



SOUL CRYSTAL

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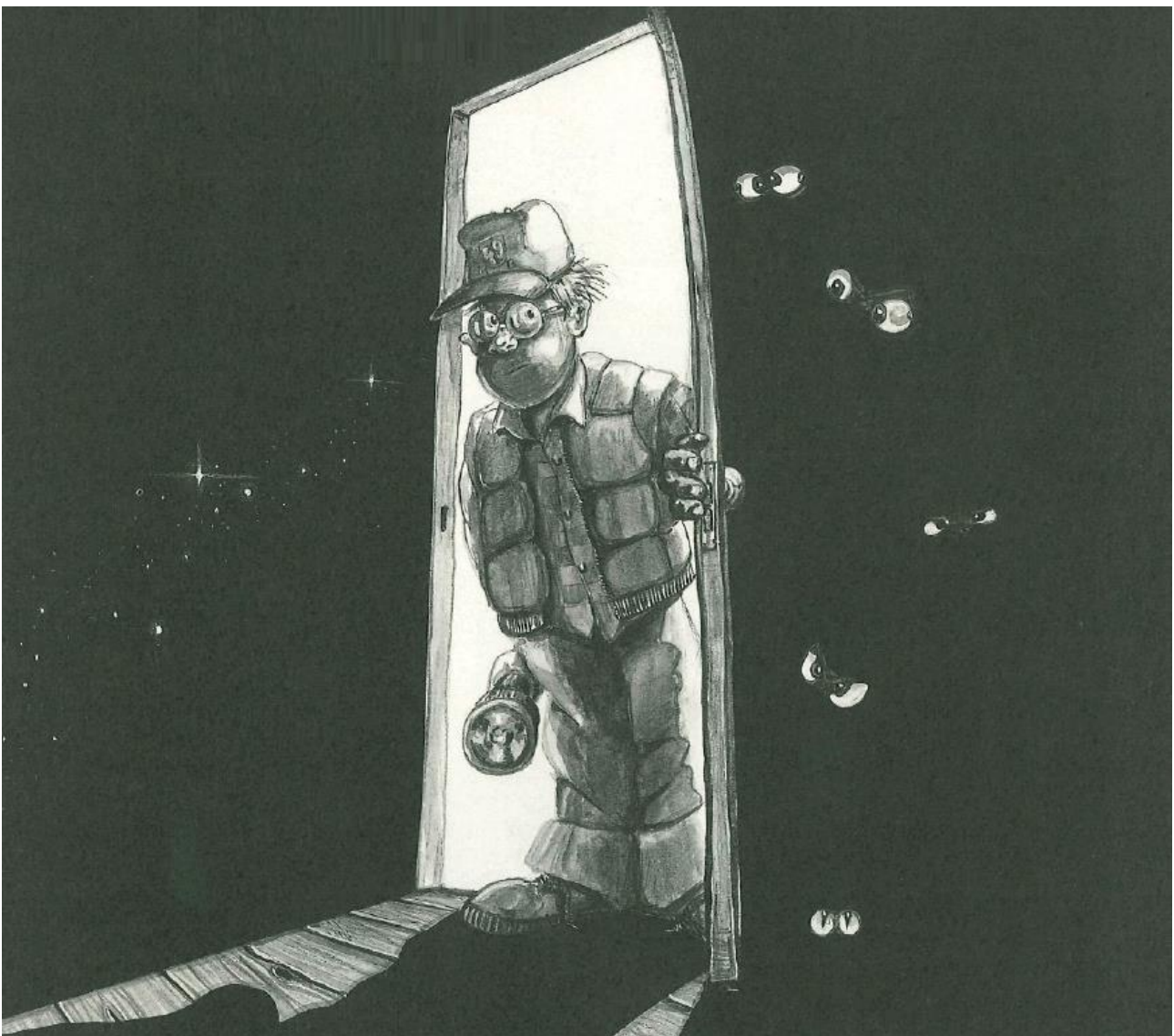
CRACKED BY ONSLAUGHT
INFORMATION & WALKTHROUGH

Introduction

During his holiday, Dave mysteriously passes through a mountain lake into a parallel world. There he meets an alchemist who promises to help him return to reality, if, in return, Dave frees the world from the oppression of a cruel tyrant. This leaves Dave with a lot of problems to solve: Whom can he trust? What's the deal with the cursed forest to the north, whose magical border he can't cross?

Inexplicable noises from the alchemist's fireplace room, shadows in the cemetery. What is true about the stories of the monastery abbot, Jack? Dave has to learn to distinguish between good and evil. He gets to know creatures that he had only known from legends, and ultimately, he must be prepared to sacrifice himself for the inhabitants of this world.

The adventure game "Soul Crystal" is a complex text-graphics adventure with keyboard, joystick, and mouse support. It features over 103 different locations, more than 130 images, 320KB of text, 30 minutes of music, and sound effects. It was developed between 1989 and 1992 by the company Avantgardistic Arts in Hannover and published by Starbyte Software in 1992.



Documentation

THE SCREEN LAYOUT

Soul Crystal's main screen can be roughly divided into three areas, each of which makes up a third of the screen. The text area is at the bottom. All texts appear here, and text you enter is displayed after the prompt (>). In the upper third is the current graphic that shows where you are right now, or if you have made a fatal mistake, how you ended your short life. Finally, you will find the menus in the middle part of the screen, your interface for communication with the parser.

THE MENUS

In order to be able to use soul crystal as comfortably as possible, an input system was developed that contains all the commands needed to solve the game without being overloaded with complex menus. This was achieved by subdividing into different menus arranging according to subject groups, which are described below.

At the beginning of the game, you are in the main menu. On the right of the picture there is a small compass, which you can use to move through the game. The arrows diagonally below serve to move up and down. In the middle of the menu area are the menu gadgets, which you can use to access the individual sub-menus.

MENU DETAILS:

Objects: This menu contains commands that have to do with the direct handling of objects. Terms listed here either provide direct information about certain objects, or they belong to the "first aid kit for adventurers", so to speak, i.e., the commands that you need most.

Control: Here you will find all commands that change objects permanently. These are, for example, commands like 'open' and 'close', or 'lock' and 'unlock'.

Action: This menu contains actions in the actual sense, i.e., commands that are applied selectively to a specific object, such as 'push' and 'tug'.

Location: Everything that could have something to do with the place you are in can be found in this menu. It contains gadgets for requesting a detailed description of the room, the output of all possible exits, etc. But also, actions that refer directly to your surroundings, ('dig') or bring about a change of surroundings ('enter', 'leave').

At the bottom of the third of the menu are the so-called 'system gadgets', i.e., those gadgets that are in menus and have no effect on gameplay, but are more of a technical or informative nature. These menus are:

Game: This menu contains commands for displaying the current score, some info texts, etc. The game can also be restarted or ended from here.

Disk: Here you will find all the commands that have to do with saving and loading games.

Extra: This menu contains gadgets for switching the music on and off and for switching between the two text output modes 'expanded' and 'compressed'.

Each of the submenus listed here can be exited by clicking on the 'menu' gadget on the left of the image. The program will then return to the main menu, from where you can select another sub-menu.

Both the movement gadgets (compass) and the system gadgets described above are displayed in all of the above menus in order to enable the game to run as smoothly as possible without constantly switching back and forth.

THE COMMANDS

In the following section, the commands that can be selected from the submenus are listed according to subject groups and briefly explained. Many of these commands require one or two objects for precise definition: more on that in the next chapter ('Interacting with the parser').

OBJECTS

Take: Take the item

Drop: Put the object back in the room

Consider: Take a closer look at the object or person, examine it, etc.

Backpack: Print out a list of all objects carried

Destroy: Destroy item or kill person, monster, etc.

Use: Apply item to another item

CONTROL

Open: Open object (e.g., door, drawer, or book).

Close: Close object (see 'open')

Lock: Complete object (usually also related to doors)

Unlock: Unlock object (see 'lock')

Attach: Attach object to another (glue, tie, etc.)

Move: Move object (smash, push, etc.)

ACTION

Push: Press object

Tug: Pull (out) object

Speak: Address a person, monster or something similar

Give: Give an item to a person / give it away

Help: To help a person, to lend a hand

Wait: Wait one turn

ENVIRONMENT

View: Look around and output the current room description

Paths: Output all currently possible exits of the current room

Enter: Enter building or vehicle

Leave: Leave the building or vehicle again

Dig: Dig on the spot

GAME

Points: Output the current score

About: Print information about Soul Crystal

Credits: Print information about Soul Crystal's development team

Restart: Restart the game

Quit: End game

DISK

Save: Save the current game status

Load: Load old saved game

Install: Initialise the save game disk

SPECIAL

Compact: Only show new room descriptions in detail

Verbose: Show all room descriptions in detail

Music: Turn soundtrack on and off

SID Type: Switch SID type between 6581 (old chip) and 8580 (new chip)

INTERACTION WITH THE PARSER

In order to communicate with the program, you first select a command, i.e., a verb. If you have clicked on this with the mouse, the selected verb is displayed behind the prompt in the text area of the screen. Commands that do not require any further information for their execution ('backpack', 'wait', 'dig', etc.) are now passed from the input driver to the parser. However, if the command still requires one or two objects for definition, the menu is faded out and a new menu page, the object menu, appears. This object menu basically consists of a box with the heading 'you see', in which all objects visible in the room or in your possession are listed, two arrow symbols for scrolling up and down this list and the 'del' gadget. By clicking on one of the two arrows, the list is scrolled up or down by one entry until you reach the first or last object. If a lot of objects are listed, or if you want to get to an entry at the end of the list quickly, you can click on the arrow gadgets with the right mouse button instead of the left one.

This function enables page-by-page 'scrolling' through the list.

As you look through the list, you'll notice that some entries have a trailing 'i' or 'e' added to them. These marks indicate the status of the item in question: '[i]' (for inventory) means that the item is already in your possession, e.g., in your backpack or similar, '[e]' (equipped) on the other hand, indicates that you have put on the object in question, i.e., that you are wearing it.

So now you select the desired object. If your command requires another object, the list is built up again so that you can also select the second object. By then at the latest, your input is complete and will be passed from the user interface to the parser as final. If you make a mistake when selecting the verb or the first object, the 'del' gadget deletes the last part of your input and takes you back one step in the menu row.

For those of you who would like to adventure using the keyboard according to the old tradition, a keyboard driver has been integrated into Soul Crystal in addition to the input options already mentioned, which enables commands to be entered conveniently using short key combinations. Primarily done using the first letters of a menu item and the cursor keys in lists.

LOADING AND SAVING GAMES

Under certain circumstances, it is worth saving you progress to be on the safe side. This is, for example, appropriate if you want to continue playing another day or if you want to try something dangerous in the game. For this purpose, Soul Crystal offers you the option of saving a large number of saved games on a data disk so that you can load them again if something doesn't quite work out as it should.

You have to prepare a data disk before saving the game. Refer to the loading instructions for information on how to do this.

When you want to save your current game, simply select the 'save' function in the 'disk' menu at any point in the game, whereupon a selection box that is very similar in design and operation to that of the object menu appears: using the arrow icons you scroll through the list, with the 'brk' button you cancel the saving process, and with a mouse click you select the entry in which your saved game should be saved. Now you can add a comment to your game before saving it, so that you can recognise it later. If you just press <return> or the right mouse button at the beginning of the line, the current room name will be used as a comment. Otherwise, after editing your comment, simply

press <return> key or the right mouse button and your game will be saved.

Loading a saved game works in a similar way: you select one of the entries, and after clicking on the saved game to be loaded, it is read in and you can continue playing from where you saved it.

If you want to free up some space on your save disk, or if you want to initialise an empty disk, you just have to click on the 'install' gadget in the 'disk' menu. All saved games are then deleted so that there is enough space for new ones.

The 'install' function must be called in any case before you save something for the first time, since some 'vital' directories or files are initialised in the process.

THE DISTRIBUTION OF POINTS

While you play Soul Crystal, the computer conscientiously logs your progress. A certain number of points are awarded for each solved task, but there are also spots in the game where points are deducted for mistakes. If you have solved the game or died through an error, your final score will be set in relation to the number of turns and you may be entered into Soul Crystal's 'Hall of Fame'. This type of calculation gives you the opportunity to compare your performance with that of your friends, who may have collected more game points, but also had to play a lot longer to do so. Later you can always try to get a higher score by solving the same tasks in fewer turns.

A QUICK START

Now you are on your own: You are on the street in front of the hotel and look around curiously. Somewhere, many hundreds of kilometres away, your parents are sitting in front of the television, clueless and full of naive trust in your good upbringing, while you have no other thoughts than how you can have as much fun as possible here in the shortest possible time.

The following example should help you to quickly familiarise yourself with your surroundings. While this is just a brief introduction to how to communicate with the game, it will quickly get you up to speed on how Soul Crystal's parsing system works. The program is preferably operated using the mouse. By simply clicking on the menu items displayed in the middle of the screen, you can transfer your commands to the parser quickly and easily. Just try it around a bit to get a feel for how it's operated. If you still have difficulties with the controls, you can get more detailed information in the 'Interacting with the parser' chapter.

This section is primarily about giving you a quick start with a practical example. Your own commands are marked by the prompt (>).

[On a dusty road] You are standing on a dusty road. There is a sign to your right, your hotel is to the east.

>*Look at the sign* The sign says: "Last hotel before the next system crash!"

>*Inventory* You currently own: jeans, t-shirt, sneakers

>*West [In the hotel lobby]* This is the lobby of 'Mary's Inn', the bed and breakfast you were planning to stay at this holiday. At the moment the room is pretty empty and looks deserted and desolate (no wonder, if you don't come in high season)! The reception is to the north and the street to the east.

>*North [At the reception]* You enter the reception of your bed and breakfast. To the north is the dining room, to the south you can see the lobby benches and through the door to the west you enter a bright hallway that leads to the guest rooms. In front of you is a massive reception desk.

>*Look at the counter* On the counter you will see a small, fist-sized copper bell and a couple of coloured brochures.

>*Take brochure* Okay, you take the brochure with you.

>*View brochure* The brochure was issued by the local tourist office. The title 'Loch Calderwood and Surroundings' is emblazoned in large letters on its cover.

>*Open Brochure* Good, you open the brochure.

>*View brochure* You are admiring the landscape depicted in the colour photos.

>*Consider bell* This bell was mounted on the reception desk so that newly arrived guests could call the porter.

>*Press the bell* You press the small copper bell and you hear a buzzer somewhere, but nothing happens!

>*Press the bell* You press the small copper bell and you hear a buzzer somewhere, but nothing happens!

>*Press the bell* As a reward for your persistence, the porter will appear and give you your room key so that you can finally settle in.

This short example should have roughly clarified how to proceed in general. Objects should be examined immediately and, if necessary, modified in such a way that you can use them as you like (e.g., the brochure, which you have to open in order to be able to read it), in cases where the desired result is not achieved immediately, you should remain persistent and not give up, etc. (you will find more about this in the following chapter 'tips and tricks').

TIPS AND TRICKS

Finally, a few tips that can help somewhat inexperienced adventurers to cope with the first problems in the game

1. Carefully read all the texts provided by the game. They contain a lot of information that could be useful for solving your task.
2. Examine each item carefully. As the excerpt in our example shows, a book or brochure can contain completely different information once you have opened it.
3. Try to imagine how you approach things in real life. Soul Crystal may be an adventure with a humorous touch, but it is nevertheless based on problems that can only be solved with logic and a little general education.
4. Be persistent; there are some places in the game where you have to repeat your input several times. This is especially true when it comes to questioning other characters.
5. Although Soul Crystal is not a so-called 'real-time adventure', i.e., no time elapses between your entries, there are still actions that are only crowned with success at a certain point in time. For example, if there is a large killer orc in a cave guarding a treasure, you would do well to wait until he leaves, for example to take care of an orcish need, instead of grabbing his gold right away and risking that you will be served for dinner at the orc family tonight.
6. Talk to creatures that are friendly to you, many of them have information for you that can be useful to you as the game progresses.
7. If you really do get completely stuck because you are planning something that you cannot print out with the 'normal' commands provided to you such as 'take', 'attach', etc., try converting your command into an 'apply' rephrase sentence. There really are very few

situations that Soul Crystal's parsing system hasn't been prepared for. And even if you only get a malicious saying as an answer, it could still contain a tip.

8. This game is probably the first adventure in which a cheat mode was integrated. So, if you should get stuck somewhere, you can pass your time looking for it (of course this is not absolutely necessary!) and with its help to get closer to your goal.
9. Last but not least: Don't forget to save your game regularly! Life is hard and death is unexpected!

INSTALL AND START THE PROGRAM

Put disk A in your floppy drive. Now load the program with:

LOAD "*"8,1

And then press the <RETURN> key. If you want to play with a joystick, please plug it into the 2nd port, when using a mouse (Commodore 1351 mouse required) please use the 1st port or continue with the spacebar and cancel with the right mouse button or the <RUN/STOP> key, an Amiga appears on the screen along with a monitor, on whose screen you can now configure your system. Using your joysticks, the mouse or the keys '@', ':', ';' and '/' you move the mouse pointer to the desired object, and pressing the left mouse button, the fire button on your joystick or the <RETURN> or spacebar activates the icon under the mouse pointer.

In the 'Input devices' drawer you can choose between the three-input media joystick, mouse and keyboard, the 'Install' icon calls a small program for copying the game disks and creating the saved game disk, and a click on the 'Soul Crystal' icon ends this part of the program. Your device driver selection will then be saved, so that you do not have to specify which input medium you want to use every time.

After a few seconds, when an image appears prompting you to insert the Soul Crystal master disk, simply turn disk A over and press space.

To create a saved game disk or to copy the data disks (Soul Crystal B & C), start Soul Crystal as usual and click on the 'Install' icon when you see the Amiga, whereupon a small utility will be loaded and started, which will do most of the work for you.

As soon as the main menu appears, you have the option of selecting one of four functions using the function keys:

<F1>: Install- prepares a floppy disk in such a way that you can use it in the game to save your scores.

<F3>: Directory- Displays the directory of the diskette just inserted into the drive. If the directory is too big to fit completely on the screen, the list will be scrolled. The scrolling can be frozen at any time by pressing the button with the Commodore logo.

<F7>: Quit installer- Leaves the install tool and returns to the workbench on the Amiga monitor, from where you can make further settings or start the program.

If necessary, each of the functions can be aborted by pressing the <RUN/STOP> key.

THE C64 DEVELOPMENT TEAM

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The Diary of the Tower Guardian

1st Day of the Year 713:

This morning, the couriers finally returned from the icy regions, where Firon, our King's brother, had visited his palace to deliver New Year's blessings. However, none of them seemed particularly pleased or hopeful. On the contrary, a message from the Elf King Firon seemed to have left them quite frightened. That's all I could find out so far. Even King Richard appeared very worried when he spoke with the envoy who left his meeting room!

2nd Day of the Year 713:

The beginning of the new year promises unfortunate events. An accident occurred today during the hunt, in which the noble Sir Henryk's horse stumbled during the badger hunt, burying him underneath. Sir Henryk was last seen, along with the old Archmage Grywinn and the king himself. Grywinn had spoken out against the appointment of the young, ambitious court magician Zargon into the Seventh Circle of the Mages Guild. Now, King Richard and Grywinn stand alone with their opposition, while Zargon is getting closer to his goal. He has dedicated years to perfecting his knowledge of magical elements, but he also possesses the strength of character and wisdom necessary for the prosperity of our country. We don't know where he came from, as he has never shared anything about himself with any of us. He is a secretive, mysterious individual, and I can't help feeling uneasy about him.

3rd Day of the Year 713:

In the early hours of the morning, the country's nobles laid Sir Henryk to rest in the graveyard of the St. Jacobi monastery. After the nobles returned from the funeral mass, a grand banquet was held in honour of the deceased. To distract myself from my gloomy thoughts, I watched the young officers and their ladies walking in the courtyard from my chamber on the main tower. The court servants were busy, rushing around to ensure the guests lacked nothing. After Vyrtron relieved me for an hour, I mingled with the guests to be part of the festivities.

Nobody noticed me, the lowly tower guard, among the elegantly dressed guests, so I had the opportunity to observe undisturbed. Suddenly, I noticed a young girl hurrying past me, so beautiful and graceful that I might have mistaken her for one of the noble ladies, if not for the white apron she wore as a waitress. When she passed by again, I was still standing there, dumbstruck. She blushed slightly and then gave me a happy wink before disappearing back into the kitchen. This happened a few more times until I gathered the courage to hold her arm and ask her name. She replied, "Simona." Unfortunately, I didn't have much time to talk to her, as she needed to attend to the guests, and I had to return to my tower as my break was over. Before leaving, I whispered to Simona to save some morsels from the feast and suggested that we meet shortly before midnight in the castle basement for a private gathering. Now I'm sitting in my room, looking down at the courtyard, counting the minutes until midnight. My only consolation until then is the opportunity to admire Simona from my window. She spotted me and waved from below, laughing. It seems I'm not entirely unsympathetic to her. I hope she truly comes tonight!

Simona did not disappoint me. Promptly, shortly before midnight, she entered the room on the castle's lower floor. She did so quietly, and I was terribly startled when I suddenly saw her in front of me. Although I was embarrassed by my reaction, she just smiled understandingly and pointed to a basket of delicacies she had gathered from the remains of the feast. As we enjoyed good food and a

carafe of fine wine, we grew increasingly intimate, encouraged by the effect of the wine. Finally, I confessed my love to her, and she replied with the words I had hoped to hear since our first encounter. But suddenly, we heard soft footsteps on the stone spiral staircase leading back to the entrance hall. To avoid compromising the young girl, I pulled her into a niche in the shadow of the torches and hid beside her, curious to see who was interrupting our secret meeting. It was Zargon. He slipped past us quietly and proceeded down the corridor until he stopped in front of a massive door. He looked around hastily, pushed the door handle, and disappeared into the darkness behind it. Still shocked by this mysterious turn of events, I wondered why Zargon was devoting himself to his studies on this particular night. After all, he would be officially accepted into the Seventh Circle of the Guild the next morning. He should be resting to be calm and composed on his significant day. But why should we care about Zargon and his magical tricks when there are more important matters to attend to?

4th Day of the Year 713:

As beautifully as yesterday ended, today was equally terrible. When Grywinn cast the runes to divine the gods' judgment on Zargon's appointment as Archmage, a bolt of lightning struck from a clear sky and turned Grywinn and his runewords into ashes. Panic ensued, and everyone was in disarray. Zargon, however, remained composed. Standing next to Grywinn's charred remains, he took the pentagram amulet meant for him and put it around his neck, declaring, "If the most powerful magician in the country cannot choose me, the second most powerful must do it!" King Richard and the terrified crowd were too stunned by the death of the wise Grywinn to oppose Zargon. Only King Richard regarded him with disdain, revealing that he knew who was responsible for Grywinn's demise. I caught a glimpse of Grywinn just before the lightning struck him. He appeared terrified by what he had foreseen.

5th Day of the Year 713:

I am afraid. I can hardly sleep, haunted by the dread of what Grywinn may have foreseen. I fear that Zargon, now that he has acquired magical power, might use it against his own people. He has already shown that he values power over lives, but how cruel must his actions be to prepare for the murder that has already taken place? Woe to us if my fears are confirmed.

Zargon's presence diminishes by the day, and when he does appear, it's often in the murky vaults of the palace, where the king's ancestors rest. None of us common servants dare venture there alone. If he notices that he is not alone, he hurries out of the room without a word of greeting, as though he is fleeing from something. During my lunch break with Simona in the castle kitchen, we observed a confrontation between Zargon and King Richard at the dining table. Zargon vehemently argued that the country's army should be taught the basics of elemental magic to strengthen them, a suggestion that Richard had rejected years ago. However, the power-hungry magician seemed to have little respect for his ruler's decisions. He even called Richard a coward, accusing him of avoiding thoughts of war. The dispute ended with King Richard angrily leaving the table, while Zargon sat there with a sinister smile, playing with a table knife.

6th Day of the Year 713:

Something terrible has occurred! Noble warriors, should you read this one day, we are in grave danger, and only the almighty gods can save our wretched souls. At midnight today, I heard screams coming from the courtyard and rushed to the window to see what had happened. Horror gripped me as I witnessed four half-decomposed mummies staggering through the courtyard. The great castle gate swung open, and a horde of disfigured monsters stormed in, taking control of the royal castle. Chaos ensued as the mob mercilessly slaughtered anyone who resisted. Then, an eerie silence

fell over the castle, and a procession of the undead emerged from the main building. Among them was King Richard, offering no resistance as they led him to another part of the castle. After a moment of silence, we heard my master's agonizing, prolonged death cry.

May the gods have mercy on my soul. In the courtyard, the surviving warriors of the king, driven together like cattle for slaughter, now cower fearfully and tremble like children, fearing the worst. Zargon, the treacherous traitor, the murderer and sinner, appears and leads the pack. He walks slowly along the line of prisoners, then stands on a platform and presents them with a choice: to serve him as their rightful master or follow their king in death. When none raise their hands to join him, Zargon unleashes his henchmen on the helpless men, leading to a horrifying bloodbath that claims the lives of all the castle residents.

Zargon has just ordered his minions to search the castle for any remaining survivors. It is only a matter of time before they find me up here and descend to capture me. So, noble warriors, take this book as the last testament to the glorious and peaceful times before evil descended upon our land. Pray for our souls and avenge us, our friends, and our families. I hope I will have a chance to end my own life, sparing myself the torments suffered by my fellow comrades.



Walkthrough

Joystick/Mouse

- W, N, (OBJECTS) **CONSIDER** desk, (MENU, ACTION) **PUSH** bell 3 times, **SPEAK Clerk**, (MENU, OBJECTS) **TAKE** room-key
- W, (MENU, CONTROL) **UNLOCK** room-door with room-key, **OPEN** room-door
- S, (MENU, OBJECTS) **CONSIDER** chair, **TAKE** swimsuit
- N, E, S, E, E, N, (MENU, OBJECTS) **LOSE** jeans, **LOSE** t-shirt, **LOSE** sneakers, **LOSE** room-key, **USE** swimsuit on Dave
- N, W, N, N, E, N, (MENU, ACTION) **HELP unicorn**, **SPEAK unicorn**, (MENU, OBJECTS) **TAKE** crystalball, W



- W, S, W, (MENU, ACTION) **GIVE** crystalball to orc kid, (MENU, OBJECTS) **CONSIDER** table, (MENU, ACTION) **WAIT** 4 times, (MENU, OBJECTS) **TAKE** pipe
- N, E, N, W, W, (MENU, ACTION) **PUSH** door, **SPEAK Mylgor**, (MENU, OBJECTS) **USE** knife on Dave, **USE** gore on pledge, (MENU, ACTION) **GIVE** knife to Mylgor, **GIVE** pledge to Mylgor
- S, (MENU, OBJECTS) **USE** Dave on bed
- N, (MENU, ACTION) **SPEAK Mylgor**, (MENU, OBJECTS) **USE** cotton shirt on Dave, **USE** pant on Dave, **USE** fur boots on Dave, **TAKE** elixir, (MENU, CONTROL) **OPEN** door
- N, E, E, E, (MENU, OBJECTS) **USE** pipe on beehive, **CONSIDER** beehive, **TAKE** honey, **USE** honey on fur boots
- W, N, N, W, N, (MENU, OBJECTS) **TAKE** silver coins
- S, E, S, S, W, N, W, (MENU, ACTION) **SPEAK salesman**, **GIVE** silver coins to salesman
- W, N, (MENU, OBJECTS) **CONSIDER** dog sled, (MENU, LOCATION) **ENTER** dog sled
- N, W, (MENU, OBJECTS) **USE** elixir on Dave
- N, (MENU, ACTION) **SPEAK** with Firon 3 times, (MENU, LOCATION) **ENTER** badger sleigh
- S, **LEAVE** badger sleigh
- S, E, E, S, E, N, N, E, N, (MENU, OBJECTS) **TAKE** rat poison
- N, **TAKE** short sword
- S, W, (MENU, CONTROL) **UNLOCK** burial gate with ice key, **OPEN** burial gate
- N, N, (MENU, OBJECTS) **USE** short sword on holy water font, (DOWNWARD), **CONSIDER** gravestone, (UPWARD), **USE** pray on stonealtar, (MENU, ACTION) **SPEAK** to Jack's Ghost
- S, S, E, S, W, W, N, (MENU, OBJECTS) **USE** short sword on silver
- W, **TAKE** shovel, (MENU, LOCATION) **DIG**, (MENU, OBJECTS) **TAKE** skull
- E, S, E, E, N, W, N, W, N, (MENU, CONTROL) **OPEN** casket, (MENU, OBJECTS) **USE** skull on skelly, (MENU, ACTION) **SPEAK** to king 3 times
- S, (MENU, OBJECTS) **USE** short sword on werwolf
- E, S, E, S, W, S, S, W, W, S, S, **USE** magic spell on west door, (MENU, CONTROL) **OPEN** west door
- W, (MENU, OBJECTS) **CONSIDER** study table, (MENU, CONTROL) **OPEN** drawers, (MENU, OBJECTS) **CONSIDER** drawers, **TAKE** laboratory key
- E, N, (MENU, CONTROL) **MOVE** FLUE, (DOWNWARD)
- W, (MENU, OBJECTS) **CONSIDER** bed, **TAKE** amulet, **USE** amulet on Dave
- E, (MENU, CONTROL) **OPEN** lab door
- N, (MENU, OBJECTS) **DESTROY** reagents
- S, (MENU, CONTROL) **LOCK** lab door with lab key, (UPWARD)
- N, E, E, E, N



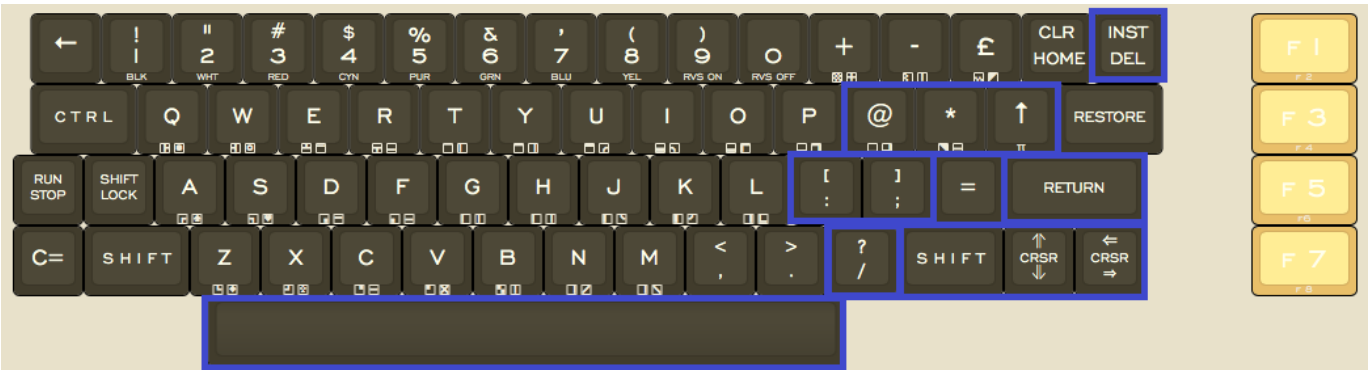
- E, N, N, (MENU LOCATION) **ENTER** boat
- N, N, **LEAVE** boat
- N, W, (MENU, OBJECTS) **TAKE** brick
- E, N, **CONSIDER** portcullis, **USE** brick on platform, (MENU, ACTION) **TUG** portcullis
- N, W, (MENU, OBJECTS) **TAKE** gate key
- E, (MENU, CONTROL) **UNLOCK** portal with gate key, **OPEN** portal, N



- (DOWNWARD), (DOWNWARD)
- N, (MENU, OBJECTS) **TAKE** SCENT, **USE** scent on Dave
- S, W, W, **TAKE** purple cloak
- E, S, S, **USE** purple cloak on Dave
- W, **TAKE** boat key
- E, (MENU, LOCATION) **ENTER** boat, (MENU, OBJECTS) **USE** boat key on boat
- E, (MENU, CONTROL) **ATTACH** boat to jetty, (MENU, LOCATION) **LEAVE** boat
- S, (MENU, OBJECTS) **TAKE** iron key
- N, (MENU, LOCATION) **ENTER** boat
- W, **LEAVE** boat
- N, N, E, (UPWARD), (UPWARD), N, N, W, (UPWARD), (MENU, OBJECTS) **CONSIDER** heaven, **CONSIDER** full moon, (DOWNWARD), (DOWNWARD)
- E, (MENU, CONTROL) **MOVE** warrior statue, (MENU, OBJECTS) **TAKE** kay's key, (MENU, CONTROL), **UNLOCK** gate door with kay's key, **OPEN** gate door
- S, **UNLOCK** steel door with iron key, **OPEN** steel door
- E, N, N, (MENU, OBJECTS) **CONSIDER** oak door, (MENU, ACTION) **TUG** doorknob
- N, (MENU, CONTROL) **MOVE** bookshelf
- W, (MENU, OBJECTS) **CONSIDER** ornate bed, **CONSIDER** bedding, **TAKE** leather socks, (MENU, CONTROL) **OPEN** leather socks, (MENU, OBJECTS) **CONSIDER** leather socks, **CONSIDER** paper
- E, E, **USE** code number on safe, (MENU, CONTROL) **OPEN** safe, (MENU, OBJECTS) **CONSIDER** safe, **TAKE** pledge
- W, N, W, **USE** pledge on purple fire, **CONSIDER** holy water font, **USE** holy water on purple fire
- E, S, S, S, (UPWARD), E, N, W, **TAKE** slice of bread, **USE** rat poison on a slice of bread, (MENU, ACTION) **GIVE** slice of bread to rats
- W, (DOWNWARD), (MENU, CONTROL) **OPEN** keg
- W, N, **CLOSE** tombs, (MENU, LOCATION) **ENTER** pentagram, (MENU, OBJECTS) **DESTROY** boiler, **DESTROY** crystal, **TAKE** scepter
- W, S, S, S, S, W, N, **USE** scepter on slot
- S, E, N, (UPWARD)
- E, S, S, (DOWNWARD), (DOWNWARD)
- S, **CONSIDER** source, **TAKE** water, **USE** water on Dave
- N, (UPWARD), (UPWARD)
- S.

Keyboard

C64 keys that are utilised in Soul Crystal:



Mapping:

Key	Game
Shift + Cursor Up/Down (or @)	North
Cursor Up/Down (or ?)	South
Shift + Cursor Left/Right (or [;)	West
Cursor Left/Right (or [;)	East
Up Arrow	Upward
Asterix	Downward
Space/Return	Confirm
INST/DEL	Delete/Back

Key	Game
O	Objects (sub-menu)
T	Take
L	Lose
C	Consider
B	Backpack
D	Destroy
U	Use

	Control (sub-menu)
C	Open
O	Close
L	Lock
U	Unlock
A	Attach
M	Move

A	Action (sub-menu)
P	Push
T	Tug
S	Speak
G	Give
H	Help
W	Wait

L	Location (sub-menu)
V	View
P	Paths
E	Enter
L	Leave
D	Dig

G	Game (sub-menu)
P	Points
S	Solve
A	About
C	Credits
R	Restart
Q	Quit

D	Disk (sub-menu)
S	Save
L	Load
C	Clear

S	Special (sub-menu)
C	Compact
V	Verbose
M	Music
S	SID-Type

Note: further mapping for inventory items such as objects or character, use with directional keys and confirm with Space/Return.

Note: when in the sub menu (e.g., Action) if the menu item has same key command as Game, Disk or Special, only the menu item will be selectable. If this occurs, use INST/DEL to return to the main menu to access Game, Disk, or Special.

Crackers info regarding Soul Crystal

This release was a long time in the making (more than a year) and had some significant issues to overcome. Most of time spent making this crack was spent on trying to figure out the best way to approach each of the issues.

Some things we had to consider:

- Keeping or replacing the original loader
- Scene preference for a file-copyable release
- PAL/NTSC compatibility
- German -> English translation
- Documentation check (copy protection)
- Trainers/Cheats?
- Alternative versions (EasyFlash/IDE64/SD2IEC)

The Loader

The first task was to understand enough about the original loader and its functionality so that we can either manipulate it as necessary, or replace it altogether. For those that might be interested, we have included the original loader in this release, rebuilt for the ACME assembler with separate 'install' and 'runtime' modules. While I haven't done any measurements or comparisons, this is a fast and functional loader that might be of interest to some...

Soul Crystal uses a 'sector-loader' for all disks. It loads individual sectors, sector-chains (files with no dir entry), and can write sectors also.

Disk A (side 1 and 2) contain all the program code, and disks B & C (both sides) are data disks with text/images/music.

The data disks are the ones that present the biggest problem in determining the loader system as individual sectors need to be loaded on demand. This makes ripping to individual files impossible. My first thought was an IFFL loader with one IFFL archive for each track, with the sectors being the "file" within. We needed a custom IFFL loader in this case that could follow the T/S links in the data. I started with a kernal loader IFFL system that I wrote that could load a sector from a track "file" by throwing away bytes as they were read from the disk until the desired sector was reached. This was done as a proof-of-concept and it worked, but needless to say, it was painfully slow.

Next up was incorporating an existing IFFL system that contained a fastloader. The hope was that with proper IFFL scanning/indexing, along with a fastloader, the game would load at an acceptable speed. The most accessible IFFL system we found was Cadavers IFFL system from one of his Rants. It is small, straightforward, and would be easy to customize for our needs.

Two main issues with this system were:

1. You could not "rescan" the IFFL in order to support multiple disks
2. You could not have more than one IFFL archive per disk. We needed one per TRACK on each disk.

This actually led to Cadaver making some improvements to support the rescan, and a small bugfix I found along the way. After this, I added the functionality to change IFFL archives on disk, and we had a functional system. This also worked, and was faster than the kernal version I had written, but

was still unacceptable if you actually intended to PLAY the game. Ultimately, we decided there was no realistic way to support a file-copyable version of Soul Crystal. (see, I actually DO care about loading speed) Back to square one, we need to keep the sector-loading functionality, but we can't keep the original loader as it is not NTSC compatible. After a brief and unsuccessful attempt to NTSC fix the original loader, we decide to rip it out and replace it.

We needed to match the original loader functionality so our new loader would have to be able to:

- Read sectors
- Write sectors
- Read sector-chain files (following sector links)
- Stream bytes from sectors as necessary (following sector links if necessary)

To do this, I borrowed the 2bit communication routines from Cadaver's code (along with the drive-code uploading routine), and finally had a finished streaming/loading/saving/PAL/NTSC fastloader.

With our new loader in place, we can fully test the game in NTSC to see if there are other issues. Right away, the game crashes on the intro. It seems that the combination flipping back and forth between two full screen bitmaps and playing the first SID song runs out of raster time. In the case of NTSC machines, the playing of this particular SID is delayed until the credits screen where there is actually enough time. On PAL it will start at its usual place (Avantgardistic logo) and play through the credits. On NTSC it starts on (and plays thorough) the credits. The rest of the game plays through fine in NTSC, although there is some minor flickering at the top of the screen occasionally. I was not able to resolve this without other side-effects.

The Translation

Now we get to the real work in this release.

This game has a massive amount of text to be translated, all encoded in different ways, and even with modern tools and the development of custom tools, this was a huge undertaking.

The bulk of the game text is stored on disk in a Huffman(ish?) encoding. I say “(ish)” here because I couldn’t get a clean decoding using a standard Huffman algo, so we took a more brute-force approach. Arcane had done much of the work figuring out how the text was encoded before I joined the team, so the following comes from his notes.

The encoding system is based on “Which letters in the alphabet are used most often”. Letters in the alphabet used most often get lowest number of bits to write.

This differs based on language as shown below:

GERMAN		ENGLISH	
=====		=====	
E	16.93%	E	11.16%
N	10.53%	A	8.49%
I	8.02%	R	7.58%
R	6.89%	I	7.54%
S	6.42%	O	7.16%
T,A	5.79%	T	6.95%
D,H	4.98%	N	6.65%
U,L	3.83%	S	5.73%
C,G	3.16%	L	5.48%
M,O	2.55%	C	4.53%
B,W	1.96%	U	3.63%
F	1.49%	D	3.38%
K	1.32%	P	3.16%
Z	1.21%	M	3.01%
V	0.84%	H	3.00%
P,Ü	0.67%	G	2.47%
Ä	0.54%	B	2.07%
ß,Ö	0.37%	F	1.81%
J	0.24%	Y	1.77%
X,Y	0.05%	W	1.28%
Q	0.02%	K	1.10%
		V	1.00%
		X	0.29%
		Z	0.27%
		J	0.19%
		Q	0.19%

When translating an entry, the English version must fit within the same space used on disk that the German occupied. The number of characters the text contains is irrelevant, what matters is the “weight” of each character used and the resulting number of bytes when encoded.

Each letter has a weight, depending on its frequency of use on that particular disk side, and for each disk we end up with a table like:

bits	char	value
=====	====	====
%11xx xxxx	space	\$a0
%100x xxxx	e	\$85
%0100 xxxx	n	\$8e
%0110 xxxx	i	\$89
%1011 xxxx	r	\$92
%0001 0xxx	s	\$93
... and so on...		

For example, if you want to write "Hello".

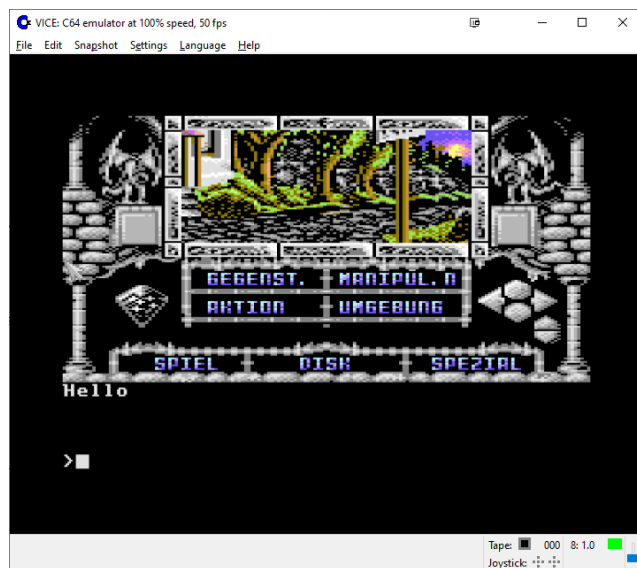
You copy all bits in a string, starting from left (MSB) to right (LSB):

H	e	l	l	o
0101 0100 1	100	1010 0	1010 0	0010 01

And convert this to 8bits

01010100	11001010	01010000	10011111
\$54	\$CA	\$50	\$9F

At the last byte we only use the first 4 bits, starting at MSB (%1001). So, the next character would start at bit 3 (%1001 xxxx). In this example I fill the last 4 bits with 1 bits (two 1 bits = space)

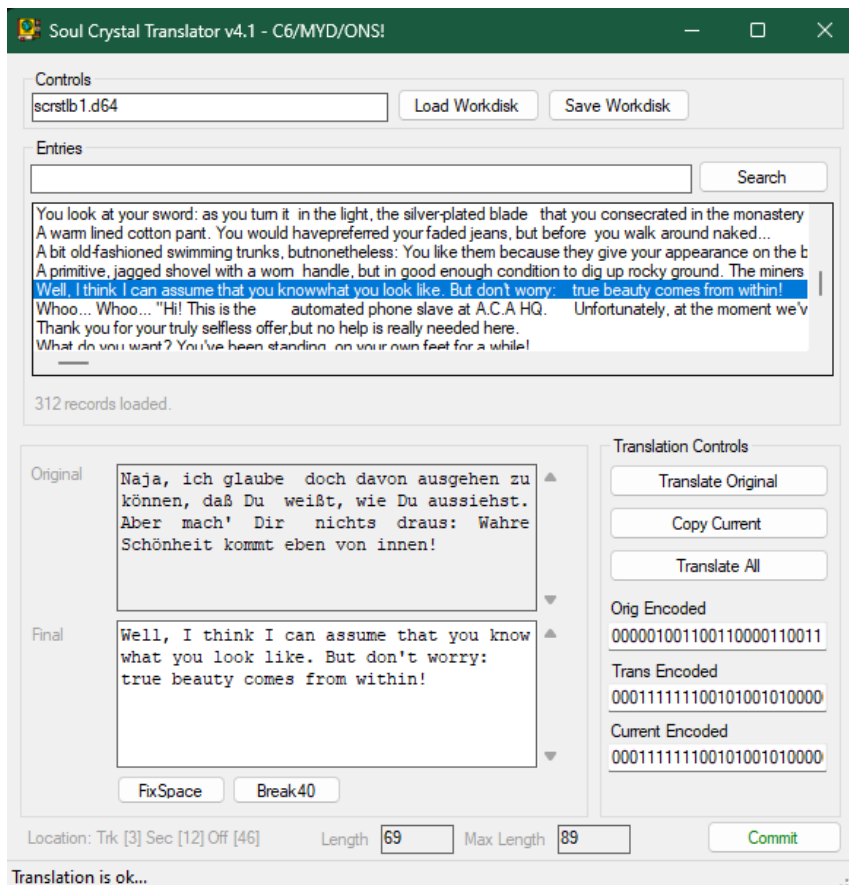


Even now that we have the encoding figured out, there's no way we could translate this all by hand, so it's time to start on a tool to do the heavy lifting.

The translation tool started simply:

1. Parse the entries on disk
2. Display a list to user
3. Show clicked on entry in an editable textbox
4. Save edits to disk

This was still a ton of work, copying and pasting in and out of Google translate, formatting the text to wrap nicely at 40chars, etc. So, I took some time to expand the translator to implement Google translate internally and do some rough formatting.



With the translator and a TON of hand editing the imperfect Google translations we finally had a version that was clean (enough).

But there is more:

All UI text is in PETSCII and scattered throughout the code on disk A, all of this needed to be carefully hand-fixed along with adjusting the keypresses used in the keyboard-control mode to match. We had to make some concessions here with some of the words, TUG instead of “PULL” and “GIV” instead of “GIVE”, sorry...

All the items in the game that you interact with are handled differently also.

An important note on these items, when a save disk is created from the installer function, all these items in game that you interact with are saved to the save disk. And when you load a saved game, these items are reloaded from the disk also. What this means is that if you loaded a saved game from a save disk that was created from the German version, all the German item text would be reloaded undoing the translation.

For this reason: you cannot use save disks from the original game on this version!

The Documentation Check (copy protection)

Occasionally during gameplay, you would be interrupted with a request from the documentation that came with the game. You would be asked to press a letter based on the query.

Arcane has removed all of these, but just so you don't miss out on any witty writing from the developers, here are the prompts for the code:

Prompt:

"Just as you are about to step deeper into the forest, a wood elf steps out of the undergrowth in front of you and blocks your way with a gesture that allows no contradiction. "Greetings, stranger!" He greets you in a friendly manner, "Before you can delve deeper into our world, you must pass a small test regarding the game instructions to prove that you really own a game of OWN - and not just one of them those inferior black copies..."

Correct:

"Well, my friend: the code is okay! You may pass...", the elf replies, visibly satisfied with your answer, and disappears back into the forest just as quickly as he emerged from it before..."

Incorrect:

"Oh no! Will these thieves never understand how hard an average programming team has to work to develop a program like this?" the elf exclaims, clearly disappointed. "Now go out and buy the original program if you want to be able to follow the progression of the story! For my part, I will not let you pass until you have paid the due duty..."

Prompt:

"As you pass through the magical barrier that has separated you from the cursed forest to the north, you hear a voice booming out of the treetops! It's a forest spirit that asks you to enter a certain code from the manual to ensure that you are really authorized to continue your journey..."

Correct:

"Yes! That was exactly what I wanted to hear! You can pass!", the forest spirit replies to your input. Then it gets quiet again and you assume that you can continue your journey for a while before you are disturbed by those annoying queries again..."

Incorrect:

"Are you really absolutely sure that you bought an original game? If that's the case then I'm really, really sorry – but nonetheless: Chris and Kai ordered me to close this part of the forest until then guard until you have proven your legitimacy. And if I should disregard their order, I will most likely be rationalized away by some stupid requester in the next game! So, I hope you understand my dilemma: THIS is how I can't let you through anyway. ..", the ghost replies sadly after you couldn't answer his question despite repeated attempts..."

Prompt:

"It's that time again: "Hi. Here are the A.C.A gods...", you hear a few voices of infinite kindness echoing down from the sky to you. "God knows how you managed to survive two of our pesky code queries - but this time you're finally due...!"

Correct:

"A muffled murmur, turning pages, an astonished scream...: "WHAT? You actually entered the correct code - something must be wrong! Are you copying instructions and package inserts too? Well, okay: You definitely have it now the right to enter Zargon's castle. Well, how about it: Do you perhaps have

one last wish?" Annoyed, you decide to quickly forget this silly kid's talk and hurry to get inside the castle. Apparently the game design really turned the poor souls into old men (hermits...?)

Incorrect:

"Damn thief!" the four voices screeched hysterically, so that you covered your ears in shock! "How did you manage to fool us on the first two queries? Well, we definitely have you now! We hereby curse you as punishment for your crime, to stay in this boring room for eternity!"

Prompt:

Well, um... I don't know how to teach you without getting on your nerves again, but... Well, ahem, we'd have to do one last check on your access rights to this game. I'm really terribly sorry, but this seems to be the only way to keep the number of black copies within tolerable (?) limits and thus ensure that our programmers get the money that they really earn with their hard work have. So please: One more time - but this time from the tower guard's diary ("Variatio delectat!")...

Correct:

"Wow! It's hard to believe: You actually have an original! A real original! So it was YOU! Thanks to! Thank you, great master! You made us so rich with your donation that we don't even know what to do with all the money! So we paid half of it into our numbered account in Switzerland so that we can later live off the interest, and from the other half - ahem: ...the four of us ordered a family pizza...! Nevertheless: You have done a good deed to a few "poor students" - let us kiss your keys as a thank you! So, after all that slimy candy cane, let's see how the story continues..."

Incorrect:

"Aaargh! I had already suspected it – but THAT is really too much for a simple parser! Why did you do that? I mean, if you've actually sacrificed that much time to get to this point in the game, which also means you must have kind of enjoyed it, why the hell didn't you buy it? Do you seriously believe that we would be able to produce such a gigantic program again if you simply cheated us out of our money, which, God knows, we have worked hard enough and under the greatest deprivation? Do you think we would still like to produce more programs of this kind if a guy like you just goes there and doesn't ruin the work of many years for me, nothing for you? Just think about the consequences of your actions: God knows we don't want to live in huge villas and be able to buy one Porsche after the other (my penthouse in Paris and the company Bentley are enough for me - one is modest!), but if we If we don't even earn enough money with this job to cover our normal living expenses, then we will soon have to look for another one, willy-nilly! It's up to you and your friends how long good software will be around - and last but not least you're hurting yourself with your stupid copying! So: Please buy the original program if you want other A.C.A productions to appear as well..."

And when loading a saved game:

"In order to prevent some stupid "copy helpers" from cheating the code queries between the individual game sections with the help of saved games and being able to play the game for free, we would now like to ask you to enter a code from the manual. I'm sorry - but: "Must be..."

Trainers & Cheats

This isn't exactly the type of game that is suitable for trainers. However, there is an interesting bit here that deserves some mention. Apparently, the game came with a built-in cheat from the developers. It's mentioned on the disk, and in the manual that came with the original game.

Neither us, nor anyone else as far as we can tell, has ever found this cheat mode in the C64 version. We've dug through the code as much as we were willing (ugh, compiled basic?) to find it and came up empty-handed.

Other versions such as the PC can enable the cheat mode by simply attempting to travel in an unavailable direction 10 times in a row. After which you are given the following text:

"Hmmm...: It almost looks like you won't be able to play this game without the help of the A.C.A gods. Therefore, we have graciously decided to activate the "developer cheat" for you in order to give you a little help on your journey with our divine help. This cheat mode was primarily programmed to test the game. However, we cannot guarantee that it will function properly. Use at your own risk!"

There is even text describing other functionalities of the cheat mode:

"Wow! Like manna from heaven, the A.C.A gods send down to earth all objects that can help you solve your task... OUCH! You idiots up there! Can't you listen? I said you should throw down any objects that could help him complete his task! ...and cupboards are definitely NOT included!"

"Okay, you can now ask the A.C.A gods to teleport you to certain rooms in the game's territory by entering a three-digit number between 001 and 103 on your computer's keyboard - but don't forget that rooms also exist in this game from which there is no escape. Now enter the desired room number or press <ESC> to cancel teleport mode early..."

"You have just activated hidden slideshowmode! Press <SPACE> or the left mouse button to view the next image, or <ESC> or the right mouse button to return to the game..."

"Sound menu activated: Please enter a number from 1 - 5 to play the different pieces of music on the soundtrack in this game section! Cancel the function via <ESC>."

This text can also be found on disk on the C64 version, but the method to activate it does not work. Does the functionality not exist on the C64? Was it a joke of some sort? Who knows?

Other Version Notes

For the EasyFlash version, saving of the game could not be done on the cartridge due to the size of the game (6 whole disk sides), so a floppy is required for saving.

After a couple years' worth of work, "Soul Killer" is finally finished!

Hope you found some of this interesting...

CSixx & Arcane

(2023) Onslaught

Onslaught websites and boards

Onslaught WWW: <http://onslaught.c64.org>

Vandalism News WWW: <https://vandalism.news>

Onslaught Apparel: <https://onslaught.tshirts.net.au/designs>

Onslaught Games: <https://onslaughtgames.itch.io>

Bulletin Boards (sponsored by AT&T, MCI and Sprint!):

Altar of Wares - telnet: [altarofwaresbbs.hopto.org](telnet://altarofwaresbbs.hopto.org) port:6464

Antidote - telnet: [antidote.triad.se](telnet://antidote.triad.se) port:64128

Reflections - telnet: [reflections.hopto.org](telnet://reflections.hopto.org) port:64128

The Deadzone - telnet: [dzbbs.hopto.org](telnet://dzbbs.hopto.org) port:64128