

CIRCUIT'S EDGE



This is Infocom's best adventure since the company shifted from text-only to graphic games. A futuristic tale based on the work of noted science fiction writer, George Alec Effinger (who also wrote most of the game text), *Circuit's Edge* takes place in the Budayeen — the bad part of town in a Muslim city. The player's goal is to reclaim a notebook for Papa, the "Godfather" of the Budayeen's crime network. To do this, several major puzzles must be solved, revolving around a series of sadistic murders.

While primarily a graphic adventure, *Circuit's Edge* incorporates many roleplaying aspects. Your character's Health determines his effectiveness, and a variety of electronic chips may be "chipped" into your skull to endow you with special skills. Kung Fu Master and most others begin working the moment they're chipped in; others must be actively used in pertinent situations. Scaling a wall, for example, requires using Alpine Jack. Consisting

of object manipulation and talking to other characters, the puzzles bring to mind those from Infocom's all-text heyday. The parser is weak, but it is only needed for talking to people — other actions are handled with the mouse and a collection of drop-down menus whose commands can also be executed with keystrokes.

For the first time in an Infocom illustrated adventure, the graphics truly complement the prose rather than being superfluous pictures, and the music adds much to the experience. The auto-mapping and Recall Events features make this an adventurer-friendly quest that's highly recommended for all but younger players. Young, impressionable minds might be forever warped by constant visits to topless bars, interactions with sleazy drug dealers, and other adult activities that make the Budayeen such a nice place to visit.

Type:
Graphic Adventure

Difficulty:
Intermediate

System:
MS-DOS (512K required, mouse optional,
CGA/EGA/MCGA/VGA, Tandy, Roland/
Ad Lib sound boards, 5.25" disks only)

Company:
Infocom/Activision

The Solution

General Advice

The Budayeen is a dangerous place, so immediately acquire the Kung Fu Master "Moddie" and Alpine Jack "Daddie" from Leila's Mod Shop. Keep them chipped in while not using other Moddies, as protection against punks, muggers, and suspects.

Sleeping triggers telephone calls. Several calls will disturb your sleep. If you go without sleep, you can get healed at the Medical Center for 100 to 200 kiam.

You can talk to people anywhere you find them, but they are usually in their shops from dusk to dawn. (Most establishments are closed between 6 a.m. and 6 p.m.) Hookers, dancers, and street dealers circulate rather than staying in any one location. You may have to look in many places to find people, especially those people who do not have a regular place of business. When you get to a location, keep pressing Look and reading the mes-

sages until the last message is repeated or the computer says you see nothing of interest. You need to look as many as four times in some locations to see everything.

Do not take drugs or chemically alter yourself, or Papa will have you killed. Do not kill anyone who does not attack you first, or the police will kill you.

Many parts of this solution (the Answering Machine chip and viewing the Holodisk, for example) can be completed in any order; some, especially the kidnapping, cannot be postponed.

Since the game features auto-mapping and includes a street map in the manual, no map is provided here.

Inventory Management

You have space for just eleven items and eleven chips. The three essential items that use up inventory slots are kiam, the "chip rack" and the belt phone. Take 628 kiam out of any automated teller and drop your bank card. Dropped items do not disappear, but people may pick them up. Items in your apartment are safe. You can store eleven items there.

Be sure you have enough slots open to accept the items characters give you. Do not be forced to drop essential items.

You can sell almost any item to street vendors, but try to sell to the pawn shop — the street vendors roam around a lot and can be hard to find. Street vendors spend a lot of time from 8 p.m. to 6 a.m. in Chiriga's and other clubs, Franco's Tattoo Parlor, and Shoukri's Adult Video Holos.

Making Money

There are three ways of making kiam: Call Papa at 111BWS64; hunt for muggers while walking around in the alleys; and gamble at The Gambling Den at South 3rd and South 4th street. Before gambling, save the game in case you lose all your kiam. The maximum bet in roulette is 50 kiam, but one win on one number will give you 1,500 kiam. As an alternative, bet the maximum of 125 kiam at baccarat. You must accumulate 1,200 to 2,000 kiam early in the game to be able to afford to save the kidnap victim. Otherwise, you'll have to start over.

Calling Papa on the cellular phone only works twice, once after you talk to him in his apartment after being caught by the cops, and once after you have rescued the kidnap victim. Papa will give you

500 kiam each time. Encounters with muggers seem to be randomized, but the closer you are to the alleys at the top and bottom of the map, the greater the frequency of encounters. Muggers have 100 to 250 kiam, chips (Thrasher, Slasher, or Out-law), and weapons (Steelfist, Stiletto, Switchblade, and the like). Muggers can kill you, so don't go mugger-hunting without the Kung Fu Master chip or one of the chips listed above and, of course, the corresponding weapon.

Saied's Orchid-Scented Package

Within two hours after you start, Saied will call to give you his phone number and ask you to pick up a package from Fuad at a club. If you intend to build a big bankroll by gambling do it now. Then go to Chiriga's club on the north side of the plaza, or main area, of the Budayeen. Talk to Fuad. Say "package" and he'll give it to you. Exit Chiriga's. Go to Frenchy's on 10th Street, immediately southwest of Chiriga's. Talk to Saied. Give Saied the package. (While talking to him, note the scent; you'll detect it later in the game.) Check Inventory for Chip rack and look at the Chronos 2000 time chip. Action: Chip in/out, select Chronos 2000.

Papa's Notebook, Hajjar, and the Morgue

After the phone call from Papa, go to Bougainvillea Apartments in the southeast part of town and Look. You get mugged. When you wake up, Look (note MCDIX on wall). Action: Pick up holodisk or answering chip. You get arrested, then released.

Go out the Gate on the far east end of town. You will be in Bill's Cab. Talk to Bill. Go to Friedlander Bey's. Exit. Talk to Papa. Exit when Papa is finished. You are in Bill's Cab. Talk to Bill. Go to the Police Station. Exit cab. Talk to Hajjar. Say "Kenji" and you get the answering machine chip. Say "pass" and you get the morgue pass. Exit to Bill's Cab. Talk to Bill and go to the Budayeen. Walk to the morgue on the northeast side of the plaza. Action: Get effects (holodisk, wallet, and pawn ticket). Action: Pick up wallet and Mustafa's ticket.

Go to Mustafa's Pawn Shop, where you learn it is closed for good. Ask at Friendly's Pawn shop and AAA Loans about Mustafa and Friendly, and you will be told Friendly will buy Mustafa's stock. Redeem Mustafa's tag at Friendly's Pawn Shop (give 20 kiam to Friendly while talking to him). Look at the ring to see the clue NBBM NPT.

Prepare for the Kidnapping

One vital goal is to save a kidnap victim. You have less than 48 hours to do so, or you must start the game over, so don't get sidetracked before rescuing Abdul. When you get the telephone call from Mahmoud, immediately go to Hassan's. Try to collect the following items from the locations listed below before you get that telephone call.

Friendly's Pawn shop: Nightvision Lens and Countdown Timer.

Electroniques: Wire and Radio Direction Finder.

Crazy Abdul's: Detonator (talk to Abdul, say "direction finder," and give Abdul 100 kiam).

Police Station: Morgue Pass (see above).

Laila's Mod Shop: Kung Fu Master and either the Super Spy chip, or The Phantom and Alpine Jack chips.

Drop or sell the wristwatch, withdraw your money from an ATM, and drop the banking disk. You will need at least three slots open to pick up items needed to complete this task. You will need about 1,200 kiam to buy the items listed above, plus at least 250 kiam more for cab fare and to buy and sell an item to a suspect. Try to have 2,000 kiam to be safe, and make sure you've got it before the kidnapping. After getting the money, you can investigate the answering chip, holodisk, or the MCDIX clue.

The Kidnapping and the Note

You must time your sleep and your activities so you can rescue the boy by midnight the night following the kidnapping. After the call from Mahmoud, go to Hassan's. Talk to Mahmoud. Say "Abdul." Get note. Look at note and notice clue (the floral scent). Go to Heavenly Fragrances and show note to the shopkeeper. (You could also have Hajjar analyze the scent, talk to Saied about it, or visit Debbie's Greenhouse first. Don't visit Hajjar, which will cost time and may result in Abdul's death.) Go to the Scarlet Orchard and talk to the shopkeeper. Say "ujhfs psdibset."

At the Docks: Cigars and Tigers

Take Bill's Cab to the Ad-Dur Docks. Press Look and you will see a second story window. If you've got the Super Spy chip, use that skill. Otherwise, chip in and use Alpine Jack. Read message. Chip in The Phantom. Use The Phantom skill. Look (twice if you don't have the Super Spy chip). Get Cuban cigars and tiger orchids packages.

Take Bill's Cab to the Budayeen. Go to Heavenly Fragrances. Talk to the shopkeeper. Give orchids to shopkeeper. Go to the Smoke Shop and talk to the shopkeeper. Show Cuban Cigars to shopkeeper. (Don't have Hajjar analyze the Cigars. If he's already done so and confiscated them, retrieve them by purchasing some real Cuban tobacco at the Smoke Shop and revisiting Hajjar. Then drop the real tobacco and pick up the original package.) Go to Maq-Allah's News and talk to shopkeeper. Look at paper.

Go to morgue and talk to the attendant. Say "Luigi" or "Casolari." Save. Action: Pick up Demolitions chip. (If attendant prevents you from exiting with it, leave one of your chips in its place; alternatively, you can return to use the Demolitions chip when it's needed to rig the bomb.) When phone rings, answer it and note the phone number of the suspect.

Go to Mahammad's Glass and talk to the shopkeeper. Say "pee xpnbo." Give shopkeeper 150 kiam. Action: Get crystal ball.

Go to Madame Mimi's Tarot Den and talk to the shopkeeper. Say "cologne" and listen for the clue about "coming very close to death." Save game.

The Radio Direction Finder and the Warehouse

Have Kung Fu Master chipped in. Go to the cemetery. Look, then fight until Alejandro flees. Look until you see the frequency on the broken Radio Direction Finder on the ground. Use your Radio Direction Finder (with the frequency from above) and follow the signal to the warehouse northwest of the intersection of north 14th Street and the alley. You should get the message "The RDF leads you to a locked warehouse..."

Take the Kung Fu Master chip out and chip in the Demolitions chip. Use the dynamite. Be sure to chip Kung Fu Master back in before entering the warehouse. Save. Enter the warehouse, fight Alejandro, listen to his dying words, and look for Abdul. Free him.

Go to Hassan's and speak to Mahmoud, who will give you two items. Make sure you have two slots open for the Holo Viewer (which enables you to show the Holo to other people) and the Static pistol (worth about 350 kiam at Crazy Abdul's). Also ask him about Abu Salah.

Viewing the Holo Disk

View the holo with the Viewer. If you want to view it before obtaining the Viewer, take the holo to Shoukri's Adult Video Holo and say "yes" to viewing the latest porno holo. Notice the nationality (Japanese).

The Answering Machine Chip and the Sapphire Quest

The answering chip can be listened to with the answering machine from Friendly's Pawn Shop. To hear the whole message you will need the Japanese chip, since Kenjii and his daughter are Japanese (see "Viewing the Holo Disk," above). Say "Japanese" to Laila at her Mod shop. Say "Japanese" to the Jeweler at the Jewels of Morocco, and he will send you on a quest for his stolen sapphire. Get it and he'll give you the chip.

Go to Franco's Tattoo Parlor and ask about serpents and samurai. Franco will tell you about Marco and Manny. Franco talks about Marco working at a shop that would sell a holo system cheap (Friendly's). Ask about Marco at Friendly's, and he tells you that Marco worked at Electroniques. Ask about Marco at Electroniques, and you'll learn his last name was Herrera.

Manny, Marco, and the Warehouse

You will need to crack the computer (see below) before you can access the files on Marco and Alejandro Herrera. Right now you can pursue leads by asking around about Manny. At AAA Loans, Guido will give you a matchbook with "SP" on it. At the Silver Palm, Heidi will talk about Manny's beautiful eyes. At the Eyes of Texas, the attendant talks about "card counting." At the Gambling Den, Karim mentions a green-eyed, red-haired girl. At the Red Light Lounge, Fanya tells you Manny lives at the Ad-Dur House.

At the Ad Dur House, say "Manny" and give the landlord 20-100 kiam to let you into Manny's room (or you can get in by using the Phantom Chip skill or an electronic lock pick). Look in Manny's room until you find a note. Look at the note. Get a knife and go to the warehouse in the alley off of south 1st street. Look and you will see a bloody trail and a tied-up crate. Use the knife to cut the rope. Look. Then get the half-ring. Look at the half-ring for the clue to get the rest of what you need to know to obtain the access code for cracking the computer.

Go to AAA Loans and ask about Manny or show Guido the half-ring. If you're not packing a gun, get one before proceeding; if you don't, you may

lose money to an attacker. Go to Abu Salah's Rug Shop and say "Guido." Take 1000 kiam back to Guido and get your 100 kiam. If you lost the 1000 kiam, either call Papa or gamble to win it back. Listen carefully to what Guido says. Go back to the Rug Shop when it is closed, break in (use the Phantom or Super Spy chip, or the electronic lock pick) and search for clues. Get the black key. You may want to ask the police computer about Abu Salah.

The Rad Hacker Cracks the Police Computer

Chiri will tell you that you can find out all there is to know about someone from the police computer if you have their first and last names and if you can use the computer. Buy a Detective's Badge for 58 kiam from Rico, a street dealer who frequents the Tattoo Parlor, Frenchy's, and the Adult Holo Shop. Go to the police station and ask the computer about Alejandro Herrera (press Action, then select Use the Police Computer). You will be thrown off the computer and out of the police department. Write down the telephone modem access number (054AJR86) you see on the side of the computer as you are being thrown out. The policeman will take the badge you bought.

You need to buy uplink cables at Friendly's Pawn shop, a terminal from Electroniques, and the Rad Hacker Chip from Laila's Mod shop (113 kiam). In order to do the next part of the solution, you will have to track down Manny Mancuso for the other half of the ring. Now all you need is the access code, which you will get if you take Bill's cab to the Shimal Mosque at 1 a.m. — be sure to arrive before 1 a.m. and wait. Look and write down the access code for the computer (hsbwjuz). Chip in the Rad Hacker, use the terminal, dial the phone number, and give the access code.

The Sapphire and the Message

Accessing the computer, you will learn that Alejandro Herrera and Marco Herrera live together in the Nfejobi Hotel. Look in the Nfejobi Hotel and use the Phantom or Super Spy chip or the electronic lock pick to get in the room. Look in Marco's room and get the sapphire (examine body) and a bullet (in the wall). Give the sapphire to the jeweler in return for the Japanese chip and 300 kiam. Go to Friendly's and get the answering machine. Chip in the Japanese chip and use the answering machine to play the message. Show the bullet to a gun expert (Crazy Abdul, street dealers, or Hajjar). You'll learn that it is a .357 magnum bullet.

The Eyes of Texas

In order to speak with Mack Dixon, Mackie, or MCDIX, you will need to buy an English 101 chip from Laila. You will find traces of the large Texan all over the Budayeen. Keep asking and you will get his whole name. Then check him out on the police computer. If you ask the hooker with the very long, pure white hair and blue eyes at Frenchy's, she will tell you about a Dixon in the Budayeen Hotel (in the center of the map). Say "Dixon," then "room" to the Budayeen Hotel Clerk. Bribe the clerk with 20 kiam to go to Dixon's room. Look at the room. Ask the shopkeeper in Cold Tea about Dixon; he will tell you about delivering bourbon to the Budayeen Hotel and Hotel Del Palazzo. Go to Hotel Del Palazzo, talk to the clerk and bribe him to see Dixon's room. Go to Leather Goddesses and ask about Mackie or Mack Dixon or MCDIX, give the madame 100 kiam, and pump Stormy for information (use one of the sex chips). Ask about him in the Budayeen shops. Try Transpex Games. Ultimately, go ask about Mack Dixon at The Eyes of Texas and bribe the shopkeeper (40-80 kiam) for Dixon's phone number (229AAC33). With English 101 chipped in, you can call him and then visit him in his room (921). Notice the numbers on the alarm clock, a clue that MCDIX is a code based on Roman numerals.

The Holo Viewer, Tamara, Lily, and the Emeralds

Ask the nurse at the hospital about Tamara. Talk to the nurse and use the Holo Viewer (obtained from Mahmoud) with the holo of Tamara. The nurse will ask for a bribe of emeralds before she'll reveal Tamara's new identity. Go to the Jeweler and ask him about emeralds; he will say he sold the last emeralds to a street dealer. Say "emerald" to all the street dealers until you find the right one (the young gentleman, sometimes found at Chiri's). Bribe the street dealer with at least 15 kiam to learn he sold the emerald earrings to a dancer. Ask the dancers in Chiri's about emeralds and some of them will tell you that Lily was showing them off. Lily is a dancer on the circuit and she moves from club to club. (Try Jo-Mama's and Frenchy's.) You might want to ask about the circuit. Say "earrings" to Lily, who will ask you to find something green and pretty. Buy a green snake at the Snake House and show it to Lily. Lily will be scared by the snake and pass out. You grab the earrings. Give them to the Medical Center nurse. Tamara Carter's new identity is Arissa Lockhart. She works the circuit as a dancer but can be found at Chiri's most of the time.

The Device and the Notebook

Go to Arissa and say "Tamara." Arissa will talk, leave, and telephone you. Make sure Kung Fu Master is chipped in. Go to Arissa's Hotel, The Grey House, and look. Save. Go to the Warehouse in the alley that connects to South 1st Street. Fight Abu Salah. Get notebook. If you did not get the black key earlier when you searched Abu Salah's Rug Shop, go there now, get the key, and rescue Arissa Tamara by using the key in the warehouse. She'll die if you don't get back in time, so you may prefer to deactivate the device with the MCDIX code (1409). This is also the code that will open the notebook. Go to Papa's, talk to Papa, and give him the notebook. Your victory level depends on how long it takes to complete the game, how angry Papa is at you, and other factors related to the notebook.

The Quest Buster's CODE

Use this table to decode clues. To make this process more convenient, photocopy it and place it beside the coded sections.

b = a

c = b

d = c

e = d

f = e

g = f

h = g

i = h

j = i

k = j

l = k

m = l

n = m

o = n

p = o

q = p

r = q

s = r

t = s

u = t

v = u

w = v

x = w

y = x

z = y

a = z

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