is not aimed at their adventure fans. Instead, they hope to attract a new market made up of people who normally don't play computer games. That's why *Infocomics* are being sold in comic book stores and other new venues. Hopefully this will work and these folks will soon advance to playing real adventures, since there isn't much here for serious, or even lighthearted, adventurers. Several more titles are planned, as well as mysteries and other kinds of stories intended for a more mature audience (old folks like me, I presume). *Infocomics* will make a lot more sense when CDI becomes a reality, and hopefully this just represents a first step in that direction. I can only recommend this one if you're extremely curious about Infocom's new directions—or your VCR is in the shop.

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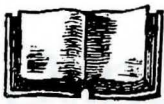
**Skill Level:** Not Applicable

**Protection:** Program

**Price:** \$12

**Company:** Tom Snyder Productions/Infocom

**Type:** Story on Disk  
**Systems:** Apple 2, C 64



# Keys to the Kingdoms



## Wizardry IV

On level 6 at 13E, 13N, you'll be asked what you seek? The answer is **bnvmfu**. Defeat the Bishop at 13E, 2N (level 6) and you'll be teleported to 17E, 4N and find the **stairs to level 5** (they appear only if he is slain).

Brad Kinman

## Ultima V

For 5 **Skull Keys**, go to **njopd** when a Shadowlord is present. Search **ipmmpx tuvng** in NW corner. A great missile weapon, the Magic Axe, is in NE corner of **kifmpn**. Exit secret door, go south to **ipmmpx tuvng** & search it. Search same thing in **qbxt** for Ring of Invisibility.

Jayson Hogan

To find **Word of Power** for **Destard**, talk to Goeth atop **tifmbn**. (It may help to say words backwards to him.) Other Words may be learned from **boopo** on balcony of **csjubjo**, **gpsuvof ufmmfs** in **nppohmpx**, and from the one who takes care of the poor in **njopd**. Use **tlvmm lfzt** to open LB's private quarters atop his castle. Search bookshelves for potions and scrolls. Get the **dbsqfu** and use it to fly. Search square where each Moongate opens and you'll find a Moonstone. Bury it elsewhere and the gate will next appear where you buried it. To get the Glass Sword, see Lord of Empath Abbey for a grapple. Then visit middle of Serpent's Spine; password is **ebxo**. You get a **sex-tant** from **ebwje** in lighthouse near Serpent's Hold.

Andrew Arno

To escape **jail**, wait till it's near 10:00 AM or PM (check pocket watch) and stand by the door. Pass time until a guy walks thru the door and up to your cell. (Don't kill the guy in the cell, or the one outside may leave.) Ask guy outside about **lfzt**.

Jason Zatylny

## Bard's Tale III

Starter dungeon riddles: priest at entrance, **dibpt**; to leave 3rd, **cmvf**; to exit 4th, **tibepx**; to exit 5th, **txpse**. Follow directions given in comment on 5th level.

Kill Brihasti in NW corner of 6th level and you're 'ported to Board for promotions. Chronomancer must cast **ARBO** in grove south of Skara Brae to reach Arboria.

Dennis Ewell & Brad Kinman

The **Arrows of Life & Valarian's Bow** are in the **Tbdsfe Hspw** in Arboria. First you must talk to the King, who want the head of Garnath. He's easier to slay with the **Nightspear**. To get it, collect **bdpst** (just outside city's boundaries) and several uses of **xbufs pg mjgf** (in castle under **mblf**; **GILL** spell required). Go to **bdpso** engraving on 4th level of Valarian's Tower and **vtf bdpso** to place it, then **vtf xbufs** to make it grow. Now you can enter top level of tower and get **Nightspear**. Slay Garnath (in **Festering Pit** dungeon), take head to King and Water of Life & heart to Grove. In Valarian's Chamber, **vtf ifbsu** and **vtf xbufs** to access passage beyond chamber and get Bow and Arrows.

George Politis, Ken Nigro, Dan Heffron

## Questron II

To avoid deadly ocean encounters enroute to the Realm of Sorcerers, take the **Psc** from Castle Redstone to **Npsmf** in Rivercrest Tomb; he'll 'port you there. Go east to Grissold and buy an **fbhmf** so you can avoid all land encounters there.

Randy Sluganski

Search dungeon on east coast of Realm of Sorcerers for **keys to Fortress**. Before entering **Twilight Tombs**, copy map from Hall of Maps in **Castle** and take the **Fuf-sobm Gmbnf** from the **Gpsusftt**. Inside the tombs, go to room in SW corner to get **Cmbdl Lfz** needed for last dungeon.

Steve Mead

## Deathlord

**Build up weak characters** by fighting skeletons in **Yokohama**. Strong ones can boost attributes by drinking magic water in level 7 of **Gjsf Hjbout njof** near town of **Spzbfm** on **Asagata**. Save after each positive increase, then make new copy of scenario disk B to refresh water before

returning. Lots of gold & gear is on levels 4-5. Better items are on lower levels of **Ufmfhspoe**, a 16-level dungeon near **Effqjohbmf**. Have a Shisai cast **Kaeru** before entering.

Dennis Ewell

All words are found of bottom level of dungeons. It's very tedious to work all the way down thru them, so wait until your **Mahotsukai** can move you up/down levels. (This won't work in Hell, so make good maps.) Keep the disk drive door open when transporting up or down: if you move higher than level 1 or below the bottom level, the party will be destroyed; with the door open, their deaths aren't recorded to disk (also handy during battle). The party described in the **March QB** has some drawbacks, especially having a **Shizen**—who is useless once your **Mahotsukai** can move up/down, and whose healing abilities can be done better by a **Shisai** (there are lots of disease-cure scrolls around, the only thing a **Shisai** can't cure). A **better party**: **Samurai**, **Kichigai**, **Yabanjin**, **Genkai**, **Mahotsukai**, **Shisai**.

Eric Karlsen

## Demon Stalkers

If having trouble with **Calvrak**, try one of these strategies. (1) Manuever your warrior somewhere north of **Calvrak** till you find an angle at which he can't hit you. Keep shooting him (his face turns red when you hit him) until he goes to be regenerated at the star. Quickly destroy one vortex; repeat the process. (2) Stand within line of fire of a vortex and wait for **Calvrak** to come close. Move Warrior to angle described in (1), then finish off another vortex. Keep track of how many vortexes you've destroyed. After all 5 are gone, follow strategy (1).

Eric Mitchell

To decode these and other clues, use the "new, improved" QuestBusters Code: count one letter back—RC = QB.



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Continued on next page

## Dungeon Master

Continued from page 4

### Mastering the Dungeon

Each of the fourteen dungeon levels consists of a winding maze. As you may have guessed, mapping is vital on certain levels. But sometimes you'll be so busy fighting or dodging monsters that accurate mapping proves nearly impossible unless you have a friend draw the map while you battle the fiends.

There are some teleports, but these are "friendly" ones that help you reach distant locations you must visit to complete the quest. Though that is often the case in mazes, these teleports are well-marked, so you don't accidentally 'port to the other side of the maze without even realizing you've done so.

### Puzzles and Riddles

Numerous puzzles and riddles are in store, some of which aren't obvious until you realize you can't go any further in a dungeon until performing a certain action or set of actions. You won't be typing in answers to puzzles and riddles, for solutions always consist of a movement or ac-

tion of the party, or placement of an item the party must possess. Money has no value in this game, though coins and other valuable items have roles to play in solving various puzzles.

### First Rate Graphics

Graphics are first-rate, equal to or surpassing those in the ST *Bard's Tale*. Everything is depicted from a first-person, "3-D" perspective. There's plenty of animation, from doors that open and shut to monsters that slash and claw. Every monster is animated, but the animation is noticeably jerky—perhaps due to the large amount of memory devoted to the detailed graphics.

Compared to some RPGs, there's relatively little sound in *Dungeon Master*. But where it does occur, it is well-done and appropriate: gates clank and rattle as they open, swords slice the air, monsters grunt when hit, and you hear tiny clicks when you walk over pressure plates or press buttons. Unfortunately, there is no background music.

**Conclusions:** From the people who did *Sun Dog* (the first high-quality ST game), this RPG meets and surpasses the stan-

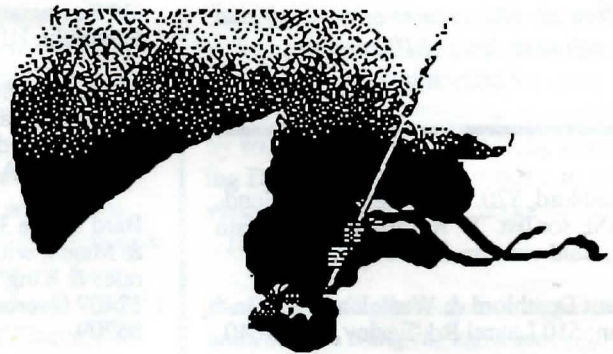
dards set by that title. (It was designed and implemented by Mike Newton, Doug Bell, Dennis Walker, Andy Jaros, Wayne Holder.) Graphics are great, the interface is relatively easy to use, and there are some nice innovations, such as feeding a character by dragging food to his mouth. Some of the ideas in *Hall of Champions* are also original, but the game's premise—a party questing to find a certain magic item is quite standard. Ultimately, this is an excellent game system with an average plot and puzzles.

Drawbacks are minor. It would have been nice to have offered more keyboard controls, and better animation could have improved the gaming experience. You can only save one game per disk, so several should be prepared. Some people will find the real-time nature of the game a nuisance. It's about as hard as the first *Bard's Tale*, and anyone who enjoyed that will probably like *Dungeon Master*.

**Skill Level:** Advanced  
**Protection:** Program  
**Price:** \$39.95  
**Company:** FTL Games

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