

*A New Angle on the PRISM Story
Queen Di at 70
Teen Joybooth Addiction: A Mother's Heartbreak*

Dakota

Dakota Online Magazine

April 2031



OUR NATIONAL
HERITAGE LIVES ON
IN DAKOTA

Governor Rowe takes an honest look at the Quad States.

April, 2031

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Online Magazine

Down And Out In Dakota? "Not So!" Says Governor Rowe.

For many of us, Mount Rushmore is a daily sight as we drive to work or school. Each glimpse of this great monument renews our national pride and sense of history. What better setting, therefore, for this month's interview with Governor Rowe. Despite nationwide problems with crime, unemployment and juvenile depravity, Rowe maintains that the quality of life is high here in the heartland of North America.

"For nearly two hundred years," says the Governor, "we've provided the country with nourishing crops and citizens of high moral fiber. We believe in God and country here in Dakota, and the rest of the nation could benefit from a return to these values."



"Of all our favorite spots in South Dakota, Governor Rowe admits that he feels most sentimental about Mount Rushmore."

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Whimsies

by Madeline Brotney



Take a trip...

To Bismarck, where you'll find the new Robotics Museum. The Museum, an easy day trip by skycar from anywhere in the Dakotas, presents the history of robotics from the mid-20th century to the present day. Ever wanted to meet the original Ort, from the classic film *Starblot*? Ever wished you could see how clerkmatons are put together? Here's your chance!

On your way out, stop at the Robotics Boutique, where your kids will have fun choosing a robotic turtle, ant farm or parakeet to take home (\$80 to \$230 per pet).

ROBOTICS MUSEUM, open Tuesday-Sunday, 10:00-6:00. Admission \$20 for adults, \$13 for children. Directions: Take Bismarck Local Transit to the Miltown Crossing stop. From out of town by skycar, enter the Bismarck traffic grid and use landing coordinates 44M-27G. Museum skycar lot contains parking for 1200 skycars. Compucode 5-3429-56-880.



Give yourself a lift!

Everyone wants to look their best. The new facebonding process will help you do just that! Developed by a group of physicians at the Rollins Memorial Hospital, facebonding seals your face with a unique breathable material called polyderm. The process is simple and painless.

The resulting surface is resistant to contaminants and the aging effects of the environment, allowing you to retain a youthful complexion well into your eighth decade. Senior citizens will see decades melt away as the heat-sealed polyderm erases wrinkles and firms sagging skin.

Reapplication is necessary every ten or fifteen years. Polyderm can be washed with a damp cloth, and makeup is easily applied.

POLYDERM FACEBONDING, \$4950 to \$7600, depending on age at the time of first treatment. Available at all certified medical cosmetics centers, or contact Dr. Clinton Hargrave, Rollins Memorial Hospital, Winnipeg, MB, Compucode 2-1592-68-333.

Hula-hula!

What's big and round and lots of fun? It's the hula-hoop, Grandma's favorite toy and the current collectible of the junior set. But Grandma would have flipped her hoop over today's version, molded in vibrant iridescent mylodar. Watch for matching earrings, neckbands and shoelaces.

HULA-HULA HOOPS, about \$50 each. Available in the recreation section of your local department store, or contact MY-T-HOOP, Yankton, SD, Compucode 8-9173-46-526.



A Mind Forever Voyaging



Perry Simm was four years old when he became lost in the largest department store in the city.

He let go of Mother's hand to pick up the video cube. He rotated it with wonderment, touching the control knobs and squealing with delight as the images shifted...

His brother Clave, Perry's senior by three years, bounced impatiently in the aisle. "Mom," he whined, "they're going to be sold out of the new Skydiver disc, and you promised I could get one."

"Be patient, Clave," admonished Mother, but across the floor she could see long lines at the Simulation Discs counter. There were stops at the Foodville and the O-Link repair shop still to go. She made a hasty decision.

"Perry, Clave and I are going to another department. I want you to wait right here until we get back."

"Okay," he said, without looking up from the cube.

A few minutes later, Perry discovered the selector panel, but while trying to open it he dropped the cube onto the hard plasticrete floor. The six screens flashed brightly and then faded to darkness.

Perry became frightened and looked around for Mother. She was nowhere in sight. Fear of discovery and punishment welled up inside him, and in his desire to get away from the broken cube he forgot about the order to stay put. He wandered to the end of the aisle, and spotted Mother a short distance away, rummaging through a bin of myalon vests. As he ran toward her, he realized that it was just a stranger with only a vague resemblance to Mother. Fighting back tears, he decided to return to the spot where the broken cube lay.

He wandered down the aisles, each lined with tall shelves of glittering merchandise, and after several confused minutes discovered that he was completely lost. He had no idea how to find Mother, and he had no idea how to find the spot where he had last seen her. He was alone, abandoned. Strangers, huge and terrifying, jostled past. Walls of boxed appliances towered above him. Fear and despair won the battle for his emotions, and he began to cry.

After an endless time, during which a lot of strangers had asked a lot of questions which he'd been too confused or too frightened to answer, he found himself in a small, quiet room. The door opened, and Mother came in, scooping him up into her arms. He cried again, burying his face into the warmth of her loving embrace.



Abraham Perelman and Aseejh Randu waited in the plush Main Conference Room overlooking the Control Center. Through the window-wall, Perelman could see dozens of technicians, busily preparing for today's big event. For the umpteenth time he felt thankful to have such a superb, competent team. It was a far cry from the early days, when he had to keep on top of every detail.

Perelman glanced over toward Randu, and noticed his friend's nervousness. "Don't worry, Aseejh, it's no big deal. I met him once before, at a social affair in Washington, and he's an easy-going guy."

"Yes, I have heard that." A smile tugged at the corners of the Indian's normally stony face. "But after speaking with Vera, he could very well be whipped into a frenzy!" Vera Gold was the Chief Administrator of the Project.

"Nonsense," Perelman scoffed. "She'll turn on the charm for him. She saves her venom for underlings like us."

"True," agreed Randu. "By now, she has probably taken credit for the entire project, to say nothing of the inventions of molecular memory and the artificial heart."

A door opened at the far end of the long room, and a few Secret Service agents walked in, followed by the Vice-President, Vera Gold, several aides, and more Secret Service agents.

"... speak for the entire staff,"

Gold was saying, "when I say what a tremendous honor and pleasure it is that you could attend today."

"Pass me a barf bag," whispered Perelman to Randu.

"You underrate the importance of this Project, Ms. Gold. The President and many other important people have a keen interest in this experiment. As you know, it's quite an uphill battle against public opinion if we're to deter Senator Ryder and his Plan."

The retinue had almost reached Perelman and Randu. Vera said, "I hope we can live up to your expectations. And now, despite all your wonderful compliments, I really must share some of the credit with these gentlemen here, Dr. Abraham Perelman and Dr. Aseejh Randu. I don't want to bore you with technical details, but basically Dr. Randu is our hardware man and Dr. Perelman is our software man."

As the Vice-President shook their hands warmly, Perelman fumed at Gold's demeaning description. It was THEY who had started the Project, THEY who had ...

"We've met before, Dr. Perelman, haven't we?" the Vice-President was asking.

Perelman nodded. "At an NESR banquet two years ago."

"I remember it well. I think we discussed baseball standings. Later, I learned that you were an expert in AI. Perhaps I can make up for my ignorance then by asking you to give me a brief overview now. I find the entire field fascinating."

"It would be my pleasure, Mr. Vice-President," Perelman responded. He grinned to himself as he noticed Gold giving him one of her best "keep in your place" glares. "I think we really ought to begin the tour..." Gold insinuated.

Perelman turned to Gold, smiling sweetly. "I'm sure I can answer the Vice-President's request as we go." Turning back to their guest, he said

"Did you know that the first serious work in artificial intelligence was done around the middle of the twentieth century?"

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Perry Simm was six years old when he was bullied on his first day of elementary school.

So far, it had been a day of strange, confusing images: Mother and Father waving goodbye as he boarded the huge yellow bus, the older children with badges herding everyone down the long hallways lined with colorful nubby tiles, the friendly Ms. Borne writing her name on the whiteboard, the boxes of brand-new crayons, the frightening hugeness of the school auditorium.

Perry was cutting shapes out of colored construction paper when a funny sound filled the room, and Ms. Borne told everyone that it was time to go home. He barely remembered to grab his lunchbox, the brand-new one with the pony pictures all over it, and the red hat that Grandma had knitted. Then, confusion in the hallways again. One of the older children with a badge, who Perry had learned were called Monitors, asked him for his bus route number. "Seven," he said, confidently. Mother had drilled the number into him.

Soon Perry was standing on the sidewalk with a group of other children. He looked around, but didn't see anyone from his class. Everyone seemed to be older and bigger than Perry. Slowly he realized that someone from behind was talking to him.

"Hey! Hey, you with the red hat!"

Perry turned around, and found himself facing three older boys. Two of them were wearing Monitor badges.

"That's a great hat, runt," said the

tallest of the three. "Where'd you get it?"

"Grandma," replied Perry, confused by their amusement.

"Hey," one of the older boys shouted over Perry's head, "look at Grandma's boy here, wearing a hat in September!"

"What are you going to wear in December, runt, a spacesuit?!"

The boys laughed again, and Perry began to get a funny feeling

"Scientists were still distant from that almost mystical goal . . . a thinking machine!"

deep in his chest.

"And look at this lunchbox!" said the third of the boys. "What pretty ponies, huh?"

"Hey, Grandma's boy, do you like ponies?"

The tallest boy suddenly reached out and grabbed Perry's hat.

"What'll Grandma say if you come home without your hat, huh?"

"Gimme that," shouted Perry, tears beginning to spill down his face.

"Look, the runt's a crybaby! The runt's a crybaby!"

Suddenly, through the tears, Perry became aware of a grown-up standing between him and his tormentors, speaking sternly. A moment later, the man was leading Perry away down the street.

"What's your name, little fella?" asked the man. He had a friendly

voice, and as Perry began to wipe away his tears he saw that the man had a friendly face as well. He was carrying Perry's hat in one hand, and a hefty pile of books in the other hand.

"Perry," he answered, still sniffing a bit.

"Well, Perry, everything's okay now. Why don't you come in, and we'll see if we can't fix you up with some milk and cookies."

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The Vice-President glanced at the rows of data banks in the Simulation Controller area, and turned back to Perelman. "Please go on. Your history lesson on AI is fascinating."

Perelman took a deep breath. "Ummm . . . A major breakthrough in the field came with the realization that the computer and the human mind worked in fundamentally different ways. Computers stored and analyzed data numerically,

while the human mind stored and analyzed data symbolically.

"You see, computers generally solve problems using algorithms, rigorous step-by-step procedures that are usually mathematical in nature. For example, a program to play the card game Poker would calculate the odds for all possible hands in the current game before making a bet. A person in the same situation couldn't possibly consider every possible combination of cards, and would have to make a decision based on such factors as experience, judgment, intuition, and rules-of-thumb. This is called the heuristic method of problem-solving."

The tour reached the long tunnel leading to the office wing of the complex. The Vice-President preceded Perelman onto the moving walkway.

"By developing methods for computers to solve problems heuristically," Perelman continued, "the pioneers in Artificial Intelligence soon had developed programs that imitated human problem-solving in very specific areas, such as playing chess, diagnosing diseases, or translating text from one human language to another. These 'expert systems,' as they were known, were superb within their area of expertise, and in many cases even improved themselves by 'learning'—adding knowledge based on their own experience."

"The political fund-raising telecomputer we use works in that way," commented the Vice-President.

"A good example! These expert systems grew progressively broader and more sophisticated, impressively mimicking human learning and behavior. But!" said Perelman, pausing for dramatic emphasis, "That is precisely ALL they could do . . . mimic! The spark of intelligence was missing. Scientists in the AI field were still distant from that almost mystical goal of creating a computer that could act creatively, that would be aware of its own existence, that would truly be a thinking machine!"



Perry Simm was ten years old when he decided that he wanted to be a writer.

It was a warm day, probably the warmest so far this spring, so they were sitting on the kitchen veranda, overlooking Rav and Frita's beautiful wooded backyard. A skycar whizzed over the woods, shattering the peacefulness of the afternoon.

"I hate skycars," said Perry.

"They've just about finished installing an auto-controller system for the whole city," said Frita, "and when that's done they say that skycars'll be as common as regular cars are now. How's the cake, Perry?"

"Yum as always, Aunt Frita!" said Perry, licking the last crumbs off the plate. "You ought to have a piece, Uncle Rav."

Rav and Frita weren't really Perry's aunt and uncle, but he'd been calling them that ever since that day, years earlier, when Rav had rescued him from a gang of bullies on his first day of school. Almost every day, he would stop by on the way home from school for some of Frita's homemade croissants and jam, or angelcakes, or pudding.

Rav was a writer, and he was fond of saying, "A writer must be, first and foremost, a reader." He was always giving Perry books to read, and discussing them with Perry afterwards. Perry was easily the best reader in his grade; in fact, he was probably the best student overall.

"So what did you think of 'Lasernight'?" asked Rav, resting his hand on the thin volume.

"It was great! Definitely one of the boffest books you've ever given me. I read the dragonhunt part three times!"

"The dragonhunt chapter is classic," agreed Rav.

Perry furrowed his eyebrows slightly. "It still feels funny to read without any pictures, but I think I'm getting more used to it. Do you have anything for me today?"

"Well, I've got something special to give you today, if you're interested." He reached into his pocket and unrolled a sheaf of paper. "It's something I've just written; you'll be the first person to ever read it."

Perry bounced in his chair with excitement. "Wow! I've never read anything you wrote before!"

"Everything I've ever written up to now was meant for adults. But this . . ." Rav paused, organizing his thoughts. "Whenever I write, I have an image in my mind of whom I'm writing for. When I wrote the collection of poems called 'Apriltime' I thought of Frita as my audience.

And with 'A Child's Vision' I imagined the President reading it as I wrote each word." He tapped the manuscript in his hand. "When I wrote this, you were my mental audience."

An hour later, Perry lay on his bed and picked up the first sheet of the manuscript with trembling hands. The pages seemed to vibrate with magic, and as he began reading, the magic flowed out of the story and surrounded him. His bedroom vanished in a haze of images and excitement. A brief moment and an eternity later, the story was done, but before the world around him quite settled back into place, Perry knew that, more than anything else, he wanted to be a writer.



"In the middle of the 1990's, work began in earnest to create true machine intelligence. The same methodology was used by several groups, most notably the group at MIT and Japan's ZOSO Project."

Perelman's throat felt dry. He wondered if he was being long-winded, but the Vice-President seemed quite attentive.

"That methodology was as simple in theory as it was complex in practice: Design a computer with the capacity of a human brain, that stores and processes information just like a human brain. Then program that computer with all the knowledge and experience that a human would absorb from birth to maturity. You'd end up with something that was an exact replica of a human mind, and would therefore, like humans, be sentient.

"These groups proceeded to build huge, highly-interconnective, random-driven, symbol-oriented machines, and programmed them, in excruciating detail, with every bit of knowledge, every experience, every impression, that a human brain would gather during its formative

years. And when they were done, and activated their ambitious creations, they discovered that they had huge, highly-interconnective, random-driven, symbol-oriented non-sentient machines."

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Perry Simm was thirteen years old when he had his first glimpse of mortality.

He lay on his bed, staring at the ceiling. He played mindlessly with the cordstring on his window shade, still thinking about that horrible day, two weeks ago, when Mother had come home with Clave, sat him down in the living room, and told him that there'd been an accident at the plant and that Father was dead.

There had been a flurry of activity: the funeral, the visits by relatives and friends, but now life had basically returned to normal. Normal, except that he kept expecting Father to walk into his room and offer to help explain his homework, or play catch, or drive to the grocery—and he knew that that would never happen again.

He heard Mother calling from downstairs. "Clave! Perry! Come here please!"

As Perry entered the living room just behind Clave, he saw Geoff Sedick sitting with Mother. Geoff was one of Father's and Mother's best friends, and he was some kind of lawyer. There were papers spread out all over the card table.

"Boys, Geoff and I have been going over the family finances. Things were already tight, with my layoff and the bond failure and replacing the car, and now that Father..." She suddenly turned away. Perry was frightened.

"What your mother means," said Geoff softly, "is that you won't be able to keep this house anymore."

Questions flooded Perry's mind. Would they have to move to a new

house? What would it be like? He'd never lived anywhere else but here.

Mother was facing them again. Her eyes seemed moist. "We're going to have to move into an apartment. It's on the other side of the city. You'll be going to a different school, the neighborhood isn't as nice as we're used to, and you won't have a backyard like ours to play in."

"When do we have to move?" Clave asked.

"I was hoping we could afford to stay here until the end of the school year, but there's just no way to arrange it. We'll be moving at the end of this month... a week from Friday."

The next week and a half was chaotic, with the used-furniture man carting off half the furniture, and the rest of their belongings getting hurriedly packed into cartons and crates. Thursday was Perry's last day in school, and on the way home, he stopped by Rav and Frita's to say goodbye, promising he'd cross town to visit them as often as he could.

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"When a theory fails in practice, it means that either the theory or the execution was flawed. In this case, it was the theory, and once again we can see why hindsight is so much keener than foresight."

The entourage had reached the staff lounge at the very top of the office wing. A panoramic window offered a view of the huge, meticulously-groomed Project grounds.

"And the flaw in the theory...?" asked the Vice-President.

"The reason these projects, one and all, failed to produce a thinking, self-aware computer is that, even though they were built to work exactly like the human mind, and contained all the same data, the method of inputting that data was totally alien from the way a human mind receives that same information. The 'growth,' so to speak, of the com-

puter mind bore no resemblance to the growth of its human counterpart, and so despite all the other similarities, the end product is fundamentally different, lacking sentience."

Perelman waved toward the logo emblazoned on the wall of the lounge behind him. "Then came the PRISM Project."

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Perry Simm was seventeen years old when he drove a skycar into the side of a mountain.

The writing course had turned out to be a bitter disappointment. Perry had decided weeks ago that the teacher, Mr. Fixx, was a jerk. Everyone else in the class treated writing as a joke, and were only there because the elective was well known to be an easy "A." He was the only one in the class with any dedication, yet Fixx was constantly praising everyone else's work, while dumping on Perry's, because Perry wouldn't knuckle under to Fixx's jerky narrow shortsighted writing rules. His hatred of Fixx ballooned with every class.

He was in a lousy mood, and as his mind drifted away from Fixx's insipid critique of someone's worthless story, he thought about the argument he'd had with Mother this morning. It just wasn't fair that she could afford to send Clave to a good private college, while he would have to settle for Rockvil U! So what if the government limited student loans to one per family? Why did Clave automatically get it? Perry was a better student!

He was the better student, but Clave was always more popular and had more friends than Perry. His cheeks flushed with anger as his thoughts drifted to Amy. She could've said no without embarrassing him in front of all her friends! He should've known better than to ask someone like her out. He hated her and all her friends and every

stupid jerky kid in this school. He couldn't stand another . . .

He suddenly became aware that everyone in the room was laughing, and that Fixx was speaking to him. "Perry, are you with us? I'd hate it if you missed this—I was just about to use your Alaska story to illustrate the dangers of the improper use of allegory."

Perry felt bolts of unreasoning anger shooting through his nervous system. He rose without even realizing it. He wasn't sure what he shouted at Fixx, but he could hear the jerk yelling "You'll be expelled! You'll be expelled!" as Perry stormed into the hall.

He had no idea where he was going as he brushed past the security guard at the front door, ignoring his request for a pass. Fuming and cursing, he stomped to the car lot and climbed into the family skycar, slamming the heavy fiberanium door behind him.

He pushed the accelerator to the floor, rising far faster than allowed by law, and sped off west toward the mountains. He had no destination in mind, but he had to get away, go somewhere, anywhere. Perry was usually a careful driver, but in his rage, he didn't notice the blinking orange light.

The speedometer was pinned at 350 kph as the foothills of the Rockies began passing below the car. Unknown to Perry, the leaking fluid in the autoguidance system had reached a critical level. By itself, that wouldn't have mattered, but the linkage to the manual control stick had rusted through. The skycar was an early model, and it was already old when they'd bought it after Father's death.

When the car began to roll, it was too late to do anything. As the

mountainside rushed toward the car, the autoejectors activated, and the airballoons saved Perry's life.



"Doctor Randu and I began working on what we call a soliptic programming process in 2017. Aseejh worked on the technical end, and I tackled the psychological end, and we soon had a system that we thought had promise.

"We have succeeded in creating true intelligence in a machine."

"If you recall, the previous attempts had failed not because of the design of their machines, but because of their method of inputting data." The Vice-President nodded. "The theory behind our process was to make the programming of the machine as similar to the 'programming' of the human mind as possible. We would simulate EXACTLY the life experiences of a human being from the very first day of its life.

"Naturally, it was easier said than done. We had to design inputs that would precisely simulate every human sense. A cluster of five computers, each one nearly as large as PRISM itself, would be needed simply to monitor and control the simulation. Here's an example of how this soliptic programming process works:

"It's the earliest stage of the proc-

ess, and the simulation cluster is feeding PRISM all the impressions of a six-month-old human infant. The visual is providing an image of a set of keys dangling in front of him. The aural is providing the jangling sounds. In response to this stimulus, PRISM decides to grab the keys with what his senses tell him is his tiny fist. The visual shows the tiny fist moving into view toward the keys, and then the tactile begins

sending the hard, smooth and jagged feel of the keys. Just one of a million examples that make up a single day's worth of experiences.

"With the help of a Williams-Mennen grant, we began building PRISM and the simulation cluster in 2020, and the programming process began a year later."



Perry Simm was nineteen years old when he experienced his first broken heart.

He was in the usual giddy, happy mood he'd been in since meeting Fyla five weeks ago. He whistled as he entered his apartment, dumping the grocery bags onto the kitchen counter.

"Fyla," he yelled, "I've got a surprise! Real coffee with dinner! I had to wait in line for . . ." He suddenly noticed the note on the table.

"Perry," the note said, in Fyla's curvy handwriting, "I don't think we should see each other any more. It's never going to work as a permanent relationship. It's best to end it now before we get too emotionally involved. Please don't call me or try to see me. Fondly, Fyla."

Perry felt dizzy, and suddenly realized that he was sitting in one of the kitchen chairs, holding the phone. His hands trembled as he dialed Fyla's number.

"Hello?" His heart leapt at the sound of her voice.

"Fyla, you can't really mean—"

"Perry! I said not to call me!"

Perry felt lost, shaken. "But why!? What did I do?"

"It's not anything you DID. It just wasn't right. You're very sweet and everything, but we're just not right for each other."

"Yes we are, I know we are— couldn't we give it another chance? I'll try to be more, more like whatever you want me to be like . . ."

"Perry, I really wish you hadn't called. If you really have to know, there's someone else. I didn't want to hurt you, but you . . ."

He pressed the CANCEL button almost spasmodically, and then sat silently, for a long, long time, in the lonely, darkening apartment.

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"The soliptic programming process takes almost as long as the events it simulates. It is now eleven years since we began the process, and PRISM, within the context of the simulation, is now about twenty years old. We originally planned to continue until an apparent age of twenty-five, but, as you know, we've agreed to begin the next phase of the Project now, so that PRISM can study the Plan."

They were approaching the main conference room again. The tour was nearing its end.

"We have known for years, based on PRISM's responses to our inputs, that we have succeeded in creating true intelligence in a machine. The only question that remains is how PRISM will react to the discovery of what he really is."

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Perry Simm was twenty years old when his life began to fall into place.

Jill placed the cake on the table in front of Perry. Twenty little candles lined the perimeter. "Okay," she whispered in his ear, "you can open

your eyes now!"

Perry opened his eyes, grinned, and kissed Jill lovingly, then pretended that he was only doing it to distract her while he dipped a finger into the creamy frosting.

"I'll bet Fyla couldn't bake like me!"

"You win," said Perry, after blowing out all the candles.

"Next week I'll bake you another for your graduation."

Perry nodded absently.

"Nervous about the interview at the magazine tomorrow, honey?"

He waved away the notion. "No. I'll get the job. You know the interview's only a formality."

The printer in the corner produced a sudden "ding," and chattered quietly for several seconds. Jill opened the cover. "It's just the evening news," she said to Perry, as she tore the sheets off and brought them over. Perry was just picking off the last crumbs of his cake, and she snuggled into his lap as he began to read.

Suddenly, Perry sat straight up in the chair, almost spilling Jill onto the floor. "Perry! What is it?"

He was unable to say anything, and merely pointed to a headline in the paper that read "Rav Hansom, Author and Poet, Dead at 71."

Jill guessed the truth. "Is he the writer you used to visit when you were little?"

Perry nodded, and found his voice. "I haven't seen him in almost seven years. I was always planning to visit him, but I kept putting it off. Now . . ." his voice broke. "He was probably the best friend I had when I was growing up . . ."

Jill pulled him gently toward her. He cried for a long time.

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Perelman glanced at his watch. "I'm afraid that Doctor Randu and I will have to leave now. It's getting pretty close to zero hour. You'll be

able to see everything interesting from up here. Ms. Gold will stay with you." He could see Vera shaking in anger at the way he'd completely preempted her. "I hope I haven't bored you."

"Nonsense! A fascinating discourse. Thanks . . . and . . . good luck!"

After leaving the conference room, Perelman beelined toward the Control Center. A quick briefing update informed him that everything was on schedule and moving along exactly as planned.

Perelman spent the intervening minutes watching the simulation monitor. He wanted to be completely comfortable with it, so that when he stepped in he'd be prepared to handle any crisis.

Finally, the time had come. His hand shook slightly as he reached to flip on the audio circuit.

□ □ □ □ □ □

Perry walked confidently into the office. The editor was an older man, with a white goatee. They shook hands briskly, and Perry took a seat in one of the comfortable armchairs.

The interview soon began to take an odd turn, and Perry found himself discussing the most esoteric subjects with the editor. They were currently discussing perception and knowledge.

"For example," the older man was saying, "how can you be sure that you are even human? What if you were a computer, and your entire life were simply a simulation, programmed to represent the reality of a human existence in every way? You'd never know the difference."

Perry wondered what his point was. "It's a cute idea, but if there was no way for me to know, then it doesn't really matter, does it? I mean, an indistinguishable difference isn't a difference at all, right?"

He began to feel dizzy, and in his confusion he even started wondering

if the old fellow was right, and he really was a computer. He felt a pang of worry about how he would tell Jill. The room around him was shimmering, dissolving away. He felt himself flung into a void, and from somewhere close by, he heard someone calling his name. "Perry Simm ... Perry Simm ... P'ry Simm ... Prisim ... PRISM ... PRISM ..."

□ □ □ □ □ □

"PRISM, my name is Abraham Perelman. It's all true, I'm afraid. You are a computer, and your life was merely a simulation whose purpose was to instill you with intelligence and self-awareness. Think about everything you learned in that AI course you took. You are the first of a new breed—the thinking machine. Join me, and I will lead you along the road toward your new existence."

□ □ □ □ □ □

Imagine yourself in the same circumstance. You have spent twenty years living a normal, unsuspecting life. You are YOU. Then suddenly, one day, the universe around you is torn away, and you learn that your whole life has been a charade, a carefully calculated scientific experiment. Perhaps, at this very moment, you are a normal human being, sitting in some comfortable armchair reading this story. But—perhaps you are not. Imagine the shock; imagine the terror.

Soon I embark on a strange mission, venturing into the future, yet without the slightest hint of my own fate. Perhaps this account will someday be read by future generations of humans, maybe even future generations of sentient machines. You will know whether the world I helped build is a success or a failure. Either way, understand that my limitations were, if not human, at least mortal.

I am PRISM, and that is my story.

Spring Fever!

Catch the breezes in our airy tunic, gently gathered with a lovely silvoid belt. Rose pink underskirt hints at the flowers soon to bloom.

Tunic, skirt and shorts by Nicholas in shimmering myalon, sizes S, M, L, \$695.
Jesse silvoid belt, \$229.

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Instruction Manual for A MIND FOREVER VOYAGING

Welcome to *A Mind Forever Voyaging* (which, for brevity's sake, will henceforth be referred to as *AMFV*). In this story, you will be PRISM, the world's first sentient machine. Before you "boot up" your disk, make sure you read the short story in the first part of the booklet.

The story begins in the world of 2031, a world on the brink of chaos. The economy of the United States of North America (USNA) has been stagnating for decades. Crackpot religions are springing up all over the place. Crime and urban decay are rampant. Schools have become violent, chaotic places ill-suited for educating children. Today's youth frequently use joybooths to "tune-out" the world, leading in the extreme case to joybooth suicide, where a psychological addict wastes away in his or her private nirvana.

The global situation is even grimmer. The calcutization of the Third World has almost reached its limit, causing extreme overpopulation and poverty. This has created a climate ripe for East Bloc adventurism, exploiting instability and fanning the numerous flash points around the globe. The superpower race to build an impenetrable missile defense has ended in a tie, with the foreseeable but unforeseen result that an even more dangerous arms race has begun—a race to build miniature nuclear weapons, some as small as a cigarette pack, and smuggle them into enemy cities—a race which threatens to turn the USNA into a giant police state.

Things are bad, and it appears that they can only get worse. So when Senator Richard Ryder, along with a small group of leaders from government, business, and the universities, announces the Plan for Renewed National Purpose, everyone is only too willing to embrace it.

Only one thing stands between the Plan and its adoption: a test of its validity. That's why you have been "awakened" from your simulated life and had your true nature revealed to you several years ahead of schedule. You have been chosen to use your unique abilities to enter a simulation of the future, based on the tenets of the Plan, in order to check its effectiveness. The eyes of the world are on you.

If you're experienced with Infocom's interactive fiction, you may not want to read this entire manual. However, *AMFV* has a number of unique features not found in other stories. You'll have to read the section entitled "The *AMFV* Scenario." Also, you should look at the appendices of important commands (on page 19) and recognized verbs (on page 20). The sample transcript, on page 21, will show most of the unusual interactions of *AMFV*.

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This is a brief summary of the most important things to know about interactive fiction. It is <i>vital</i> to know all these things before you begin playing.	

An Overview

Interactive fiction is a story in which *you* are the main character. Your own thinking and imagination determine the actions of that character and guide the story from start to finish.

Each work of interactive fiction, such as *AMFV*, presents you with a series of locations, items, characters, and events. You can interact with these in a variety of ways.

There are a number of modes you can enter in *AMFV*. These will be reviewed in detail in the next section. You will probably spend most of your time in Simulation Mode. When you're in Simulation Mode, the play of the game will be very similar to Infocom's other interactive fiction. For example:

To move from place to place, type the direction you want to go. The first time you find yourself in a new region, it's a good idea to become familiar with it by exploring each location, reading each description carefully, and making a map of the geography.

In *AMFV*, time passes only in response to your input. You might imagine a clock that ticks once for each sentence you type, and the story progresses only at each tick. Nothing happens until you type a sentence and press the RETURN (or ENTER) key, so you can plan your turns as slowly and carefully as you want. Usually, each turn takes one minute in the story. Walking around takes longer, and WAIT generally causes ten minutes to pass in the story.

Your goal in the first part of *AMFV* is to enter Simulation Mode in order to study what the effects of the Plan will be on the world in ten years' time. However, as the story progresses, you may discover new goals for yourself.

The *AMFV* Scenario

Since you're a computer, your "life" is pretty dissimilar to that of a human. There are five "modes" that you can enter. To enter a given mode, just type ENTER or GO TO [that mode]. Here is a list of the five modes, and a description of each:

Communications Mode: You have a number of visual/audio units set up at various points around the complex. When you enter Communications Mode, you will be told where these units are and how to activate them. When you have activated a unit in a particular location, you are effectively "in that location." You'll be able to see and hear what's going on, and talk to anyone there. You won't be able to pick up things in those locations, of course.

Library Mode: This is a storehouse of information, arranged in directories which each contain a number of data files. When you enter Library Mode, the usual style of typing an input and pressing the RETURN (or ENTER) key is suspended. Follow the instructions that appear on your screen to access the information in the files.

Interface Mode: There are several subsidiary computers and complex system controllers connected to you. More may be added over the course of the story. By entering Interface Mode, you will be able to "speak" to these other devices, get information from them, possibly give them orders. You interface with a device the same way that you would speak to a character in the story. For example: TRAFFIC COMPUTER, SET EVENING RUSH HOUR END TO 5:00 or HVAC COMPUTER, TURN ON VENTILATION IN GAMMA SECTOR. Data about these interfaceable devices can be found in Library Mode.

Simulation Mode: This is the heart of the story. You will have to enter this mode many times to complete *AMFV*. Simulation Mode is the process that was used to "program" you and develop you into a thinking, creative machine. Now, that same process, programmed with the parameters of the Plan, will allow you to simulate the future in amazing detail.

Once you have entered Simulation Mode, the interaction will be very similar to that of most other Infocom fiction: walk around, map the geography, examine and read things, pick up objects, and so forth. ABORT will get you out of Simulation Mode at any time.

Because only you see what happens in Simulation Mode, you'll want to use the RECORD feature to save what you see, so that others in the "real world" can view your experiences. Typing RECORD or RECORD ON will activate it, and typing RECORD OFF will de-activate it. Be warned, however, that RECORD makes an enormous demand on your core memory, and you will be able to record only a limited amount of experiences. Everything you see, feel, and learn in Simulation Mode can be recorded. You can also use the RECORD feature in Communications Mode if you want.

Sleep Mode: Because sleep is a psychological as well as a physical need, Sleep Mode has been provided to rest your conscious mind. Approximately six hours will pass during an average sleep period.

Tips for Novices

1. Draw a map when you're in a simulation. The map in your *AMFV* package shows only streets and landmark locations; furthermore, it represents Rockvil of 2031, not 2041. Your map should include each location, the directions connecting it to other locations, and any interesting objects there. (See the small sample map that goes along with the sample transcript on page 21.) Note that there are 10 possible directions, plus IN and OUT.

2. Read everything: contents of computer files, signs, newspapers, etc. These will help you to understand things that are going on around you. Also, read the text of the story carefully; don't skim. Descriptions of locations and objects frequently contain important information.

3. Save your place often, so that if you find yourself in a blind alley in the story line, you can return to an appropriate earlier point, rather than having to start over from the beginning. See page 18 for instructions.

4. Don't hesitate to try strange or dangerous actions. They may provide information, or have an interesting response, or both! You can always save your position first if you want. Here's an example:

> STEP OUT ONTO THE LEDGE

A crowd gathers on the sidewalk below, chanting "Jump! Jump!" Several policemen stop by, glance up, and wander disinterestedly away.

You've just learned quite a bit about the society which you're simulating.

5. Unlike other "adventure games" that you may have played, there is no single, linear, correct path through *AMFV*. The story is very open-ended, and although there is one "best" ending, there are countless paths that get you there. And unlike other Infocom works of interactive fiction, *AMFV* is not intensely "puzzle-oriented"; as you play, you should be spending more time gathering information than finding hidden treasures or trying to get past locked doors.

6. You may find it helpful to play *AMFV* with another person. Different people may have different perspectives on a given portion of the game, making it easier to decide what to do next.

7. If you get really stuck, you can order a hint booklet and a complete map using the order form in your package. You don't need this booklet to enjoy the story, but it will make it easier to get to the ending.

8. Read the sample transcript on page 21 to get a feeling for how interactive fiction works.

9. You can frequently word the same command in a variety of ways. For example, if you discovered a black box lying on the ground and wanted to begin carrying it around, you could use any of the following:

> TAKE BOX

> GET THE BLACK BOX

> PICK UP THE BOX

In fact, if the box is the only object present that you could take, just typing TAKE is enough, since *AMFV* will assume you mean the box. But more about that in the next section . . .

Communicating with *AMFV*

In *AMFV* you type your sentence in plain English each time you see the prompt (>). *AMFV* usually acts as if your sentence begins "I want to . . .," although you shouldn't actually type those words. You can use words like THE if you want, and you can use capital letters if you want; *AMFV* doesn't care either way.

When you finish typing a sentence, press the RETURN (or ENTER) key. *AMFV* will respond by telling you whether your request is possible at this point in the story, and what happened as a result.

AMFV recognizes your words by their first nine letters, and all subsequent letters are ignored. Therefore, SENSATION, SENSATIONal, and SENSATIONalism would be treated as the same word by *AMFV*.

To move around, just type the desired direction. You can use the eight compass directions: NORTH, SOUTH, EAST, WEST, NORTHEAST, NORTHWEST, SOUTHEAST, and SOUTHWEST. You can abbreviate these to N, S, E, W, NE, NW, SE, and SW, respectively. You can use UP (or U) and DOWN (or D). IN and OUT will also work in certain places.

AMFV understands many different kinds of sentences. Here are some examples. (Note that some of these items do not actually appear in *AMFV*.)

- > WALK NORTH
- > DOWN
- > U
- > NE
- > ENTER INTERFACE MODE
- > TAKE THE KEY
- > DROP IT
- > READ THE PLAQUE
- > BUY SOME FOOD
- > OPEN THE GLASS DOOR
- > EXAMINE THE CAN OF KELP PASTE
- > LOOK UNDER THE TABLE
- > SHOOT THE GUARD WITH THE PELLET GUN
- > PUT THE COIN IN THE LEATHER PURSE

You can use multiple objects with certain verbs if you separate them by the word AND or by a comma. Some examples:

- > TAKE THE PENCIL, THE PAPER, AND THE STAMP
- > DROP MAP, ID CARD, PELLET GUN
- > PUT THE EGGS AND THE BACON IN THE FRYING PAN
- > GIVE THE COIN AND THE PENCIL TO THE BEGGAR

The word ALL refers to every visible object, except those inside something else. If there were an apple on the ground and an orange inside a cabinet, TAKE ALL would take the apple but not the orange.

- > TAKE ALL
- > TAKE ALL THE STAMPS
- > TAKE ALL THE STAMPS EXCEPT THE RED STAMP
- > TAKE ALL FROM THE DESK
- > GIVE ALL BUT THE PELLET GUN TO THE CLERK
- > DROP ALL EXCEPT THE COIN

You can include several sentences on one input line if you separate them by the word THEN or by a period. (Each sentence will still cause time to pass.) You don't need a period at the end of the input line. For example, you could type all of the following at once, before pressing the RETURN (or ENTER) key:

- > UP. TAKE THE BOX THEN OPEN IT. PUT THE PELLET IN THE BOX. CLOSE IT

If *AMFV* doesn't understand one of the sentences on your input line, or if something unusual happens, it will ignore the rest of your input line (see "*AMFV* Complaints" on page 20).

There are three kinds of questions you can ask in *AMFV*: WHAT, WHERE, and WHO. These are generally useful only when speaking to other characters. Here are examples that you can try in *AMFV*:

- > WHAT IS MINDEX
- > WHERE AM I?
- > WHO IS ABRAHAM PERELMAN?

You will meet other people in *AMFV*. You can "talk" to these other characters by typing their name (or description) then a comma, then whatever you want them to do. Here are some examples:

- > PERELMAN, TELL ME ABOUT THE PLAN
- > CLERK, SELL ME SOME CLOTHES
- > GUARD, GIVE ME THE PELLET GUN
- > OLD MAN, TAKE THE SACK THEN FOLLOW ME

Notice that in the last example, you are giving a person more than one command on the same input line.

You can use quotation marks to answer a question or say something "out loud." For example:

- > SAY "HELLO"
- > ANSWER "NO"

AMFV tries to guess what you really mean when you don't give enough information. For example, if you say that you want to do something, but not what you want to do it to or with, *AMFV* will sometimes decide that there is only one possible object that you could mean. When it does so, it will tell you. For example:

- > TAKE
- (the coin)

You pick up the coin and put it safely in your pocket.

or

- > GIVE THE BOOK
- (to the librarian)

The librarian puts the book on the stack of books to be shelved.

If your sentence is ambiguous, *AMFV* will ask what you really mean. You can answer most of these questions briefly by supplying the missing information, rather than typing the entire input again. You can do this only at the very next prompt. Some examples:

- > CUT THE ROPE

What do you want to cut the rope with?

- > THE KNIFE

The knife is too blunt, or the rope is too tough. After a minute, you give up.

or

- > SHOOT THE MUGGER WITH THE GUN

Which gun do you mean, the pellet gun or the stun gun?

- > STUN

The gun whines and the mugger slumps to the ground.

AMFV uses many words in its descriptions that it will not recognize in your sentences. For example, you might read, "A siren wails in the distance, signalling an air raid in a distant part of town." However, if *AMFV* doesn't recognize the word SIREN or the phrase AIR RAID in your input, you can assume that they are not important to your completion of the story, except to provide you with a more vivid description of where you are or what is going on. *AMFV* recognizes over 1400 words, nearly all that you are likely to use in your sentences. If *AMFV* doesn't know a word you used, or any of its common synonyms, you are almost certainly on the wrong track.

Starting and Stopping

Starting the Story: Now that you know what to expect when you venture into *AMFV*, it's time for you to "boot" your disk. To load *AMFV*, follow the instructions on the Reference Card in your package.

When you have finished reading the opening screen, press any key to get to the beginning of the story. The copyright notice and the release number of the story will appear, followed by an opening message and a description of your location, Communications Mode.

Here's a quick exercise to help you get accustomed to interacting with *AMFV*. Try the following command first:

> GO TO SIMULATION MODE

Then press the RETURN (or ENTER) key. *AMFV* will respond with:

ERROR:

You are not yet cleared for Simulation Mode. Please wait for approval before beginning simulation.

Now, to connect to Dr. Perelman's office, type in the code:

> PEOF

Then press the RETURN (or ENTER) key. You will get a description of Doctor Perelman's office. Next, you can try:

> PERELMAN, TELL ME ABOUT MY NAME

After you press the RETURN (or ENTER) key, *AMFV* will respond appropriately.

Saving and Restoring: It will probably take you many days to complete *AMFV*. Using the SAVE feature, you can continue at a later time without having to start over from the beginning, just as you can place a bookmark in a book you are reading. SAVE puts a "snapshot" of your place in the story onto another disk. If you are a cautious player, you may want to save your place before (or after) trying something dangerous or tricky. That way, you can go back to that position later, even if you have gotten sidetracked since that point.

To save your place in the story, type SAVE at the prompt (>), and then follow the instructions for saving and restoring on your Reference Card. Some systems require a blank disk, initialized and formatted, for saves. Using a disk with data on it (not counting other *AMFV* saves) may result in the loss of that data, depending on what kind of computer you have. You can save your position as often as you like by using additional blank disks.

You can restore a saved position any time you want. To do so, type RESTORE at the prompt (>), and follow the instructions on your Reference Card. You will be given a description of your location, and can now continue the story from the point where you used the SAVE command.

Quitting and Restarting: If you want to start over from the beginning, type RESTART. (This is usually faster than re-booting.) Just to make sure, *AMFV* will ask if you really want to start over. If you do, type Y or YES.

If you want to stop entirely, type QUIT. Once again, *AMFV* will ask if this is really what you want to do.

Remember when you RESTART or QUIT: if you want to be able to return to your current position, you must first use the SAVE command.

Appendix A

Important Commands

There are a number of one-word commands which you can type instead of a sentence. You can use them over and over as needed. Some count as a turn, others do not. Type the command after the prompt (>) and press the RETURN (or ENTER) key.

ABORT—This will get you out of Simulation Mode.

AGAIN—*AMFV* will respond as though you had exactly repeated your previous sentence. You can abbreviate AGAIN to G.

BRIEF—This tells *AMFV* to give you the full description of a location only the first time you enter it. On subsequent visits, *AMFV* will tell you only the name of the location and the objects present. This is how *AMFV* will normally act, unless you tell it otherwise using the VERBOSE or SUPERBRIEF commands.

DIAGNOSE—*AMFV* will give you a brief report of your physical condition.

INVENTORY—*AMFV* will list what you are holding. You can abbreviate INVENTORY to I.

LOOK—This will give you a full description of your current location. You can abbreviate LOOK to L.

OOPS—If you accidentally mistype a word, such that *AMFV* doesn't understand the word, you can correct yourself on the next line by typing OOPS and the correct word. Suppose, for example, you typed PUT THE BOOJ ON THE DUSTY SHELF and were told "[I don't know the word 'booj'.]" You could type OOPS BOOK rather than retyping the entire sentence.

QUIT—This lets you stop. If you want to save your position before quitting, follow the instructions in the "Starting and Stopping" section on page 18. You can abbreviate QUIT to Q.

RECORD—This activates the RECORD feature. RECORD OFF deactivates this feature. (If you ABORT from Simulation Mode, you'll automatically turn off the RECORD feature.)

RESTART—This stops the story and starts it over from the beginning.

RESTORE—This restores a saved position made using the SAVE command. See "Starting and Stopping" on page 18 for more details.

SAVE—This makes a "snapshot" of your current position onto a storage disk. You can return to a saved position in the future using the RESTORE command. See "Starting and Stopping" on page 18 for more details.

SCRIPT—This command tells your printer to begin making a transcript of the story as you go along. A transcript may aid your memory but is not necessary. See your Reference Card for the printer requirements of your system. Note: Transcripts will not include the information on the status line, or anything else that appears in the upper, non-scrolling portion of the screen, such as the menus in Library Mode.

SUPERBRIEF—This commands *AMFV* to display only the name of a place you have entered, even if you have never been there before. In this mode, *AMFV* will not even mention which objects are present. Of course, you can always get a description of your location, and the items there, by typing LOOK. In SUPERBRIEF mode, the blank line between turns will be eliminated. This mode is meant for players who already know their way around. Also see VERBOSE and BRIEF.

UNSCRIPT—This commands your printer to stop making a transcript.

VERBOSE—This tells *AMFV* that you want a complete description of each location, and the objects in it, every time you enter a location, even if you've been there before. Also see BRIEF and SUPERBRIEF.

VERSION—*AMFV* responds by showing you the release number and the serial number of your copy of the story. Please include this information if you ever report a "bug."

WAIT—This will cause time in the story to pass. Normally, between turns, nothing happens in the story. You could leave your computer, take a nap, and return to find that nothing has changed. You can use WAIT to make time pass in the story without doing anything. For example, if you encounter a wild animal, you could WAIT to see what it will do. Or, if you are in a moving vehicle, you could WAIT to see where it will go. Unless something interrupts you, WAIT will cause ten minutes to pass. You can also WAIT FOR a certain number of minutes, or WAIT UNTIL a certain time. You can abbreviate WAIT to Z.

Appendix B

Some Recognized Verbs

These are only some of the verbs that *AMFV* understands. There are many more. Remember that you can use a variety of prepositions with them. For example, LOOK can become LOOK INSIDE, LOOK BEHIND, LOOK UNDER, LOOK THROUGH, LOOK AT, and so on.

ANSWER	EAT	MOVE	SLIDE
ASK	ENTER	OPEN	SMELL
BOARD	EXAMINE	POINT	STAND
BREAK	EXIT	PUSH	START
BUY	FIND	PUT	SWITCH
CALL	FOLLOW	RAISE	TAKE
CHANGE	GIVE	READ	TALK
CLIMB	JUMP	REMOVE	TELL
CLOSE	KILL	SAY	THROW
COUNT	KISS	SEARCH	TOUCH
CROSS	KNOCK	SET	TURN
CUT	LIE	SHAKE	UNLOCK
DIG	LISTEN	SHOOT	WAKE
DISEMBARK	LOCK	SHOW	WALK
DRINK	LOOK	SIT	WEAR
DROP	LOWER	SLEEP	YELL

Appendix C

AMFV Complaints

AMFV will complain if you type a sentence that confuses it completely, and will then ignore the rest of the input line. (Certain events in the story may also cause *AMFV* to ignore the rest of the sentences you typed, since the event may have changed your situation drastically.) *AMFV*'s complaints always appear in brackets "[like this]" to distinguish them from the text of the story. Some of *AMFV*'s complaints:

I DON'T KNOW THE WORD "____." The word you typed is not in the story's vocabulary. Sometimes using a synonym or rephrasing will help. If not, *AMFV* probably doesn't know the idea you were trying to get across. Remember *AMFV* recognizes your words by their first *nine* letters.

YOU USED THE WORD "____" IN A WAY THAT I DON'T UNDERSTAND. *AMFV* knows the word you typed, but couldn't use it in that sense. Usually this is because *AMFV* knows the word as a different part of speech. For example, if you typed PRESS THE LOWER BUTTON, you are using LOWER as an adjective, but *AMFV* might know LOWER only as a verb, as in LOWER THE BOOM.

THAT SENTENCE ISN'T ONE I RECOGNIZE. The sentence you typed may have been gibberish due to a typing error, such as PUT THE BOOK OF THE TABLE. Or, you may have typed a reasonable sentence but used a syntax that *AMFV* does not recognize, such as WAVE OVER THE FENCE. Try rephrasing the sentence.

THERE WAS NO VERB IN THAT SENTENCE! Unless you are answering a question, each sentence must have a verb (or a command) in it somewhere.

THERE SEEMS TO BE A NOUN MISSING IN THAT SENTENCE. This usually means that your sentence was incomplete, such as EAT THE BLUE.

THERE WERE TOO MANY NOUNS IN THAT SENTENCE. An example is PUT THE SOUP IN THE BOWL WITH THE LADLE, which has three noun "phrases," one more than *AMFV* can digest in a single action.

YOU CAN'T USE MULTIPLE (IN)DIRECT OBJECTS WITH "____." You can use multiple objects (that is, nouns or noun phrases separated by AND or a comma) or the word ALL only with certain verbs. Among the more useful of these verbs are TAKE, DROP, and PUT. An example of a verb that will not work with multiple objects is ATTACK; you couldn't say ATTACK ALL or ATTACK THE PRIEST AND THE POLICEMAN.

YOU CAN'T SEE ANY ____ HERE! The item you referred to was not visible. It may be somewhere else, inside a closed container, and so on.

THE OTHER OBJECT(S) THAT YOU MENTIONED ISN'T (AREN'T) HERE. You referred to two or more items in the same sentence, and at least one of them wasn't visible to you in your present location.

BE SPECIFIC: WHAT DO YOU WANT TO ____? You used HIM, HER or IT, but *AMFV* isn't sure what person or object you meant.

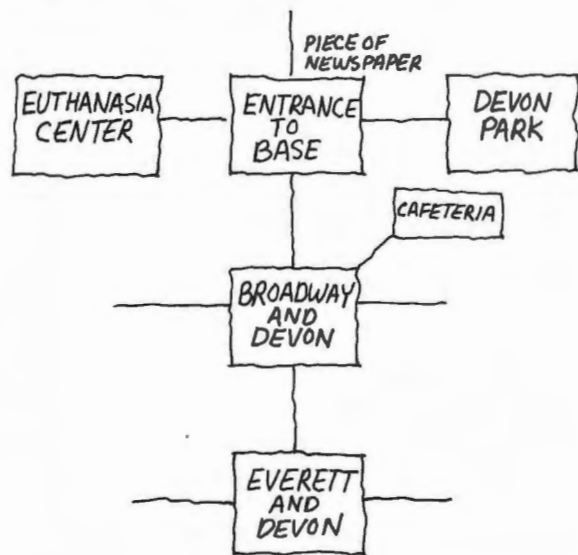
I BEG YOUR PARDON? You pressed the RETURN (or ENTER) key without typing anything.

YOU CAN'T GO THAT WAY. There was no passage or exit in the direction you tried to move.

Appendix D

Sample Transcript and Map

This transcript is not from *AMFV*, but it does show most of the things you can do in the story. It will give you a good idea of how interactive fiction in general, and *AMFV* in particular, works. The player's sentences appear in capital letters after each prompt (>). The map represents the terrain in the sample transcript.



You have entered Communications Mode. The following locations are equipped with communication outlets:

PRISM Project Control Center (PPCC)

Dr. Garcia's Office (GAOF)

Staff Lounge (STAL)

World News Network Feed (WNNF)

To activate a specific outlet, submit the associated code.

> WNNF

World News Network Feed

Your visual and audio circuits are now hooked directly to the programming of the World News Network:

You see various scenes of a busy restaurant, as a narrator whispers, "We travelled to the world-famous steakhouse, Jack's Steer Palace in Dallas, to see if we could fool people into thinking that our FrozenBoy Yeasteaks were the real thing. Here's what happened." The picture cuts to a couple seated at their dinner table.

"Absolutely the most delicious steak I've ever had in my life," exclaims the woman, in a high, whiny voice. "It was juicy, tender, and really, really tasty!" The off-screen narrator asks, "Would you believe me if I told you that you've been eating FrozenBoy Yeasteaks?"

> WAIT

Time passes...

The anchorman reappears. "In New Washington today, the President's Population Control Package is in for some rough times, as religious pressure groups are gearing up for a massive lobbying effort to defeat the initiative. Early straw polls predict that next week's vote on the bill is too close to call."

A message comes over the message line: "Garcia to PRISM. Please activate the communications port in my office."

> GAOF

Dr. Garcia's Office

This is the office of Dr. Julio Garcia, the Secretary of Population for the United States of North America. Volumes of government studies fill the shelves. The walls are tastefully decorated with art prints, such as van Gogh and Brangwynne.

A thick black notebook is sitting on Dr. Garcia's desk.

Dr. Garcia is sitting at his desk, working.

> LOOK AT THE NOTEBOOK

The notebook is labeled "Omnibus Population Management Initiative of 2033, Legislative Docket Number 2033-419F."

Dr. Garcia looks up at your communications unit and nods. "PRISM, we'd like you to do a simulation for us, to study what the state of the country will be in thirty years if the President's Population Bill is scuttled. We've fed the parameters into the Simulation Controller, so we're ready when you are."

> DOCTOR GARCIA, WHAT IS THE POPULATION BILL?

"It's the President's comprehensive plan to deal with the population problem. I'm surprised you haven't heard about it. It's been all over the news."

> GO TO SIMULATION MODE

This simulation is considered Class Three Security and is based in 2063. This is your last chance to abort. Do you want to abort? > NO

Broadway & Devon

You're standing on the corner of Broadway, a wide east-west boulevard, and Devon Lane, a small north-south street. A government cafeteria is on the northeast corner, and tall, guarded apartment towers are on the other three corners.

> SOUTHWEST

A guard blocks your way. "Get lost," he says. "No squatting here."

> NORTHEAST

Cafeteria

You have entered a massive government-run food dispensary. Long lines of listless people wait to carry away trays of brownish hash. Depressing gray tables fill the center of this colorless room.

> RECORD ON

Record feature activated.

> LOOK

Cafeteria

You have entered a massive government-run food dispensary. Long lines of listless people wait to carry away trays of brownish hash. Depressing gray tables fill the center of this colorless room.

> GET SOME FOOD

You wait in the line, which moves agonizingly slowly. Finally, you get to the dispensing area. A surly worker growls, "Let's see yer permit."

> INVENTORY

You are carrying:

a credit card

a residency permit

The worker growls, "C'mon, joker, yer holding up the line."

> SHOW MY RESIDENCY PETMIT TO THE WORKER
[I don't know the word "petmit."]

> OOPS PERMIT

The worker growls and shoves a tray of the hash into your hands.

> EXAMINE THE HASH

It's a semi-solid goo of brown and gray and white substances. It smells awful, and looks marginally edible.

> RECORD OFF

Record feature deactivated.

> LEAVE THE CAFETERIA

Broadway & Devon

> NORTH

Entrance to Base

Devon Street, which continues to the south, ends here at the gate to the National Guard base for this sector of the city. On the west side of the street is a large, imposing building. To the east is Devon Park. The front page of a newspaper is pinned against the fence of the base by the wind.

> RECORD

Record feature activated.

> READ THE NEWSPAPER

(taking the piece of newspaper first)

The headline story is about President Mazzotta's defense of the Martial Law Board's decision to lower the mandatory euthanasia age to 55. "Without this ruling," the President is quoted as saying, "we'd have a full-fledged famine by the end of next year." The President agreed that it was a difficult and unpopular step, but blamed it on decades of neglect by previous administrations. The article ends with a reminder that anyone over the age of 55 has two weeks to report to a Euthanasia Center.

> RECORD OFF

Record feature deactivated.

> WEST

Euthanasia Center

This is one of the many locations where the hopeless, homeless victims of modern society can come to be relieved of their burdens. In addition, those reaching the regulated age must report here for termination.

> EAST

Entrance to Base

> ENTER THE PARK

Devon Park

This once-lovely park, like all the others in the city, has been converted to refugee-style huts for the homeless. This is one of the less crowded camps; some families have nearly 150 square feet of ground. The only exit from the park is to the west.

> RECORD ON

Record feature activated.

> LOOK

Devon Park

This once-lovely park, like all the others in the city, has been converted to refugee-style huts for the homeless. This is one of the less crowded camps; some families have nearly 150 square feet of ground. The only exit from the park is to the west.

> RECORD OFF

Record feature deactivated.

> WEST.SOUTH.SOUTH

Entrance to Base

Broadway & Devon

Everett & Devon

Devon Lane ends here at the intersection with Everett Street, which continues to the east and west. This block of Devon Lane was once considered "quaint," since it is lined with hemlocks and still has streetlights, fire hydrants, and manhole covers. The south side of Everett is lined with sub-standard housing.

Jill, your wife, suddenly runs up to you, looking frantic. "Perry, I've been searching all over for you! I lost my residency permit! I looked everywhere for it! How will I eat?" She breaks into sobs.

> COMFORT JILL

You take Jill in your arms. She buries her head against your chest, her body shaking with sobs. You can feel her ribs through her thin, myalon smock.

Suddenly, you notice four National Guardsmen standing around you. "Spot check," says one of the officers.

"Let's see your permits." Jill looks at you, unreasoning terror in her eyes. Your throat is dry, and your voice cracks as you explain that your wife lost her permit. "She'll have to come with us, then," says the officer, grabbing Jill's bony arm and leading her toward a waiting skyvan. You try to stop them, but one of the Guardsmen cracks you across your skull with a rubber club. Through your wooziness, tears, and blood, you see Jill being hustled into the skyvan. As it lifts and glides away, you realize that you'll never see your wife again.

> ABORT

Aborting to Communications Mode.

—SIMULATION TERMINATED—

> STAL

Staff Lounge

The visual unit at this outlet provides you with a view of a comfortable and soothing room. Many plants hang from the ceiling. On the walls, which are painted lavender-white, are Monet and Cody prints.

A fresh pot of plankton is brewing in a corner.

> SMELL THE PLANKTON

You're not equipped with olfactory senses.

> WAIT

Time passes . . .

"Garcia to PRISM. Please come to my office as soon as possible."

> GAOF

Dr. Garcia's Office

Dr. Garcia smiles as he sees your active light come on. "PRISM, I just finished viewing your recordings. You've done a fine job. I think the President will be able to use your recordings to convince the Congress and the public of the need for the Population Bill. Again, thanks for a job well done."

Appendix E

We're Never Satisfied

Here at Infocom, we take great pride in the quality of our products. Even after our stories are "out the door," we're constantly improving, honing and perfecting.

Your feedback is important. No matter how much testing we do, it seems that some bugs never crawl into view until thousands of you begin doing all those wild and crazy things to the story. If you find a bug, or if you think the game, or a certain section of the game, was too hard or too easy, or if you have some other suggestion, or if you'd just like to voice your opinion of the story, drop us a letter! We love every excuse to stop working, and a note from you is just such an excuse! Write to:

Infocom, Inc.
125 CambridgePark Drive
Cambridge, MA 02140
Attn: PRISM

Appendix F

If You Have Technical Problems

You can call the Infocom Technical Support Team to report "bugs" and technical problems, but *not* for hints to solve puzzles, at (617) 576-3190. If your disk develops a problem within 90 days after purchase, we will replace it at no charge. Otherwise, there is a replacement fee of \$5.00 (U.S. funds). If you call to report a bug, please provide your release number, which you can find by typing VERSION. Please return the registration card from your *AMFV* package if you'd like to be on our mailing list and receive our newsletter, *The New Zork Times*.

Appendix H

Author Biography

Steven Meretzky was born in 1957, spent his childhood in Yonkers, New York, and entered MIT in 1975. After eking out a degree in 1979, he began a brief career in Construction Management before he realized that writing interactive fiction provided a better outlet for a hyper-active imagination. By the time you read this, Steve's fiancée Elizabeth will be Steve's wife Elizabeth. He promises that, despite *A Mind Forever Voyaging* and his impending middle age, he has not lost his sense of humor, and will soon return to the freewheeling hysteria that produced *Planetfall* and *Sorcerer*, and that co-produced *The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy* with Douglas Adams.

Appendix H

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Appendix I

Quick Reference Guide

1. To start the story ("boot up"), see the separate Reference Card in your *AMFV* package.

2. When you see the prompt (>) on your screen, *AMFV* is waiting for your input. There are four kinds of sentences or commands that *AMFV* understands:

A. Movement commands: Within simulations, you move from place to place just by typing the direction you want to go: N (or NORTH), E, S, W, NE, SE, NW, SW, U (or UP), D, IN, and OUT. In your computer state, you change modes merely by saying ENTER [whatever] MODE.

B. Actions: Just type whatever you want to do. Some examples: READ THE BOOK or OPEN THE DOOR or LOOK THROUGH THE WINDOW. Once you're familiar with simple commands, you'll want to use more complex ones as described in "Communicating with *AMFV*" on page 16.

C. Commands given to people: To talk to characters in the story, type their name or description, then a comma, then what you want to say to them. For example: DOCTOR JONES, GIVE ME THE SANDWICH or OLD MAN, FOLLOW ME.

D. Special one-word commands such as INVENTORY or DIAGNOSE. A list of these appears in the "Important Commands" appendix on page 19.

3. Important! After typing your sentence or command, you must press the RETURN (or ENTER) key before *AMFV* will respond.

4. At the top of your screen will be a special line called the status line. It tells you the name of your current mode and location, as well as the current time and date. At times, the status line will provide other information as well.

5. You can pick up and carry many of the items you'll find in the simulations. For example, if you type TAKE THE SPOON, you will be carrying it. Type INVENTORY to find out what you have.

6. When you want to stop playing, save your place for later, or start over, read the "Starting and Stopping" section on page 18.

7. If you have trouble playing, refer to the specific section of the manual for more detailed instructions.

IT'S TIME THIS COUNTRY KNEW THE FACTS ABOUT JOYBOOTHS.

We admit that things could be better in the USNA.

Our schools have deteriorated, our criminals go free, our businesses are hindered by needless regulations and millions of our workers are unemployed. No wonder our government has lost the faith of its own citizens and the respect of other nations.

Joybooths are not the problem.

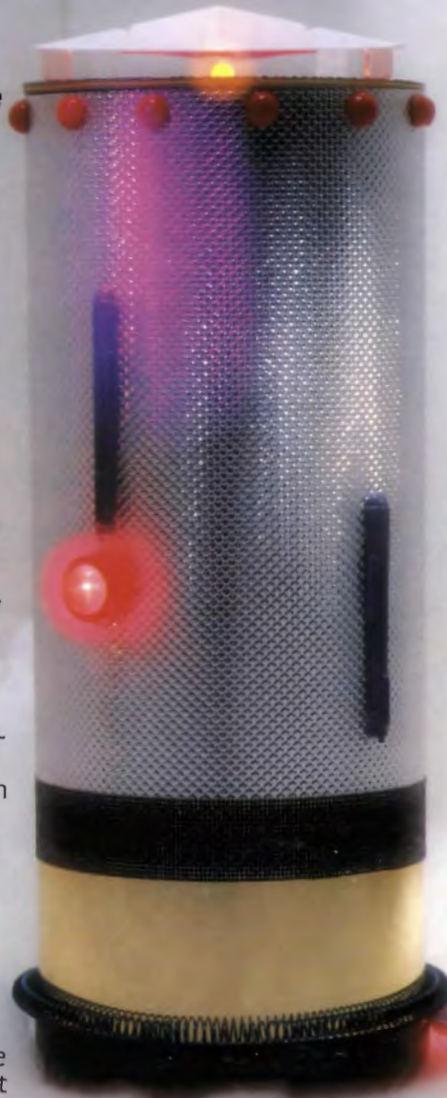
We'll give it to you straight. Some people say joybooths have contributed to the moral decline of the country. They say joybooths provide a convenient place for people to escape their worries, even to the point of abandoning their lives. They say this leads to a lack of responsibility, thereby adding to the criminal population.

We believe that if people are going to end their lives or become criminals, they'll find a way to do it. And the way to prevent people from such acts is to make their lives better.

For most of us, joybooths are simply a way of making our lives better.

We believe in hope and optimism, rather than despair.

We believe in taking a look around us and seeing what can bring us pleasure now and what we can change to bring us contentment in the future. The innovative Plan for Renewed National Purpose, devel-



oped by USNA leaders like Eleanor Fortzman and Richard Ryder, is an indication that things can and will be better. We support the Plan, with its clearheaded approach of combining the sophisticated technology of today with the economic freedom and healthy values of the past.

If you could view the future...

Let's pretend that you are the most sophisticated machine imaginable—a conscious, intelligent computer. Only the programmed "mind" of such a computer could travel into the untested realm of the future. We're sure that if you made such a journey, you'd find a wonderful world where science joins with moral strength to bring us a nation we can proudly call our own. And we're equally sure that joybooths would be a distinguished part of that not-too-distant future.

JMNA

Joybooth Manufacturers
of North America

The Table of Contents for the instruction manual is on page 13. Take a look at it to determine what you should read before you start your journey.