

InsideADRIFT

The newsletter of the ADRIFT community

Issue 23

May/June 2005

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Issue: 23 (May/Jun 05)

Issue 24 due out 30 July 05

News and announcements

ADRIFT 4.0 release 46

At last we have a new release of ADRIFT, but it really is not much more than a bug fix, though the bugs fixed does include the long term one of ADRIFT not being good at understanding weights of objects.

ADRIFT site traumas

Towards the end of April the difficulties with the ADRIFT site continued, with it being down more often than it was up. At least this time the problems were caused because Campbell Wild was working towards a solution.

Having transferred to a new service provider for his broadband connection in order to acquire a static IP address, there were times when the two providers seemed to be involved in a war over his server. This meant that the ADRIFT site became unavailable as it was pointing to the wrong address.

Touching wood, those problems seem to be a thing of the past and the server has been there for us.

Reviews Exchange Issue 4 out now

Issue four has been released by David Whyld and is available from: <http://www.shadowvault.net/rex.htm>

Reviews in this issue include:

- Authority* by Eva Vikstrom – review by David Whyld
- Bedlam* by Mark Whitmore – review by David Whyld
- Bolivia By Night* by Aidan Doyle – review by David Whyld
- Castle Quest* by Andrew Cornish – review by David Whyld
- A Day At The Seaside* by Matthew Hunter – reviews by David Whyld and Robert Rafgon
- Fire In The Blood* by Richard Otter – reviews by David Whyld and Robert Rafgon
- Flat Feet* by Joel Ray Holveck – review by David Whyld
- Frustrated Interviewee* by Robert Rafgon – review by David Whyld
- House Husband* by C. Henshaw – reviews by David Whyld and Robert Rafgon

Editorial

Only ever seems to have been a difficult time before I come to write this each issue.

The problems with the ADRIFT site availability are hopefully a thing of the past

KF

Contact

Send any suggestions, requests or comments about the newsletter to:
editor@insideadrift.org.uk

Find the newsletter at:
<http://www.insideadrift.org.uk/>

InsideADRIFT merchandise

You can now purchase an exciting InsideADRIFT mug, if you so desire. It has been updated with the new logo.

The store is really not fully operational, if you are interested look at www.cafepress.com/insideadrift

More details can be found on page 9.

How It All Started by Kevin Treadway – review by David Whyld
The Monster In The Mirror: Part 1 by Mystery – review by Robert Rafgon
The Monster In The Mirror: Part 2 by Mystery – review by Robert Rafgon
The Mystery Of The Darkhaven Caves by David Whyld – review by Laurence Moore
Private Eye by David Whyld – review by Robert Rafgon
The Prostitute by The Anonymous Martian – review by Laurence Moore
Selma's Will by Mystery – review by Robert Rafgon
Threnody by John Schiff – review by David Whyld
Whom The Telling Changed by Aaron A. Reed – review by David Whyld

Competition news roundup

InsideADRIFT Spring Competition 2005 results

The competition was marred by a lack of judges, just six people voting, leaving an unsatisfactory result with three games finishing level at the top, and the other two tied for fourth.

Equal First

- * "Fire in the Blood" by Richard Otter (1 1 0 2 2 2 = 8)
- * "Frustrated Interviewee" by Robert Rafgon (2 0 2 0 0 4 = 8)
- * "Private Eye" by David Whyld (0 2 0 1 4 1 = 8)

Equal Fourth

- * "A Day At The Seaside" by Matthew Hunter (0 0 0 0 1 0 = 1)
- * "The House Husband" by C. Henshaw (0 0 1 0 0 0 = 1)

Congratulations to those who entered as I thought that the games were all well written and I thought none looked, as some in the past have, that they had been rushed for the competition.

It was a shame that more didn't judge, although forum difficulties in the first week of judging may have hampered the process. This was the first time the new top three system of voting had been used, and it cannot be considered a success. With only two non-author judges, their votes possibly had too much effect on the result. In truth there is little that can be done to create a voting system that works in this sort of situation.

ADRIFT Intro Comp 2005

The results of this event are due out just after the newsletter is released. Eight entries were received and are being judged, good luck to all.

InsideADRIFT Competitions

The rules for the Summer and Game of the Year competitions can be found at <http://www.adriftwiki.org.uk>.

Drifters birthdays

June

6 En Kerklaar (19); Mattaius (19); Seciden Mencarde (16)

8 EricS39 (40)

13 The Amazing Poodle Boy (35)

15 Matt (Dark Baron) (16)

16 Blakk Matt (19)

19 NickyDude (36)

21 Kinvadren (22)

22 betpet (30)

25 Cannibal (35)

July

1 proganyl (59)

2 30otsix (35)

8 syke39 (33)

9 The Mad Monk (16); mammoth (37)

11 3-blind-mice (17)

15 Tonyg (17)

17 Mel S (19)

18 ejl0007 (31); nick (21); driftingon (25)

29 jonrock (52)

Drifter's Toolbox

Sorry, nothing to offer this issue, don't think I have used any new software.

Wider IF Community

Spring Thing 2005

The results have been announced and are as follows:

1. "Whom The Telling Changed" by Aaron A. Reed
2. "Bolivia By Night" by Aidan Doyle
3. "Threnody John" by "Doppler" Schiff
4. "Flat Feet" by Joel Ray Holveck
5. "Second Chance" by David Whyld
6. "Authority" by Eva Vikström

It was generally felt that David Whyld's entry was unlucky not to be higher placed.

One Room Game Competition 2005

Sadly only one game, in Italian was submitted for this event. Perhaps the ADRIFT community missed a trick in not entering.

Rules, deadlines, prizes etc. are here:

http://www.avventuretestuali.com/orgc/orgc2005_eng.html

Forum news

I think it would be fairest to describe the forum as quiet, it is unusual for more than 3 or 4 threads to be added to in a day, and some of those may be complaining about how quiet it is.

Articles

Competitions: why would anyone enter them?

On the InsideADRIFT site I asked people to contribute a short piece for this article, so thanks to Christy Henshaw and Richard Otter for responding with their thought.

As a newbie (and no, I don't mind that term at all!), ADRIFT is a great platform for experimenting with IF, getting to grips with having to write in a fragmented format, and learning to second-guess player actions. But experimenting and even writing full games falls a bit flat for me if I can't get any feedback or have little external motivation for really putting the effort in.

When I first started out, I thought it would be ages before I would feel confident entering anything in a competition, and as there are so many ADRIFT games already on the archive, I guessed it would be like pulling teeth to get the game played, especially by experienced players and writers. Once I realised that there are comps just for the ADRIFT community, and that there are lots of friendly, helpful people on the ADRIFT forums, I felt more confident about going in the deep end right away. I might get a shock, but at least I'll have gotten it over with early on! The deadline motivated me to get the game finished, the possibility of player feedback (or lashback) encouraged self-criticism and improvement, and the possibility of financial gain was just the cherry on top.

Christy Henshaw

Events Diary

May 2005

28 ADRIFT Intro Comp 2005
judging ends and results.

June 2005

30 Lotech Comp 2005

Entries should be in today for the competition for CYOA based IF games.

July 2005

1 IntroComp05

Intentions to enter must be in.

17 IntroComp05

Entries to be in today.

30 InsideADRIFT Issue 24

July/August 2005 due out.

August 2005

21-28 InsideADRIFT Summer Competition 2005.

September 2005

1 2005 IF Comp

Authors must have signed up with the IF Comp database by this date.

24 InsideADRIFT Issue 25

September/October 2005 due out.

30 2005 IF Comp

Authors upload their games to the competition site.

October 2005

1 2005 IF Comp

Games are released sometime around now; the six-week judging period begins.

November 2005

15 2005 IF Comp

All votes must be submitted by the end of the day.

26 InsideADRIFT Issue 26

November/December 2005 due out.

I'm old enough to have lived through those halcyon days of the early 80s when computers like the ZX Spectrum really ruled. Every Speccy owner worth anything would have a stack of adventure games such as 'Lords of Time', 'The Hobbit', 'Subsunk' etc in their software collection. Games full of guess-the-verb, impossible puzzles, things in descriptions which couldn't be examined, I loved them all. As with everything those days passed and the dear old 48k machine was consigned to a cardboard box in the attic. Picture some years later, a slightly older man (failing eyesight, greying hair, bad back) clearing out the attic who happens upon a box of cassette tapes and an ancient computer with rubber keys. Then, out of the box came some of the games created on the adventure system called 'The Quill' (never heard of the Quill? then have a look at <http://www.crashonline.org.uk/04/quill.htm>). After spending a few happy hours of pure nostalgia playing these old games I had this crazy idea of checking if a Windows version of something like the Quill existed. After a short search on the net I stumbled onto this program called Adrift and an odd little forum that seemed more friendly than most I'd seen (well we all make mistakes).

So what; you are probably asking? Well, once I downloaded Adrift I began immediately on my masterpiece, a game to beat all others and one which would be certain to set the IF world on fire. One year later I'm still writing that game and will probably be at it in another year's time. I realised fairly early on that I was never going to get the game into anything like a finish state and I was starting to get a bit disillusioned with it; when along came the InsideAdrift Summer Mini-comp. One of the three sections of the comp was for a 10 room game and I thought 'I could do that!' so I decided to have a go. Setting to, my entry 'Ticket to No Where' slowly developed as the deadline got closer and closer. I found each stage was a lot of fun, the deadline, testing, entering, the voting, the results and reviews (well, I didn't like all of those!). Actually the position didn't really matter to me, but I would say that as I came 5th narrowly beating a half finished game. It really didn't seem to matter though, as I had a lot of fun.

So what did I really get out of it? Well, the first thing I got from entering was that I actually managed to get a game completed and even got an entry in 'Baf's Guide'. Next, people played my game and some of them liked it! I mean people actually played my game, I found that just amazing. Since then I have put entries (and votes) in other competitions for basically the same reasons but also to help support the Adrift community, which I feel every forum member should try to do.

So, more competition entries to come? Absolutely!

Richard Otter

As the organiser of a few comps I may be a bit biased, but I think that entering a competition is the best way to get some response from players. Even if it just boils down to getting a position in a list, that still tells you something.

On both occasions I have entered a competition, before the current Intro Comp, I was almost bullied into it by other drifters, and I don't regret entering even though the were less than successful. Something that does tend to be needed to enter a comp is discipline, even if it is just to get the game ready to enter, and that does tend to benefit the game.

Ken Franklin

December 2005

?? **InsideADRIFT Awards 2005** votes during this month

18 InsideADRIFT Game of the Year Competition

2005 entries in and judging starts

2006

January 2006

1 InsideADRIFT Game of the Year Competition 2005 ends

April 2006

16-30 InsideADRIFT Spring Competition 2006

(Provisional)

The (big) idea by KF

The law of diminishing returns?

Does it get harder to write the longer you use a tool like ADRIFT?

Recently I have rather lacked inspiration in writing with ADRIFT, rather than at least starting games.

My worry is that it is a bit of familiarity breeds contempt, and that I have been using this tool for so long that I have tired of it. Using a particular system to do anything can mean that you get in the comfort zone and are not really learning anymore.

It might be that attempting to learn a different system would fire up my imagination again.

Does anybody care? By David Whyld

The recent Inside ADRIFT Spring Comp 2005 was in some ways a success and in others a failure.

A success: it got five entries. Now that might not sound like a huge amount, particularly when compared to the 30+ entries in the yearly IFComp – but in a community the size of the ADRIFT one, which rarely has more than 30-40 active members at any one time, it's a notable achievement all the same. It's also a larger number of entries than any other Spring Comp has received so it's a success for that reason alone if nothing else. On top of that, it also attracted a couple of games by newcomers which is always a nice thing to have.

A failure: it got a grand total of six votes. *Six*. Of which four were from people who were competitors in the Comp itself. Only two other people out of all the current users of ADRIFT bothered to vote. However you look at it, that's a pretty poor turnout. Just as well the ADRIFT Comp didn't have the same kind of requirement as most Comps have – i.e. that the people who enter them aren't allowed to vote – because otherwise the total number of voters would have been even smaller.

So just why is there such a poor turnout for Comps? I can think of several reasons offhand:

1. People can't be bothered.
2. People *are* bothered but don't have the time to play through five games in the Comp's two week judging period.
3. People have played the games, not liked them much, and decided not to vote.
4. They don't like Comps full stop and have no interest in voting for the games in them.
5. They *meant* to vote but never got round to it.
6. They didn't like the games and decided not to vote in case they ended up annoying the game's author by giving his game a poor vote.
7. They prefer to lurk as opposed to actually participating.
8. The recent problems with the ADRIFT forum (hopefully now fixed) left them unable to get access to the games until it was too late.
9. They played some of the games but didn't get around to playing them all and figured that just voting for the ones they played wasn't fair on the ones they *hadn't* played.
10. They've entered a game in the Comp and feel it's a bit unsporting voting for the other games.

I can imagine a few people citing point 2 as their reason because unless you have lots of free time, two weeks *isn't* really long enough to play through five full size games (even if two of them *were* quite small). You could certainly play *some* of all of the games but three of them were big and would likely take a fair amount of time to reach the

ADRIFT recent releases

This issue new games are still thin on the ground, with most being either re-releases or competition entries.

Complete games

* signifies a previously released game

In The Claws Of Clueless Bob (35 Kb) By David Whyld, released Wed 18th May 2005

You've fallen into the claws of the most notorious villain of them all: Clueless Bob Newbie, the world's worst game writer! He's now forcing you to play his games over again and again - a fate surely quite a bit worse than death. Unless, of course, you can escape...

Frustrated Interviewee [Version 2] (50 Kb) By Robert Rafgon, released Sat 7th May 2005

[Now in ADRIFT 4.0] Frustrated Interviewee shows the story told by an interviewee in a job interview to illustrate different aspects of a difficult question. The story covers an apartment, three other friends and a quest on a computer game set in a strange clichéd fantasy land. This game was entered into the 2005 InsideADRIFT Spring competition, where it finished equal first from five entries.

Beethro's Text Adventure (19 Kb) By Sokko (uploaded by Timmon), released Sat 7th May 2005

Although labeled a 'demo', "Beethro's Text Adventure" is a complete and fully playable subset of a much larger adventure (I view it as a prequel). In fact, with 40 rooms, 7 characters, 51 objects, and full

ending. Point 5 might be a valid point but it's a bit unlikely that people *forgot* about the deadline. Point 8 is probably also an issue. Regular forum members know about the other ADRIFT sites and so the main forum being down wouldn't affect them too much but any newcomers likely wouldn't be aware. Point 9 might also be an issue for the same reason as point 2. Point 10? Could well be a valid point. Can you enter a Comp yourself and give a totally honest vote to the other games, knowing that it might be your good vote to another game that allows it to beat your own? In an ideal world, you could. In real life, personal opinions probably intrude and affect your overall vote. But the *main* reason for more people not participating in the voting process?

Simple. Point 1: they can't be bothered.

Yep, the 'lack of feedback' issue rears its ugly head once again. It's no secret to anyone who's been a member of the ADRIFT community for more than a few months that while people are happy to encourage others to write games, offer advice, beta-test them, give ideas, opinions, etc, etc, but when the game is done and ready to be played... everyone goes mysteriously quiet. You might a review after a while. You might, if you're especially lucky, even get a brief comment on the forum about your game. Once in a blue moon there'll even be a full blown discussion but don't hold your breath waiting for one about your game because you'll be waiting a long, long time. But more often than not, you'll get precious little feedback at all. The Reviews Exchange has gone some way towards ensuring that more reviews are written but speaking as the poor fool who organises it every couple of months, it's not always easy to get contributions and there are still a good number of games that go unreviewed and their authors get no feedback upon. Competitions used to be the one way of actually getting some much needed feedback on your games because the majority of the ADRIFT community (or a sizeable portion of it at least) would take part, play the games, vote on them and some would even go as far as to review them. But even that seems to have dried up recently. In a smallish community that nevertheless boasts upwards of thirty active members, just six votes for the first competition of the year is a pitiful amount. What were the other people doing? Yes, they've got lives outside the Comp but showing their support would have been nice.

Okay, writing ADRIFT games and voting on them isn't a way of life: it's a hobby. You don't get paid for what you do and you're very unlikely to gain any recognition from the rest of the IF world for your efforts*. You write them because you *like* writing them or because you want to win a competition and show everyone how good you are. Or simply because it's a hobby and it passes the time. Or maybe you do it for the recognition, to know that there are a few people out there who actually *want* to play your games. Of course, if you get no feedback at all for your efforts, it's often hard to know if anyone likes them or, indeed, if anyone is even playing them. You might as well decide to jack it all in and do something more worthwhile with your time instead.

* You might, of course. The rest of the IF world isn't *quite* as anti-

hints, this game is larger and more developed than many 'complete' ADRIFT adventures. It was not written by me, but by someone named Sokko.

Grab your Greatsword and get cracking!

GAME OF THE MONTH

Second Chance (260) By David Whyld, released Mon 2nd May 2005

It begins on the day you die, crushed beneath the wheels of a speeding lorry, and then an enigmatic stranger gives you the opportunity to set things right. You are given a second chance. (Entered in Spring Thing 2005)

Private Eye (482 Kb) By David Whyld, released Sun 1st May 2005

Millionaire oil tycoon Marcus Kavallon has been kidnapped and only you, Lep R. Chimner, private eye extraordinaire, can save him. Well, you and your ever inefficient sidekick, Jim, that is. [Genre: Comedy/Detective/Gamebook] (Joint winner of the Adrift Spring Comp 2005)

Fire in the Blood V1.00 (100 Kb) By rotter, released Sun 1st May 2005

Since that night your life has seemed like a living dream or to be more accurate a living nightmare. Coming home and finding her like that, her still form lying in your lounge

Even now, two months later, you still can't come to terms with what has happened. Assault, murder, rape are only words, just words. But those words ended your world. . (Joint winner InsideADRIFT Spring Competition 2005)

Spring Comp 05 (1081 Kb) By various, released Wed 20th Apr 2005

ADRIFT as it used to be a few years ago but don't go expecting the RAIF crowd to proclaim your new ADRIFT game as superior to *Photopia* or *City Of Secrets* any time soon.

Which brings me back to the recent Spring Comp and its poor turnout of voters. Six people voted in the Comp out of a community of perhaps thirty to forty regular members, and some ten to twenty casual members. Six out of a possible sixty isn't a good amount however you look at it. It doesn't say to anyone planning to write a game for a comp that doing so is a *good* idea. More than anything else, it says that people don't care about competitions and that there's no reason to enter them.

So c'mon, people, the next time a competition is run: either enter a game or vote on the entries. Or, better still, do both! Or one day it might well turn out that a competition is announced and no one enters because they've seen the lack of enthusiasm for previous ones. And as competition games comprise the bulk of all released ADRIFT games these days, that would be a pretty disastrous thing to happen.

Reference

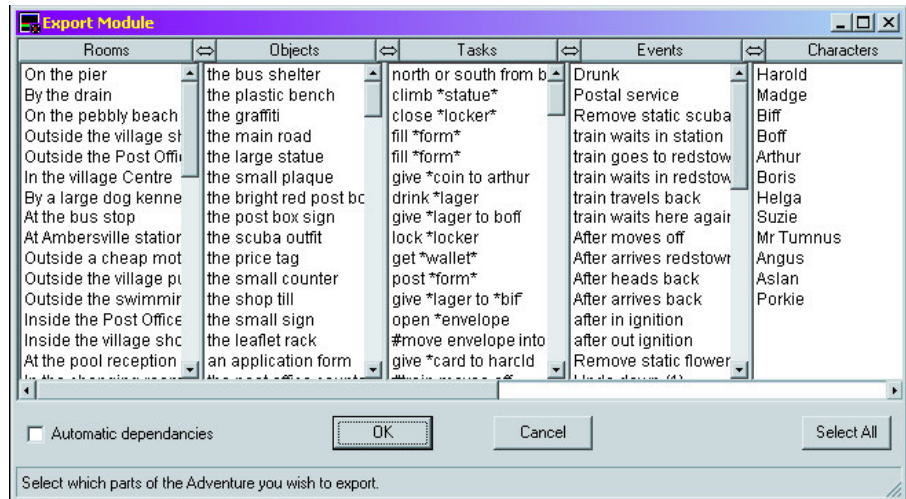
Modules are an area of ADRIFT that has always looked promising, but has been hampered by some buggy early implementation, Recently many of the bugs have been fixed.

Modules

Modules are essentially segments of adventures, which can be plugged in" to another adventure. They allow developers to create standard libraries of commonly used objects and functions to reduce the amount of repetition and recreating the wheel".

Creating a Module

The simplest method of creating a module is to simply export it from an adventure you have created. To do this, select File > Export > Module from the menu. This will bring up something like the following window:



The entries for this competition run in April/May 2005:

"A Day At The Seaside" by Matthew Hunter

"Fire in the Blood" by Richard Otter

"Frustrated Interviewee" by Robert Rafgon

"The House Husband" by C. Henshaw

"Private Eye" by David Whyld

*** Wax Worx (38 Kb) By Eric Mayer, released Sun 27th Feb 2005**

You're locked in a wax museum. If you can find your way out, you might also remember who you are and how you got here. It shouldn't be too difficult, with all those wax serial killers waiting to help you out.

*** A Walk At Dusk (21 Kb) By Eric Mayer, released Mon 14th Feb 2005**

As you walk down the dirt road at dusk you hear the trilling of peepers. You've heard tree frogs since you were a child, but never seen them. Is this the evening you finally glimpse one of the mysterious singers? An interactive essay.

Demos

Hunt (DEMO) (3 Kb) By Pofy, released Sat 7th May 2005

An upcoming breather for the game, hunt. This DEMO allows you to feel the hilarity off some of the jokes and kill the boss quickly, however keep in mind one thing. Rabbits, can be deadly...

Realtime Countdown demo (1 Kb) By KF, released Sat 2nd Apr 2005

After you type countdown, the file will display a countdown to zero after each turn and, if time runs out end the game.

This lists everything in your adventure in a series of lists. To select items you wish to export to your module, simply click on them in the list click them again to deselect them. You can select an entire list by clicking on the list title at the top, and you can select the entire adventure by clicking on the Select All button.

You have to be careful when exporting a partial adventure, because most items have references to another. For example, you might have a task light candle" which requires you to be holding a match and a candle. If you exported the task without the objects, it wouldn't make much sense as a module. To assist with this, you can select the Automatic dependencies checkbox. Now, whenever you select an item from a list, it will automatically select anything else if it is referenced by that item.

When you are happy with the items selected, click the OK button to continue. This will prompt you for a filename. Enter the name of the module, and click Save. Your module has now been created.

You can also create a module directly into a text editor, such as Notepad by adding the text and saving the file with the extension AMF.

Modifying a Module

Modules are stored in text format to allow manual editing of the files, and to promote easy sharing over text forums. To edit a module, simply double-click on the icon, or right-click on it and select Edit. This should open the file in Notepad.

Importing a Module

Importing a module is very simple. Simply select File > Import > Module from the menu. This will bring up a file browser window to allow you to select the module.

Clicking Open will then parse the module. Firstly the syntax is checked. If anything in the module does not match the defined structure (see below) then an error window is displayed showing the parse errors. If there are no parse errors, a window will be displayed if there are any parse warnings. These are generally if there is an item referenced but not present in the module. If this is the case, you are asked whether or not you wish to continue importing the module. Selecting Yes, or if there are no parse warnings will then display the same window as when exporting so that you can preview what the module contains. Clicking OK will then import the module into your adventure.

Module Structure

Modules must adhere to a strict syntax in order to be parsed successfully.

You can enter comments at any point, as long as the line starts with the character "#". The parser will ignore anything else on the line. Blank lines will also be ignored.

Spaces and carriage returns are ignored when parsing, and all non-

InsideADRIFT Merchandise

Although this is not intended as a money spinning idea, more a way to create items for me, these items are available for the discerning drifter to purchase.



The boxer shorts, priced at \$13.49, with a discreet InsideADRIFT logo on the right leg.



Costing \$17.39, the baseball jersey comes in red/blue/black and white.

Also available from www.cafepress.com/insideadrift are: trucker hat \$11.79; sweatshirt \$22.39; sleeveless tee \$15.89; women's tank top \$15.89; mousepad \$11.49; teddy bear \$13.79; sticker \$2.69; journal \$7.69; messenger bag \$19.99.

quoted tokens are not case sensitive.

To embed a quote, i.e. ' ', you must precede it with a backslash, i.e. \". E.g. you might have something like The sign reads \"No Entry\"."

The first non-commented line must contain the ADRIFT version that the module is compatible with. At the moment this will not affect how the module is parsed, but it's there in case I change the module structure in future versions. It should be in the format.

Each item within a module must be defined explicitly in the format

```
Version X.XX Release X
DEFINE <itemtype> <itemname>"
```

A complete skeleton for an ADRIFT Room is as follows:

```
DEFINE Room <room reference>"
SHORTDESC = "<short room description>"
LONGDESC = <long room description>"
NOTONMAP = [True / False]
ALTDESC
IF TASK <task ref>" IS {Not} Completed
THENSHOW description"
NEWSHORTDESC = <new short description>"
HIDEOBS = [True / False]
SHOW [Immediately / After Main / After Any]
END ALTDESC
NORTH = <room ref>" {IF OBJECT <object ref>" IS <state>"}
EAST = <room ref>" {IF TASK <task ref>" IS {Not} Completed}
SOUTH = <room ref>"
WEST = <room ref>"
UP = <room ref>"
DOWN = <room ref>"
IN = <room ref>"
OUT = <room ref>"
NORTHEAST = <room ref>"
SOUTHEAST = <room ref>"
SOUTHWEST = <room ref>"
NORTHWEST = <room ref>"
END Room
```

An object definition:

```
DEFINE Object <object reference>"
PREFIX = <object prefix>"
NAME = <object name>"
ALIASES = <alias 1>" {,"<alias 2>"}
DESCRIPTION = <description>"
```

Failed Intros

Some Spies Have All The Luck

An unfinished game written by J. J. Guest in 1987, using Incentive's Adventure Creator A little while ago I fired up my old Acorn Electron microcomputer which hadn't been used for more than fifteen years. To my amazement, not only did it work, but so did the old cassette tapes I'd recorded my unfinished text adventure games on! Here's the intro to one I wrote in about 1987, entitled "Some Spies Have All The Luck"

Having been sacked from your job as general dogsbody at a second-rate fast food joint, you stumbled across an advert in the Espionage Times.

"Would you like a job where you can travel to exotic places, meet lots of interesting people and go skiing a lot? Are YOU the sort of person that likes action and adventure, and skiing? The pay is lousy, but the fringe benefits are well worth the risks! If interested, please contact:

The British Secret Service,
Underneath the manhole cover,
Quite near Hyde Park,
London SW1"

This game was a broad spoof of the James Bond spy genre. It began with the player onboard a light aircraft somewhere over the south pacific. The player's mission was to parachute down a certain island, locate the secret base of some megalomaniac or other, and foil his plans. If the player didn't jump out of the plane within a certain number of moves, the decision would be made for him:

```
LOCATION = [Hidden / All Rooms / [Inside / On] <object ref>"
/ "<room ref>" {,"<room ref>"}]
TYPE = [Static / Dynamic]
OPENABLE = [True / False]
OPENSTATE = [Open / Closed / Locked]
STATES= <state1>{|<state2>}
STARTSTATE="<state>"
INITIALDESC = <initial description>"
SURFACE = [True / False]
CONTAINER = [True / False]
END Object
```

A task definition:

```
DEFINE Task <task reference>"
COMMAND <command>"
{COMMAND }
WHERE = <room ref>" {, <room ref>}
MESSAGE = <message reply>"
RESTRICTION (See Task Restrictions)
ELSESHOW <message to show on failure>"
{[AND / OR] RESTRICTION }
ACTION (See Task Actions)
REVERSIBLE = [True / False]
REVCOMMAND <command to reverse task>"
{REVCOMMAND }
REVERSETEXT = <message when task reversed>"
REPEATABLE = [True / False]
TRYAGAIN = <message if tried again>"
END Task
```

An event definition

```
DEFINE Event <event reference>"
NAME = <event name>"
START After Task <task ref>"
LENGTH Between <start no> and <end no>
REPEATING = [True / False]
WHERE = <room ref>"
STARTTEXT = <text on event start>"
MIDTIME1 = <mid no 1>
MIDTEXT1 = <text 2>"
MIDTIME2 = <mid no 2>
MIDTEXT2 = <text 2>"
PAUSE IF TASK <task ref>" IS {Not} Completed
```

"Come on, old chap!" says the pilot, "Got the jitters all of a sudden, have we?" He flies the plane in a loop so that you fall out and plummet towards the ground. "Never mind!" he calls, "It'll all be over in a jiffy!"

This is all very well, of course, as long as you've remembered to put on your parachute. If you haven't, the adventure is all over rather sooner than a jiffy:

You hit the sea with the most painful bellyflop in history. Your belly is so sore that you are forced to retire from active service.

If you do remember your parachute, you land safely on the island, but a worse fate may be in store for you; the island is inhabited by cannibals. These are no ordinary man-eaters, however, they're the survivors of an ill-fated Brownie Guide camp that have been forced eat human flesh just in order to survive! One wrong move, and the Brownies are preparing for a jolly old sing-song around the camp fire, with YOU as the main course:

The logs burn easily and within seconds you have become "Espionner Bouilli a la Canibale."

Unfortunately, I never finished writing the game, so I can't tell you what happened if you survived the Brownies, but presumably it would have involved meeting interesting people, and skiing.

Article by J. J. Guest (c) 2005

```
ON START MOVE Object <object ref>" TO <room ref>"
EXECUTE TASK <task ref>"
END Event
```

A character definition:

```
DEFINE Character <character reference>"
NAME = <character name>"
PREFIX = <character prefix>"
ALIASES = <alias>" {, <alias 2>"}
LOCATION = <room ref>"
DESCRIPTION = <description of character>"
GENDER = [Male / Female / Unknown]
TEXTHERE = <description if in room>"
SHOWMOVE = [True / False]
ENTERTEXT = <text if enters the room>"
EXITTEXT = <text if exits the room>"
WALK
STARTTASK = <task ref>"
STEP [Follow Player / Hidden / <room ref>"], <time in room>
{STEP }
LOOP = [True / False]
END WALK
{WALK }
CONVERSATION
SUBJECTS = <subject(s)>"
REPLY = <reply to subject>"
TASK = <task ref>"
ELSEREPLY = <reply if task is complete>"
END CONVERSATION
{CONVERSATION }
ATTITUDE = {Ally / Neutral / Enemy}
STAMINA = X to X
STRENGTH = X to X
ACCURACY = X to X
DEFENCE = X to X
AGILITY = X to X
RECOVERY = X
SPEED = {Every turn / Most turns / Every second turn /
Every third turn / Every four turns}
LOWTASK = <task when stamina drops to below 10%>
DIETASK = <task when character is killed>"
END Character
```

The Introduction:

```
DEFINE Introduction
MESSAGE = <introduction>
STARTROOM = <room ref>
END Introduction
```

The winning message:

```
DEFINE Winning
MESSAGE = <winning message>
END Winning
```

And the Player:

```
DEFINE Player
NAME = <name of player>
GENDER = {Male / Female / Prompt}
PROMPTFORNAME = {True / False}
DESCRIPTION = <description>
BUTIFTASK <task> IS COMPLETE THENSHOW <description>
INITIALPOSITION = {Standing / Sitting / Lying} {ON <object ref>}
MAXBULK = <number> {Tiny / Small / Normal / Large / Huge} Objects
MAXWEIGHT = <number> {Very Light / Light / Normal / Heavy /
Very Heavy} Objects
STAMINA = X to X
STRENGTH = X to X
ACCURACY = X to X
DEFENCE = X to X
AGIILITY = X to X
RECOVERY = X
END Player
```

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