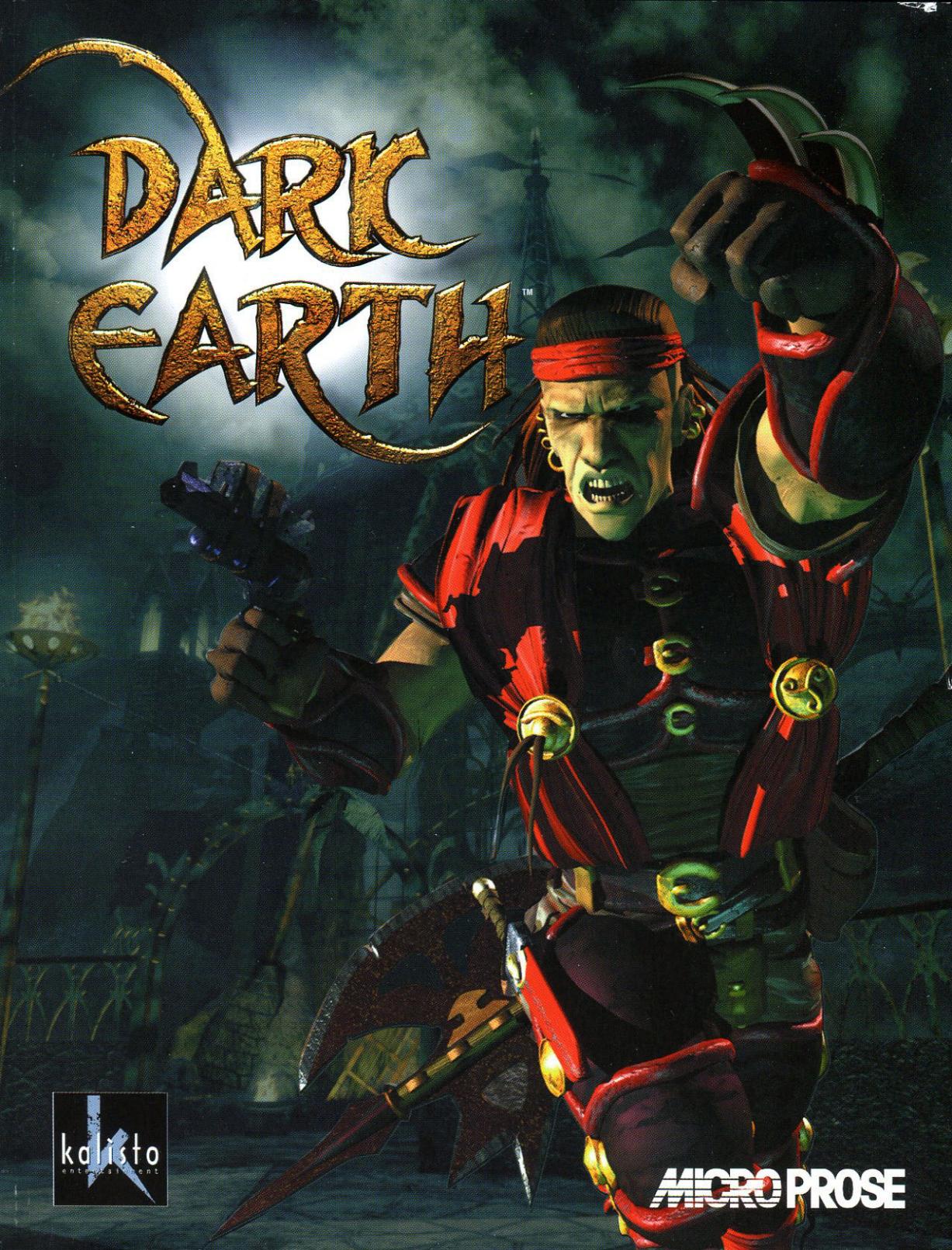
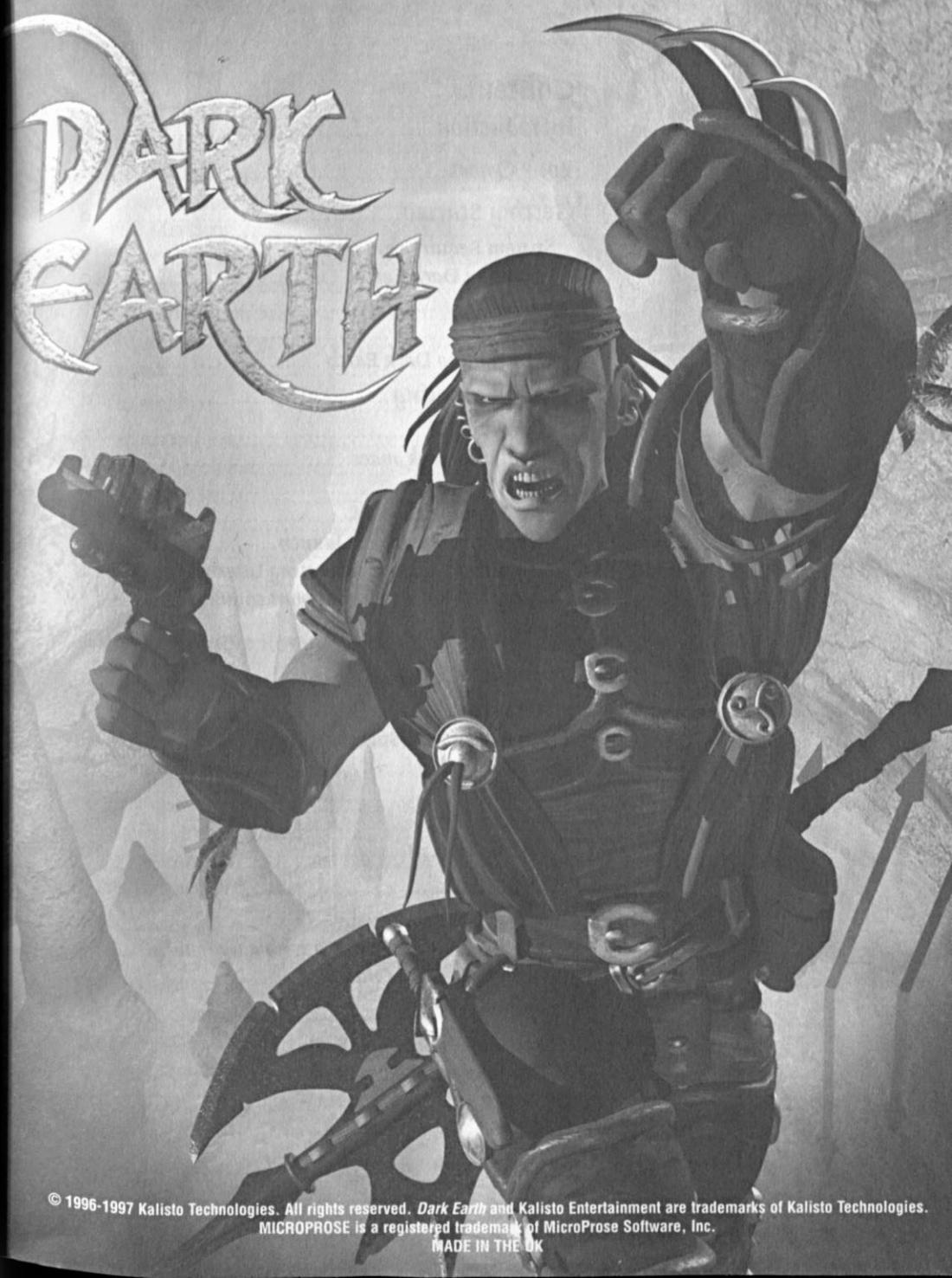


DARK EARTH



MICRO PROSE



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MADE IN THE UK

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Introduction

"... The tiny group finally managed to struggle to the top of the black ridge. Hulvar was the first to stop. Pulling back the heavy hood that hid his face, he let out a sigh of relief. As he turned to his two companions, his scarred face broke out into one of his rare smiles. "There!" he said, pointing to the plain that was now visible below. In spite of her wounds, Ylanna's face lit up. "The Stallite Dohymion!" she said in wonder, "we are back on the right path!" Behind her, old Ketoun was silent, but tears of joy rolled down his deeply wrinkled cheeks. For several minutes they stood, contemplating the sacred light of the Sun God piercing the layers of the Black Shroud, feasting their eyes on the dazzling walls of Dohymion. Suddenly, wild, inhuman cries echoed once more through the wastelands behind them. Hulvar grabbed Ylanna's hand and they ran towards the City of Light..."

Dark Earth is our Earth, three centuries in the future. But far from being the happy, glowing future we



might hope for, this is a ravaged, icy, merciless world. The days are perpetual twilight while the nights are shrouded in utter darkness.

At the start of the third millennium, a gigantic comet passed very close to Earth, spitting out hundreds of deadly meteorites that nothing on the planet could stop. The resulting cataclysm changed the face of the Earth forever. The sky became a dome of black dust, the air cold and thick; clinging to the lungs before crystallizing on cracked lips as they breathe out. Now, there is a permanent murky smog, with visibility hardly ever exceeding five hundred metres.

Nobody ventures out alone into the desolate landscape of Dark Earth. Death lurks everywhere. Treacherous ground gives way beneath careless feet, poisonous invisible clouds drift through the air and the deathly cold of the night can paralyse even the strongest. And then there are the creatures: the 'things' that creep and crawl soundlessly through the night, sometimes into the unwary traveller's camp; foolhardy voyagers will never again see the half-light of day...

And yet in this nightmare world, a few islands of hope and civilization still cling on to life. These are the Stallites, fortified cities built by the survivors of the cataclysm. These places of refuge, warmth and safety are blessed and protected by the Sun God. The Stallites are illuminated by miraculous shafts of light that rip open the black veil of the sky. The people of



the Stallites are united by the same religious fervour: the worship of the Sun God. Here, they have been able to relearn how day follows night. They search their memories to try to understand and use the strange devices left over from pre-Cataclysm days. And most importantly, they learn how to control, conserve and radiate sunlight in order to protect themselves from the all-embracing darkness.

On Dark Earth, light is the most precious commodity there is. Although the tragic story of the hail of fire and black rock that rained down on the planet has been handed down through legend, the inhabitants of Dark Earth are unaware of the real causes of the cataclysm. Many believe the catastrophe to be an ancient curse; a divine punishment.

Very few know the Truth.

The future of the planet is in the hands of Man, a fragile and weak creature caught between two battling forces that are beyond his current understanding.

For a full history of Dark Earth read the section at the back of this manual.

Your Quest

Join Arkhan, a Guardian of Fire in the city of Sparta, as he is swept from his routine life and daily duties to a new and terrifying ordeal. Ever-darkening plots of treachery and greed surround him as a fearful darkness envelops the city and an unknown evil threatens to transform him into a monstrous



creature. Arkhan must risk all to discover the hidden secrets behind the onrushing tide of darkness and terror. When terror stalks the very heart of the city he must learn who to trust and who to fear and only then, by realising the powers within darkness and light may he find a way to unlock secrets shrouded by the past.

Getting Started

System Requirements

Dark Earth runs on Microsoft® Windows® 95 with DirectX 5.

Note: 32 Mb RAM required in order to play Dark Earth High colour version.

Minimum system:

- Intel® Pentium® 75 or 100% compatible
- 8 Mb RAM
(256 colour gameplay with no background music)
- Quad-speed (4X) CD-ROM drive
- Windows® 95 compatible, DirectX 5 supported Sound and video cards
- 60Mb free Hard Drive space

Recommended system:

- Intel Pentium 120
- 16 Mb RAM
(256 colour gameplay with background music)
- Quad-speed (4X) CD-ROM drive
- Creative Labs AWE32 sound card

Dream machine:

- Intel Pentium 166
- 32 Mb RAM
(16-bit colour gameplay with background music)
- Hard Drive 300Mb free
- Eight speed (8X) CD-ROM drive
- Creative Labs AWE32 sound card

Installing Dark Earth

Note: DirectX 5 is a system requirement for Dark Earth.

To install Dark Earth:

1. Put Dark Earth CD 1 in the CD-ROM drive (with the label side up).
2. Open the Start menu and click on Run.
3. In the command line, type D:\SETUP.EXE and press Enter.
Note: If the CD-ROM drive is another letter, such as E:, substitute that letter for D: in the command line. For example, type E:\SETUP.EXE and press Enter.
4. At the first setup prompt, choose an option for installing the program on your hard drive with either 60 Mb or 300 Mb (recommended) and click Next.
5. Follow on-screen prompts to set up the game. Accept the defaults, or change them if you prefer. Since this process takes a few minutes, the on-screen display shows installation progress.
6. When the setup is complete, a prompt appears. Click OK to return to the desktop and launch the game.

Launching

Note: 32 Mb of RAM are required to play Dark Earth (32K) — High colour version.

To run Dark Earth from the Window® 95 Start menu after setup:

1. Click Start - Programs - Kalioto - Dark Earth - Dark Earth (256).
2. The monitor settings screen will appear. Drag the slider bars to set brightness, contrast, and colour saturation; then press Esc.
3. Note: The first Dark Earth launch will show the introductory animation. To see this again, select it from the Cut Scenes Menu.
3. The Main Menu appears. Click New to begin a game.

Exiting

To exit Dark Earth:

1. Press Esc to go to the Main Menu and click Quit.
2. At the Quit? prompt, click the check mark or press Enter to exit.

Uninstalling Dark Earth

To uninstall Dark Earth after setup:

1. Click Start - Programs - Kalioto - Dark Earth - unInstall.
2. The Uninstall program will run. When it has finished, open the hard drive with Windows Explorer, then click the Earth folder and drag it to the Recycle Bin.

Troubleshooting

Uninstall

If you encounter any problems during setup, uninstall Dark Earth before trying to correct the problems.

Insufficient disk space

If you have problems with the 300 Mb install please do the following:

1. Check the hard disk for available space.
2. Run ScanDisk and Disk Defragmenter.
3. As needed, backup and clear some files to get more free hard drive space.

If it is not possible to free enough disk space for the 300 Mb install, then install the 60 Mb version.

DirectX 5

Microsoft DirectX 5 is a system requirement for the game. If your video and/or audio card drivers are incompatible with DirectX 5, error messages will appear when you run Dark Earth. An example of a DirectX 5 incompatible driver message is, "Invalid page fault..." Messages such as this mean you need to install updated drivers to play Dark Earth.

Updated audio and video drivers can often be downloaded from the World Wide Web. The hardware drivers, originally packaged and shipped with the Creative Labs AWE64 card could, in some cases, result in incompatibilities with DirectX 5.0 games.

The latest DirectX certified AWE64 drivers can be downloaded from the Creative Labs world wide web site (<http://www.soundblaster.com>). If you do not have Web access or if your driver update is not available on the Web, please contact the manufacturer, your distributor, or Microsoft (<http://www.Microsoft.com>).

Poor Monitor Display

If the monitor display is unsatisfactory, try changing the settings. Within a game, press F10. The Monitor Settings screen will appear. Use the mouse to drag the slider bars to set brightness, contrast, and colour saturation. Press F10 again to return to the game.

Help Error Message at launch

This help, Dark_e.hlp, includes links to the Kalisto Internet Web Site. Even if you don't use the Internet, we recommend that you copy Internet access files from C:\Earth to your Windows® 95 System folder, so that Help works properly on your hard drive. The files to copy are Setbrows.exe, Inetwh16.dll, and Inetwh32.dll.

Help Error Message requesting Internet Browser

If you get a Help error message requesting a browser. You can set a browse path using Setbrows.exe.

Character moves without your commands

Make sure that your joypad (or joystick) is properly calibrated in Windows® 95 before you run the game (or disconnect your joypad).

Game Controls

Dark Earth has simple keyboard commands. Use them to control Arkhan, take things out of the Inventory, change moods (Onscreen Interface), and select Menu options. There is support for joypad play, but not for mouse play. The mouse works in Inventory, Menu screens, and the Monitor settings screen. During a game, left-click opens the Inventory and right-click closes it.

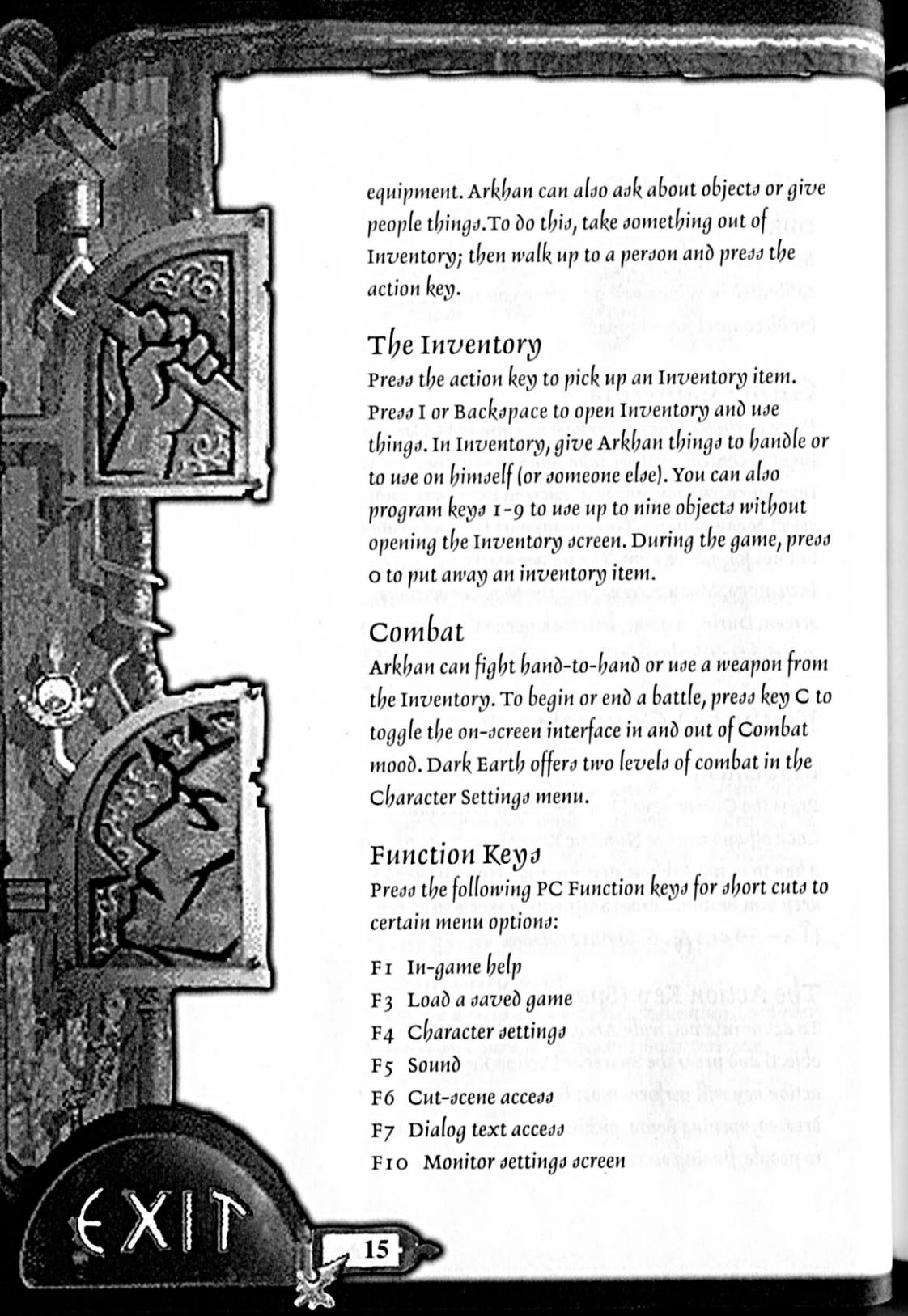
Keyboard Controls

Movement

Press the Cursor keys ($\uparrow \downarrow \leftarrow \rightarrow$) or turn Num Lock off and use the Numeric Keypad (8, 2, 4, 6). Tap a key to move Arkhan step-by-step. Hold the key to keep him moving. Press Shift with a movement key ($\uparrow \downarrow \leftarrow \rightarrow$ or 8, 2, 4, 6) to run or strafe.

The Action Key (Spacebar)

To act or interact, walk Arkhan up to a person (or object) and press the Spacebar (Action Key). The action key will perform most functions: getting dressed, opening doors, picking up inventory, talking to people, finding secret passages and operating



equipment. Arkhan can also ask about objects or give people things. To do this, take something out of Inventory; then walk up to a person and press the action key.

The Inventory

Press the action key to pick up an Inventory item. Press I or Backspace to open Inventory and use things. In Inventory, give Arkhan things to handle or to use on himself (or someone else). You can also program keys 1-9 to use up to nine objects without opening the Inventory screen. During the game, press O to put away an inventory item.

Combat

Arkhan can fight hand-to-hand or use a weapon from the Inventory. To begin or end a battle, press key C to toggle the on-screen interface in and out of Combat mood. Dark Earth offers two levels of combat in the Character Settings menu.

Function Keys

Press the following PC Function keys for short cuts to certain menu options:

- F1 In-game help
- F3 Load a saved game
- F4 Character settings
- F5 Sound
- F6 Cut-scene access
- F7 Dialog text access
- F10 Monitor settings screen

Command Keys

| | |
|---|---|
| Tab | Toggle the on-screen interface to Light or Dark |
| $\uparrow \downarrow \leftarrow \rightarrow$ | Move Arkhan forward (\uparrow), back (\downarrow), left (\leftarrow), right (\rightarrow) |
| Shift + \uparrow | Run forward |
| Shift + $\leftarrow \rightarrow$ | Sidestep to adjust position or dodge attacks |
| Spacebar | Action key. Walk up to a person or thing, then press |
| C | Change on-screen interface to Combat. Turn on and off. (Use the Ctrl keys as shown below) |
| Ctrl | Automated Combat. Turn Combat on and hold Ctrl to let Arkhan fight automatically. (First, open the Character Settings menu F4 and change from Normal Combat to Automated Combat.) |
| Ctrl + $\uparrow \downarrow \leftarrow \rightarrow$ | Normal Combat. Moves will vary if fighting hand-to hand, with a weapon, after contamination, and depending on your rival's distance. (Not available when Character Settings are set to Automated Combat.) |

Ctrl + Shift + ↑ Special attack move. Only works after contamination occurs. Although powerful, this move increases contamination. (Not available when Character Settings are set to Automated Combat.)

Esc Open Main Menu

P Pause game - Press P again to resume game play

Enter Interrupt dialog and close on-screen text box

F10 Open and close Monitor Settings screen

I or Backspace Open Inventory.

O Put any Inventory item away without opening screen.

1-9 Programmable Keys for Inventory fast access. Use top of keyboard, or turn Num Lock on to use the Numeric Keypad.

8, 2, 4, 6 Turn Num Lock off and the Numeric Keypad arrow keys will move Arkhan like the cursor keys ($8 = \uparrow$, $2 = \downarrow$, $4 = \leftarrow$, $6 = \rightarrow$).

Combat

Before starting a fight, set a Combat level, arm Arkhan from the Inventory (or let him fight hand-to-hand), and turn Combat on.

Setting Combat Level

Go to the Character Settings menu. Press ← or → to toggle the Combat level between Normal and Automated. The icon on the left of the screen is lit for Automated and dimmed for Normal.

Fighting (hand-to-hand or with a weapon)

Arkhan can fight hand-to-hand or use a weapon from the Inventory. You can also program keys 1-9 to choose from nine weapons without opening the Inventory screen. After programming the keys, press a key to arm Arkhan with that weapon. During a game, press O to put away any Inventory item.

Turning Combat On/Off

During a game, press C to turn combat on and off. The bulb on the Onscreen Interface switches to red when Combat is on. In Normal mode (default), you direct Arkhan's fight. In Automated mode, hold Ctrl to let Arkhan fight automatically. Attack moves depend on Arkhan's weapon, state, and his opponent's distance. For either Combat level, release Ctrl to move Arkhan with cursor keys (or keypad) as usual. Press C to turn Combat off.

Hint: Train with Zed and Phedoria at the beginning of the adventure. Training does not drain Arkhan's life force.

Joypad

Dark Earth has simple keyboard commands. There are joypad (or joystick) equivalents for most, but not for all keyboard commands.

Although joypads differ, they have certain common features, including Direction Pad keys (arrows), alpha keys (such as A, B, C, X, Y, Z), top keys (such as LS and RS), and often keys with names (such as Start or Select). Experiment with your joypad to determine how your configuration matches the interface in Dark Earth.

Movement (Direction Pad)

Press the Direction Pad ($\uparrow \downarrow \leftarrow \rightarrow$). Tap a direction key to move Arkhan step-by-step. Hold a key to keep him going that way. Press joypad A with \uparrow to run; press A with $\leftarrow \rightarrow$ to strafe.

Action key (joypad B or 2)

To act or interact, walk up to a person or thing and press the action key (joypad B or 2). Get dressed, open doors, talk to people, find secret passages and operate equipment. Arkhan can also ask about objects or give people things. First, take something out of the Inventory; then walk up to a person and press the action key.

Combat

Note: Before a fight, use the Character Settings menu to set a level of Combat, either Normal or Automated.

Arkhan can fight hand-to-hand or use a weapon from Inventory. To begin or end a battle, press joypad Z (or 6). To fight in Normal mode, press joypad C (or 3) and Direction Pad keys. To fight in Automated mode, press joypad C (or 3).

Menus

Press the joypad Y (or 5) to open the Main Menu. Use the Direction Pad to point to a menu option. Press joypad D (or X or 4) to open a menu. Press LS to page up in lists; press RS to page down. Press the action key to select or set options. Press joypad Y (or 5) to exit menu screens.

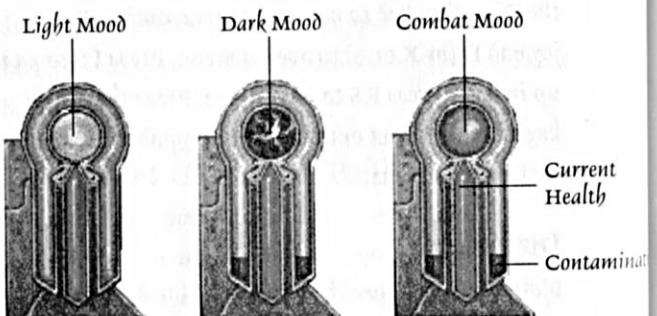
Inventory

Note: You must use the keyboard I (or Backspace) to open the Inventory.

In the Inventory, press the Direction Pad ($\uparrow \downarrow \leftarrow \rightarrow$) to select objects and icons. Press LS and RS to page up and down through the objects. Press the action key (joypad B or 2) to give Arkhan things to handle. Press joypad D (or X or 4) to have Arkhan use something on himself (eat; drink; read a document). Press joypad Y (or 5) to exit the Inventory.

On-screen Interface

The On-screen Interface shows Arkhan's current mood, life force, and contamination, if any. Use it to plan strategy and set three moods: Light, Dark, and Combat. The bulb colour changes with his mood. Press Tab to set Light or Dark mood; press C to set Combat mood. Red mercury located in the centre column indicates Arkhan's current health and life force. The outer column warns of any contamination that Arkhan may suffer. During combat, a small display appears on-screen for the opponent. A scuba tank will appear when Arkhan explores underwater.



Light Mood

(White bulb): Arkhan is his regular reasonable self. He takes time to think and to interact politely. Press Tab to set.

Dark Mood

(Black bulb): Arkhan is more aggressive and acts on instinct. This can be an effective way to search rooms or interrogate people. Press Tab to set.

Combat Mood

(Red bulb): Ready to fight. Press C to turn Combat on and off.

Red Mercury

Indicates Arkhan's health and life force. Drops if Arkhan is injured. Food and drink will help restore health and life force. If this drops to 0, the game is over.

Note: After a certain point, Arkhan may appear to recover mysteriously, as his life indicator regenerates after an injury. Be careful – his contamination feeds off such injuries to its advantage.

Injury

In event of an injury the Red mercury drops. If this drops to 0, the game is over.

Contamination Level

The outer column blackens if something poisons Arkhan. A race against the clock begins. He must find an antidote. After Arkhan is contaminated, he can use the special attack move (Ctrl + Shift + ↑).

Note: The special attack move aggravates Arkhan's contamination

Contamination Rising

Something is poisoning Arkhan. He must find an antidote. He can use the special attack move (Ctrl + Shift + ↑), but it makes contamination worse.

Opponent Injury

A display appears during combat and shows the opponent's health and life force. It drops as Arkhan injures his rival. If this drops to 0, that character is dead.

Scuba

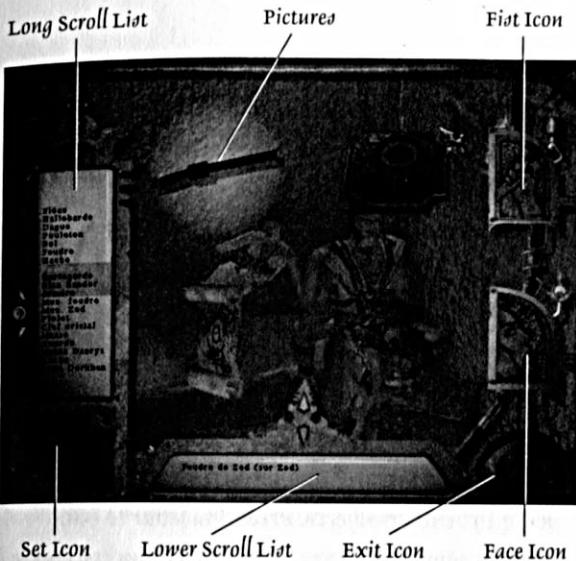
A display appears during underwater sequences and shows Arkhan's available air supply. If his oxygen runs out, the game is over.

Inventory

Arkhan can find and store things in the Inventory, such as weapons, food, drink, keys, and so on. To do this move Arkhan near an object and press the action key. If that object belongs in his Inventory, the Inventory screen opens, showing what Arkhan has collected. To open the Inventory screen at anytime, press I or Backspace (or left-click). Press Esc or I (or right-click) to return to the game.

You can take something from Inventory with the keyboard and/or the mouse. You can also program keys 1-9 for fast access to nine Inventory objects.

During a game, press O to put an Inventory item away.



Left scroll list

On the left side of the Inventory screen is a scroll list of weapon and/or objects. You can select directly from this list. Press Spacebar to hand the selection to Arkhan. Press Enter to have him use it on himself (eat; drink; read a document).

Lower scroll list

At the bottom of the Inventory screen is another scroll list, which supplies a description of the currently selected object. You can scroll to see more descriptions.

Pictures

Press F1 to display pictures from the Weapons or Storage Inventory. As needed, use PgUp and PgDn or click the scroll lists) to see pictures of specific



objects. Press the cursor keys (or click) to select a picture. Press the Spacebar to hand Arkhan something (or drag the picture to the Fist icon). Press Enter to let him try to use it on himself (or drag it to the Face icon).

Note: You can program keys 1-9 to prioritize pictured items for fast access.

Set icon



Press F1 (or click here) to set this icon to Weapons or Storage. The pictures and scroll lists will display that set of Inventory objects. Press Spacebar to hand Arkhan something. Press Enter to let him try to use it on himself.

Face icon



Select an item and press Enter (or click and drag it here) to let Arkhan try to use it on himself (eat; drink; read a document).

Fist icon



Select an item and press Spacebar (or click and drag it here) to put that object in Arkhan's hand. Arkhan returns to the game with that weapon, or object, in hand.

Note: During a game, Arkhan can ask people questions about something in his hand. Walk up to that person with the object and press the Spacebar.

Exit icon



Press Esc, or I, (or right-click, or click here) to return to the game without taking something from Inventory.

Programmable Keys



You can program keys 1 to 9 to prioritize up to nine Inventory items for fast access. Use either the number keys at the top of the keyboard, or turn Num Lock on to use the numeric keypad:

1. Press I to open the Inventory screen.
 2. Highlight the picture of an object, then press a key from 1 to 9. (Press O to cancel that selected object.)
 3. A number will appear on-screen next to the selected picture. During a game, press that number key to instantly arm Arkhan with that object.
- Repeat steps 1 to 3 above to prioritize up to nine objects in the Inventory.

During a game, press O to put any inventory item away.

Inventory Command Keys

Summary

| | |
|----------------|---|
| I or Backspace | Open/close Inventory screen |
| F1 | Toggle between Weapons and Storage icons |
| PgUp / PgDn | Scroll up and down a page of objects |
| ↑ ↓ ← → | Select a picture |
| Spacebar | Hand Arkhan selected item and return to the game with it |
| Enter | Let Arkhan use the object on himself and return to the game |
| Esc | Return to game in progress without anything |
| I-9 | Program these keys for fast access |
| O | Put away any object during a game |

Menus

During a game, press Esc to go to the Main Menu. To open a menu, press the cursor keys to select its icon then press Enter (or click on the icon). Within menus, use the cursor keys to select and change settings, then press Enter. Press Esc to return to the Main Menu without changing settings.

Note: The joypad also works as follows.

Press joypad E (or Y or S) to go to the Main Menu.

Use the Direction Pad D (or X or Y) to select options.

Start a new game from the beginning. See Launching.
Return to the game in progress.
Set available sound options.



Resume a saved game.

Set character shadowing and Combat level. See Character Settings.

Exit to Windows 95

Review text of game dialogues seen or heard so far for clues. See Dialog Text.

Start a new game from the beginning. See Launching.
Resume a saved game. See Load.

Set character shadowing and Combat level. See Character Settings.

Set available sound options. See Sound.

Replay cinematic animations seen in the game so far. See Cut Scenes.

Review text of game dialogue seen or heard so far for clues. See Dialog Text.

Return to the game in progress.

Exit to Windows® 95. At the Quit? prompt, press Enter (or click) to accept the check mark (✓) and quit. (Select X to go back to the main menu.) See Exiting

Save

You can save a game wherever Arkhan finds the symbol of the Sun God, the Rahal on a wall. Walk up to the Rahal and press the action key. Arkhan says a brief prayer, then the Save screen opens. Press the cursor keys (or click) to select a game slot, then press Enter to save the game.

If you do not want to save, select the Dark Earth icon (or press Esc) to return to the game. You can save up to nine games. Each time you save a particular game, its number increases by 1.

Preview

The first time you save, the Dark Earth logo will appear. After that, a preview screen will show where Arkhan is. To save the game, press Enter (or click the Save icon). To exit without saving, press Esc (or click the Dark Earth icon).

Game Slots

Select a game slot to save the current game. You can save a maximum of nine games. However, you can save as often as Arkhan finds a Rahal. Press the cursor keys (or click) to select a game slot. After the first save, a preview appears on this screen, so you can figure out where Arkhan is. To save the game,

press Enter (or click the Save icon). To exit without saving, press Esc (or click the Dark Earth icon).

Save icon

Press Enter (or click here) to save the selected game and return to the game in progress.

Dark Earth icon

Press Esc (or click here) to exit without saving.

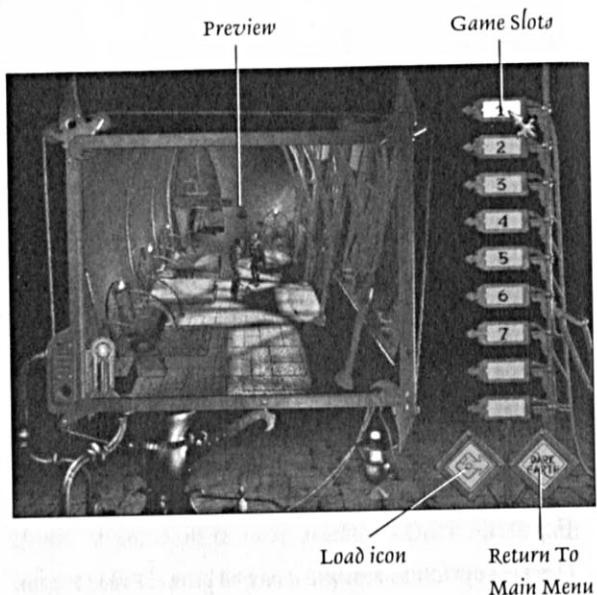
Load

F3

Use this option to resume a saved game. Press F3 for direct access.

Although you can only save a maximum of nine games at the same time, you can save a given game as often as Arkhan finds a Rahal. Therefore, the highest numbered slot on the Load screen is the last game saved.

Press the cursor keys to select a game. A preview appears on-screen, so you can figure out which game it is. Press Enter (or click the Load icon) to load that game. From this screen, you can press Esc (or click the Dark Earth icon) to go to the main menu without loading a saved game.



Preview

Preview the selected saved game to see where Arkhan is. If it's the desired game, press Enter (or click the Load icon). To preview another saved game, press cursor keys (or click) to select another numbered slot.

Game Slots

Select a numbered slot to resume a saved game. The highest numbered slot is the last game saved. Press the cursor keys (or click) to select a game slot. A preview appears on-screen, so you can figure out which game it is. Press Enter (or click the Load icon) to load that game.

Load icon

Press Enter (or click here) to load the selected saved game into memory and return to the game or the Main Menu.

Dark Earth icon

Press Esc (or click here) to go back to the game or the Main Menu without loading a saved game.

Character Settings

F4

Use this option to set Combat level and character shadowing details. Press F4 for direct access.

Combat Level (left side of screen)

Press ← or → to toggle the Combat level between Normal or Automated (the icon on the left of the screen is lit for Automated and dimmed for Normal). During a game, press C to turn combat on and off. In Normal mode (default), you direct the fight. In Automated mode, hold Ctrl to let Arkhan fight automatically.

Shadowing (right side of screen)

There are four shadowing options. The default, Auto, sets optimal character shadowing for your system. If your system allows, set detail level I (most realistic). If shadowing seems to slow play, reduce this feature to II (realistic), III (simplified), or Auto.

Press Esc (or click the Dark Earth icon) to go to the Main Menu.

Combat Level

Arkhan

Char
Shad
Lev

Return To
Main Menu

Arkhan

Show the figure of Arkhan. Notice how his shadow changes, as you select Auto, I, II, or III.

Note: Arkhan's appearance changes during the game.

Character Shadow Level III

Manually set the simplified level of character shadowing. Press ↑ or ↓ and Enter (or click here) to activate this.

Character Shadow Level II

Depending on your system, manually set this realistic level of character shadowing. Press ↑ or ↓ and Enter (or click here) to activate this. If this level seems to cause speed problems, re-open this screen and reset it to Auto.

Character Shadow Level I

Depending on your system, manually set the most realistic level of character shadowing. Press ↑ or ↓ and Enter (or click here) to activate this. If this level seems to cause speed problems, reopen this screen and reset it to Auto.

Dark Earth icon

Press Esc (or click here) to go back to the game or the Main Menu.

SOUND

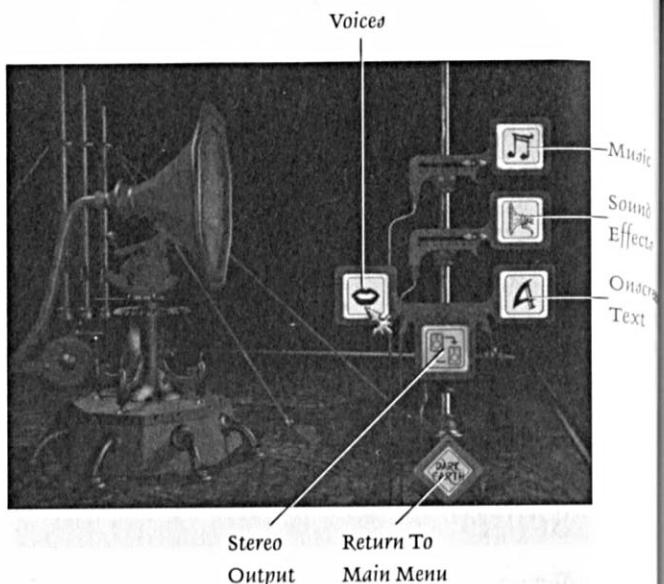
F5

If you have a sound card, use this screen to set Sound options. Press F5 for direct access.

Press the cursor keys (or click) to select an icon. Press Enter (or click) to toggle options on and off. To set Music and Sound Effects volume, press ← or → (or click and drag). Turn Dialog Text and Voices on or off. Also use this option to adjust stereo sound (reverse speaker output). Press Esc to return to the Main Menu.

Note: You can't turn both voices and dialog text OFF at the same time.

EXIT



Stereo output

Adjusts stereo speaker output for your PC. Press ↑ or ↓ to select this icon then press Enter (or click here) to reverse stereo sound from speaker to speaker.

Voices

Press ↑ or ↓ to select this icon, then press Enter (or click here) to turn the dialog on and off. When this is on, you can hear spoken dialog during the game.

On-screen Text

Press ↑ or ↓ to select this icon, then press Enter (or click here) to turn dialog text on and off. When this is on, you can read on-screen text that matches the spoken dialog.

Sound Effects

Click or press ↑ or ↓ and Enter to select this icon. Press ← or → (or click and drag the scroll bar) to increase or decrease Sound Effects volume. You can also turn Sound Effects off by moving the scroll bar all the way to the left.

Music

Click or press ↑ or ↓ and Enter to select this icon. Press ← or → (or click and drag the scroll bar) to increase or decrease the Music volume. You can also turn Music off by moving the scroll bar all the way to the left.

Dark Earth icon

Press Esc (or click here) to go to the Main Menu.

Cut Scenes

F6

Replay cut scenes viewed in the game so far. Press F6 for direct access.

Press the cursor keys (or click arrows) to preview cut scenes and find the one you want to see again. A number on the lower right corner of the screen indicates whether the cut scene is on CD1, CD2, or both. When you find the selection you want, press Enter. The animation plays on the full screen. Press the numeric keypad plus (+) or minus (-) to change the size of the on-screen animation. Press the numeric

keypad slash (/) to view cut scenes in high definition format; press the numeric keypad asterisk (*) to switch back to full screen. Press Esc to return to the Main Menu.

While viewing, if you want to interrupt a Cut Scene, press Esc.

Preview

Preview the selected cut scene and see a still of it. If it's the cut scene you want, press Enter. To preview another cut scene, press ↑ or ↓ (or click the scroll arrows) then press Enter. A number on the lower right corner of the screen indicates whether the cut scene is on CD1, CD2, or both. The cut scene plays on the full screen. Press the numeric keypad plus (+) or minus (-) to change the size of the on-screen animation.

Press the numeric keypad slash (/) to view cut scenes in high definition format; press the numeric keypad asterisk (*) to switch back to full screen.

Scroll list

Enter. To find the cut scene you want, press ↑ or ↓ (or click the scroll arrows) then press enter.

Dark Earth icon

Press Esc (or click here) to go to the Main Menu.

Dialog Text

F7

Review game dialog text so far for clues. This option only works after some dialog takes place. Press F7 for direct access.

To see all text for every character, press Home. To select text for a particular character, press ← and → until that person's picture and name appear, then press Enter (or click). The last dialog with that person appears in the middle of the list with previous and next dialogs before and after it. This helps put the phrase in context. Whether selecting one person or everyone, press ↑ and ↓ to find the dialog text you want. Press Esc to return to the Main Menu.

Scroll Left Scroll Up

Scroll Right

Scroll Down Return To Main Menu

EXIT

EXIT

Scroll up

Press ↑ (or click here) to find the dialog text you want.

Scroll down

Press ↓ (or click here) to find the dialog text you want.

Scroll right

Press → (or click here) to find the picture and name of a person. Then press ↑ and ↓ to find the dialog text you want.

Scroll left

Press ← (or click here) to find the picture and name of a person. Then press ↑ and ↓ to find the dialog text you want.

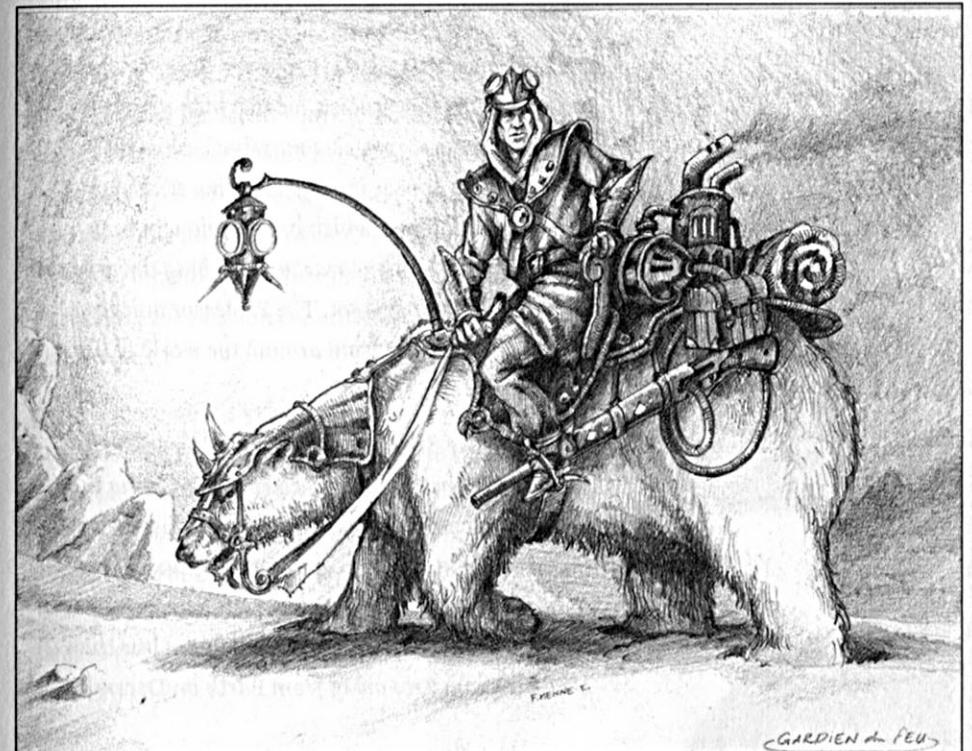
Dark Earth icon

Press Esc (or click here) to return to the Main Menu.

EXIT

EXIT

The History of Dark Earth



And then there was no light...

"... This is Troy McLurr for CNM World News. At the minute I'm in Louisville, Arizona, right in the middle of a high-risk area. The latest from the scientists is that the whole country will be bombarded by meteorites if - God forbid - Operation Guardian Angels proves unsuccessful. The atmosphere here is tense. People are constantly scanning the skies, waiting for the first sign of the comet that is being called by some 'The Black Moon' and by others 'The Wrath of God'. Many have already made their decision and fled to what they think are less exposed areas..."

On December 6th, 2054, Professor Erataux of the Institute of Stellar Studies, located high up in the French Pyrenees, spotted a massive 'unknown' celestial body appear during a routine scan of the skies. It was a comet which had previously been masked by the Sun and was now heading towards the heart of our solar system. The Professor quickly informed colleagues from around the world of his discovery.

On December 8th, twelve of the world's greatest astronomers held a hastily-convened meeting in New York to compare their calculations and voice their concerns about the path of comet Erataux. Their computers soon confirmed what the astronomers already suspected: the comet would pass less than 40,000 kilometres away from Earth on December

23rd. At that distance, it seemed inevitable that pieces of the comet would be drawn to Earth. A particularly unwelcome Christmas present!

On December 10th, heads of state of over thirty nations made their way to Geneva for a top secret meeting. The only information leaked to the world's press suggested that they were looking at a new plan to maintain world peace.

On December 12th, Operation 'Guardian Angels' went live. The plan was to equip thirteen space stations and satellites in orbit around the Earth with long-range nuclear weapons. These 'Guardians' were to destroy or divert any debris resulting from the passage of comet Erataux. Space shuttles packed with weapons and the technicians to install them were sent up to the space stations. Each 'Guardian Angel' was to be equipped with ten mega blast Thunderstrike stratospheric nuclear missiles. In order to calm public fears, an official communiqué was then released, describing the missions as scientific or routine maintenance.

But on December 15th, The World Times leaked the truth about Operation Guardian Angels and the potential dangers of the comet skimming by so close to Earth. Then the world's media machine flashed the story and provoked an unprecedented wave of panic. The crime rate soared, suicides increased and people flocked to churches, mosques, synagogues and temples of every kind.

Forced to acknowledge the danger, heads of state did all in their power to reassure their own people and quieten fears, assuring them that the Guardian Angels plan would be a complete success. In some countries, however, martial law was declared in order to maintain a semblance of calm. The people of the world were left to scan the skies with terror-stricken eyes.

The first meteors appeared on December 20th, automatically triggering the launch of thirteen missiles. Unfortunately, the haste with which some of the defence systems had been installed caused serious malfunctions. One of the missiles exploded on launch, completely destroying the Chinese Kwan II space station, while several others veered wildly off course. So, despite all mankind's efforts, the 'Sons of the Black Moon' hurtled towards Earth, destroying the missiles that flew into its path like moths into a flame.

Once it was known that the Guardian Angels could not avert disaster, panic gripped the peoples of the Earth.

Several fragments of the comet, the largest measuring over four kilometres across, crashed down onto the planet, carving out enormous craters, devastating the landscape and igniting gigantic firestorms. Colossal clouds of black dust shot up into the atmosphere. The air became chokingly hot and dry. Millions of people perished and millions more met the same fate in the weeks that followed. For the survivors, a new age of

chaos and desolation had just begun, the age of Dark Earth.

Climate

"... I made my way slowly over the glutinous mud, head hunched down, my dogskin cloak pulled up around my neck to protect my throat from the dust-laden wind. I kept my eyes fixed to the ground for fear of falling into one of those deep mud-ice ravines. But even so, I tried to walk faster. With only a few hours remaining before total darkness, I had to hurry back to the Stallite if I wanted to have the slightest chance of seeing the light of the Sun God ever again..."

The cataclysm caused dramatic changes in the Earth's climate. Besides the total destruction of the lands around the impact zones, the fires caused by burning debris and the giant tidal waves, changed some things for ever. The Black Shroud, the cloud of dust that now hung in the sky, made the Earth a cold, dark world. Away from the shafts of light, the temperature rarely rose above 10°C in the equatorial regions and could fall as low as -40°C at night in the former temperate zones. Storms of black hailstones regularly beat down on the caravans of nomads who brave the roads from Stallite to Stallite. The rain is also black and sometimes acidic, so exposure to it is kept to a minimum. Deprived of light, most plants could no longer photosynthesize, condemning many herbivorous species to death and reducing the amount of oxygen in the air. The ground is now covered by

powdery, grey dust; dust storms are frequent and suffocation is the fate for those careless enough to get caught in one.

One of the most fearsome dangers are the deposits of a mysterious bubbling, pulsating dark substance in the desert regions. It is said that a fate worse than death awaits any who touch this substance...

After the cataclysm, many dormant volcanoes became active once more, and from time to time blow out wreaths of smoke, clouds of ash and rivers of lava. Worse still, several nuclear power stations and waste processing plants were destroyed in the disaster, inundating vast swathes of land with radioactive dust. These regions and those with strong concentrations of the strange dark substance, have been christened "Deadlands" by the inhabitants of Dark Earth.

The Flora and Fauna of Dark Earth

"... The dog lay silently in wait, hidden among the clumps of grey-topped fungi. Now and again, a bird landed on one of the big mushrooms, tearing off a few rubbery pieces before flying away. The dog did not budge. He knew he had no chance of reaching them before they flew off. After a short time, however, its eye was caught by another movement in among the sparse vegetation: a fleeting glimpse of tawny-grey fur, scuttling between two small, blackish plants. His

nose began to twitch, his muscles tensed under the black hair of his legs. He waited a few more seconds, then sprang. His victim, a fat, furry rat, had no time to react. With a snap of the jaws the dog broke the rat's neck before guzzling the creature down whole. A meal, but not enough. He raised his head and sniffed before settling down patiently to await his next prey.

He had not done badly today, all things considered, but no doubt tomorrow he would have to find a new place..."



The cataclysm had dramatic consequences for all the Earth's flora and fauna. The fires and floods devastated certain regions of the world beyond hope of recovery. But the greatest damage to plant life was done by the cloud of residual dust that prevented photosynthesis. Only the hardiest plant species survived; algae, lichens and fungi, now became the main sources of food for humans and animals. The only remaining chlorophyll plants were those that could survive with little light and were dark in colour adding to the sinister air of desolation in the wild Darklands. A few Stallites built greenhouses where a few plants and flowers grew in their original form. On Dark Earth, the gift of a rose is a rare event, reserved for the privileged few.

EXIT

EXIT

As may be expected, the lack of vegetation wreaked havoc in the food chain. Every animal suffered terribly in the wake of the cataclysm. The large herbivores, such as horses, cattle, and elephants, were the first to die, in their tens of millions. Due to the shortage of prey, carnivores also died in great numbers. Omnivores were perhaps the ones who fared best, but still many of them died of hunger, cold, or disease. Many animals, such as birds, monkeys, apes and rodents, also died because the bushes and trees in which they lived were destroyed.

While some insects had an easy time living on wilting and rotting vegetation, the feast did not last long. However, thanks to their incredible ability to adapt, insects and arachnids quickly evolved with the new climate. Most of them now live deep underground. The ones seen most often in the cities were ants, spiders, and scorpions and certain mutant species are widely feared because of their deadly poison. In the first few years after the cataclysm, birds were able to survive in the stale air because of the proliferation of insects, but with no trees to perch in and no landmarks for migration, they were forced to change their way of life. Now, most of them live around the Stallites and settle on the buildings. Humans leave them alone, since birds have been made sacred by the cult of the Great Solaar. Travellers who look at a Well of Sacred Light from afar often see hundreds of birds flying endlessly round and round, as if trying to reach the Sun God.

Most animals have reverted to the wild and are ruled by their instincts. However, there are still some domesticated or half-tame dogs in the Stallites. Now and again, people will have a pet snake or even a cat. Some Stallites are famous for the tame bears owned by the Guardians of Fire.

The People

"... I am Ruel, Guardian of Fire in the Stallite Dohymion. With ten other men, I guard the North Gate. I have not been a Guardian for long. They gave me this job when Hulvar Regorn did not return from an expedition into the Darklands. But they say I am doing well. True enough, there is no-one quicker than I am at lighting the lamppoles that blaze around the city walls. While I was on my rounds yesterday, a small group of nomads arrived at the gate. I could see on their faces that their journey had been hard and that they were relieved to have reached the safety of the Stallite Dohymion. Their eyes rejoiced with the pleasure of light, their skin with the pleasure of warmth, their mouths with the pleasure of laughter. There and then, I understood how much more agreeable my life was than theirs. I lifted my eyes in silent prayer to the Sun God, asking him to keep sending us light and warmth against the darkness..."



Physical Appearance

The men and women of Dark Earth are mostly of medium height and fairly stocky. Their skin is fair (even the skin of African peoples is now markedly lighter) and their eyes are pale. Most people can see in the dark, at least to some degree and have developed strong resistance to cold and toxins. Their muscles are fine and firm and, though they eat little, their bodies store the fat to protect them from the cold. For the same reason, they are also hairier than their ancestors.

Their clothing is of varying type and origin, but rarely in good condition - life is hard and materials are in much shorter supply than in earlier days. Animal skins and furs are used, as are old, very hard-wearing fabrics left over from Before, wool, cotton and linen in the regions where these crops have survived. While the Lightdwellers, the inhabitants of the Stallites, can wear fairly light clothing, those who venture out into the Darklands, especially the nomad Wanderers, are swathed from head to foot in the strongest, warmest clothing possible. The Wanderers often wear rudimentary sunglasses to protect their eyes from the light, particularly after a prolonged period spent in the Darklands.

Political and Social Organization

Most of the descendants of the survivors have gathered for protection in the Stallites where they have built fortified camps, sometimes on the ruins of old cities. They are known as Lightdwellers. The

others, called the Wanderers, have chosen - or been forced - to take to the road, travelling from Stallite to Stallite in search of trade goods, ancient treasures, or simply somewhere to live. Most of them will find only a violent death at the end of a difficult life. Although the Lightdwellers are often wary of the Wanderers (some of them are banished criminals and others have returned from their journeys unnervingly changed) they need them for their supplies of building materials and other commodities. And admittedly, many Lightdwellers admire the Wanderers for their courage and adventurous spirit.

Organization of the Stallites

Though the Stallites are very different, they are organized in the same general way. The Stallites are surrounded by a protective wall, a wooden fence, or a stone wall, designed to protect the city from intruders or wild beasts from the Darklands. Besides their physical defences, the Stallites also enjoy the protection of the Mystic Guardians. Most of them are still buried in the ground, but some have been partially or completely unearthed. The Sunseers have declared Mystic Guardians to be sacred objects and it is forbidden for anyone apart from Sunseers to touch them.



In the middle of the Stallite stands the Great Temple, usually the nerve centre of a City of Light. The Great Temple is generally the largest and most impressive building. While the structure and shape of the Temples vary from city to city, all of them are brightly lit. During the day, a ray of light from the sky crosses the centre of the Temple. The faithful prostrate themselves before the Rahal, the symbol of the Sun, suspended in the light. The Company of the Guardians of Fire, a massive, squat building, is usually not far from the Great Temple, generally next to a well. Other, smaller companies are situated along the ramparts. The rest of the buildings and houses are arranged differently from Stallite to Stallite, with fields and orchards generally situated around the edge of the city.

Castes and Professions

The population of the Stallites is generally divided into five distinct castes or groups. As religion has taken a dominant place in human civilization, the Stallites are governed by priests, the Sunseers, assisted by their strongmen, the Guardians of Fire. Next in order come the Builders and the Providers, essential people who account for just over half the population. The Scavengers are the rabble of the Lightdwellers.

The Sunseers

The Sunseers are the priests of the Sun God or Great Solaar. Their prayers and offerings are given up so that Great Solaar will continue to smile on the cities of light. They also teach the Lightdwellers to worship the Sun God and ensure that everyone takes part in the ceremonies as befits their station. They are also the guardians of science and knowledge. They provide medical care and teach reading and writing. Their clothing, which may vary from one Stallite to another, is always light-coloured. It attracts light and reflects it back, illuminating the souls around it. Even more than the rest of the population, the Sunseers love quartz and crystals, using them as jewellery. The Council of the Seven, presided over by the Great Prôneur, rules the Stallite. It organizes food distribution, collection and cleaning expeditions outside the city walls and, when necessary, sits in judgment of the crimes committed within the Stallite. The Sunseers have absolute power inside the Stallite. The population accepts the fact (though not always gracefully) insofar as the Sunseers are the guarantors of light and there is nothing worse than the shadows of the Darklands.



The Guardians of Fire

The Guardians of Fire are the "right hand" of the Sunseers. They are strong, practical men, used to being out and about, whereas the Sunseers rarely leave the neighbourhood of the Great Temple. They are in charge of security inside the stallite and of keeping watch over the perimeter to ensure that no intruders can get in. At night, it is their task to keep the huge torches burning that light up the city, on the ramparts and in the most thickly populated areas. They light the huge braziers around which the people of the poor districts gather to seek warmth; they also supply torches and fuels to those in need.

A specialist branch of the Guardians of Fire, the Oilmen, press certain types of plants to extract a thick oil which makes excellent fuel. For instance, a bowl of roueg oil (from a black plant that is also used to make fabric) will burn for several hours. The Guardians of Fire are also in charge of the FaRaha, a system of mirrors set atop the highest buildings and which can send a powerful ray of light sweeping across any part of the Stallite and can also be used to signal to Wanderers heading for the city from the Darklands. Some of the most highly-placed Guardians of Fire still know how to use and repair electrical circuits. Others try to invent new ways of producing light and making it last. If there is a fire, the Guardians also act as firefighters.



The Builders

The builders are the workers and craftsmen of the Stallite. They construct and maintain all the buildings in the city, make sure that the city walls are sound, and make furniture and tools for the Lightdwellers.

The miners working in the salt, coal, and mineral mines are also Builders. They are tough men, used to danger and death because they often work in the Darklands. The Sunseers centralize and distribute the fruits of the labour of the Builders. Builders are obviously given some of the nicest housing and will have the best possible furniture and household goods.



The Providers

The Providers are the farmers and hunters of Dark Earth. They have the difficult but vital task of tending the few fields and orchards within the walls of the Stallite, raising cattle, finding game or even recovering food from Before

(cans, freeze-dried foodstuffs) out of the ruins all around. The Sunseers demand a contribution from each of the Providers, which is then redistributed to the rest of the population. The Providers can then do what they like with what is left.



The Scavengers

The Scavengers form the majority of the poor population of the Stallites. Some of them are simply too old or too young to be part of another caste. Others are incapable, or unwilling, to pursue any productive activity. The Scavengers manage to survive by sifting through garbage or scouring abandoned or ruined places to find anything they can use to barter for food, a warm place or a little light. Some Scavengers live by thieving, even though they will pay a high price if caught (being banished from the Stallite by the Sunseers is almost the same as a death sentence). Others risk volunteering for exploration expeditions organized by the Sunseers, which venture out of the Stallite and are sometimes gone for weeks.

Religion

The cult of the Sun God, Great Solaar, or Father of Light, is the central pillar of human society on Dark Earth. The only remaining islands of civilization all stand on sacred sites protected by the Sun God. In each of the Stallites, the Sunseers, the priests of the Sun God, have complete control over the lives of all the inhabitants. The Sunseers' creed is simple: the Sun God protects Mankind against the Darkness. He is the fount of all life, to be feared and respected. The Sun



God is considered to be an almighty being who sees everything that men do. He brings light and life to those who worship him, while those who offend him and his servants will be consumed by fire.

It is said that when men have cleansed and purified their souls (and the Earth), the Sun God will send his children to rid the world of the Black Shroud.

Darkness will be banished for ever more and the whole planet will be bathed in life-giving light. The symbol of the Sun God is a white circle from which descend three vertical bands, like rays of sunlight. The symbol is to be seen in various forms on all religious objects. The Sunseers shave their heads and paint them with the sacred symbol, the central band reaching down to the chin, and two lines either side down to the cheek bones. This is to show that the Sun God is master of their thoughts, sees through their eyes and speaks through their mouths. Because of their closeness to the Sun God, to whom they have devoted their lives, the Sunseers are considered to be holy and are revered by the other inhabitants of the Stallite. They regulate the lives of the Lightdwellers, distribute food and goods and deliver justice. Just one word from a Sunseer is enough for a man convicted of a crime to be banished to the Darklands with his entire family. This punishment, more often than not, means a death sentence.

The Wanderers are less religious than the Lightdwellers. Nevertheless, most of them would still

say that they believed in the Sun God. How else can you explain these great wells of daylight that pierce the Black Shroud? Many bands of Wanderers have a Mystic amongst them to help sustain the faith of his companions. And, whatever they may secretly think, the Wanderers need contact with the Sunseers too much ever to go against them.

Changing Times, Changing Ways

Owing to the harsh living conditions after the cataclysm, Mankind's mores, manners and principles have changed considerably. Deprived of the comforts and safety of technology, instinct quickly took over. Only the hardiest were able to survive the catastrophes, the diseases, the scarcity of oxygen and the food shortages. In this wild, savage, unforgiving environment, men became hardened. If need be, they can be merciless. But they have also learned to appreciate the benefits of togetherness and the value of human life.

Communal Life

A solitary existence is a precarious thing on Dark Earth. Men soon came to understand that, in order to survive, they had to share their knowledge and skills and live together to be able to subsist and defend themselves. Even the most unsociable Wanderers travel in small bands. The only exceptions are the lone hunters; a few mystics who have taken a vow of solitude and those who have been stricken with contagious diseases and head off alone to die in the

Darklands... Alone, that is, unless they find the mythical Clan of the Damned: a group of nomads whose members, according to legend, are all diseased, disabled, deformed, incurable, or crippled.

Life in the Stallites

Each Stallite is different. Some were built on open land, others on the ruins of pre-Cataclysm cities. The Sunseers, Guardians of Fire, Builders, and Providers often have solid stone houses. The



Scavengers, however, live in abandoned buildings, shacks, or old underground shelters. The Wanderers live in thick tents that look a little like Indian tepees; setting them up at every stop if they have not managed to find a safer, or more comfortable, refuge.

Food

The diet of the people of Dark Earth is considerably different to that of Before. The staple is the big mushroom that grows almost everywhere around the Stallites and in the Darklands. Soups and stews are also made from roots and the more palatable plants. For meat, rats, mice, snakes and some of the larger insects will suffice. Apart from the few cattle and pigs bred by the Providers, hunters sometimes bring back

wild boar, bears, dogs, or some other wild animal. This type of meat is rare and is reserved for special occasions - or for the most influential people. The Providers who tend the land are able to grow various fruits and vegetables, though these cannot be compared to those available Before. Unfortunately, there are never enough to go round, which means that only a privileged few ever get to taste them. To drink, there is water from the springs and wells, filtered through fine-mesh sieves. The water is often polluted, but the inhabitants of Dark Earth have become resistant to it over the years. Some Providers distill a strong alcohol from mushrooms and a few people are lucky enough to taste ancient drinks, dug up from the ruins of the cities of Before.

Conjugal Life

Given the short life expectancy - people rarely live beyond the age of 50 - and the high infant mortality rate, couples form at a very young age, around 15 or 16. Polygamy is thought to be quite natural and is encouraged by religion in some Stallites. Women, who are often just as hard-boiled as men, are paid great respect, and their maternal role is considered all-important. While they are unlikely to tremble with fear when faced with a band of marauders or an angry bear, most women are struck with terror at the thought of being sterile. On Dark Earth, sterility is a source of shame and a loss of social standing. The birth of a child is always greeted with pride and is an occasion for great rejoicing.

EXIT

Childhood

Up to the age of three, children are pampered and protected as much as possible from the rigours of the climate. They are the future of the human race and adults will do all in their power to help them. Despite that fact, infant mortality remains high.

A child officially reaches majority at 12. A religious ceremony is held, which places the child under the protection of Great Solaar and makes him either a full citizen of the Stallite or an active member of the clan; depending on whether he is a Lightdweller or a Wanderer. Once adult, the child must do his share to keep his family alive and become part of the social group to which he belongs.

Death

When a man dies, custom dictates that his body be burned so that his soul can go to join the Sun God. Leaving the body of an enemy to rot in the open air or, worse still, to bury it, is the surest way to condemn his soul to perdition. If the cremated man was righteous, his soul will rise to join the Sun God. If he was a heretic, his soul must roam the Darklands for ever. If he has sinned but has repented, he will have a chance to reach the Sun by being reincarnated as a bird. For that reason, birds are considered to be sacred and inviolable animals. To harm a bird, or eat its flesh, is a mortal sin; a crime against the Sun God. However, the Wanderers (and starving Lightdwellers) rarely keep this commandment, to the great horror of the pious.

EXIT

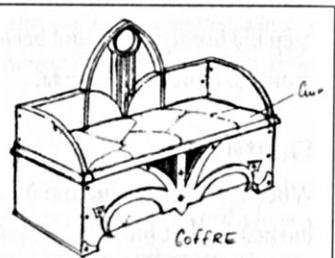
Education

The only school on Dark Earth is the school of life. However, those who can read and write are greatly respected, as are those who still retain scraps of the culture of the days Before. In the Stallites, and to a lesser extent in the Wanderer clan, there are often people who are prepared to teach children and other adults in exchange for food and lodging. The Sunseers, the guardians of knowledge, also teach reading and writing, but devote most of their time to the future members of their own order.

Art

Given the inhospitable conditions of life on Dark Earth, Art has become a secondary consideration, but it can still be found in the work of some craftsmen, such as goldsmiths and metalworkers. Most of the metal used has been recovered from the ruins of the cities of Before, and is worked on anvils or with blowlamps. Another plentiful material is bone. Animal or, more rarely, human skeletons are used to make jewellery, small decorative or useful objects.

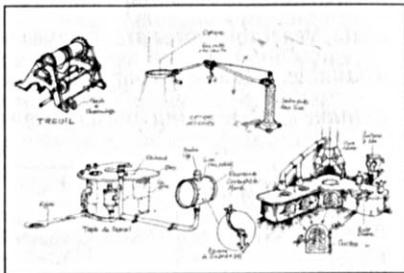
Music has also survived the cataclysm. There are flutes, harps or, much less frequently, musical instruments from Before that have miraculously



survived. The songs tell stories of the golden age of Before or the adventures of Dark Earth heroes. Horns are used to sound the alert, as their powerful notes carry far.

Crafts
Some of the most widely respected Builders are the glassmakers.

They work almost exclusively on religious artefacts for the Sunseers such as glass tables, windows and sun symbols. Given the amount of fuel and energy required to produce glassware, the glassmakers' creations are very highly valued. Crystal is also very highly prized by the inhabitants of Dark Earth. According to popular belief, crystals and quartz are the tears shed by the Sun God when the cataclysm occurred. Wood being rare, carpenters and cabinet makers have been replaced by metalworkers and welders. In most Stallites, metal is widely used. It is the most resistant material and the one that suffers the least deterioration. Chromed and polished metal are wonderful for catching and reflecting the light of the Sun God. The techniques of working with stone are a mixture of knowledge from Before and experience gleaned since the cataclysm. There are also bone sculptors who mainly produce small artefacts

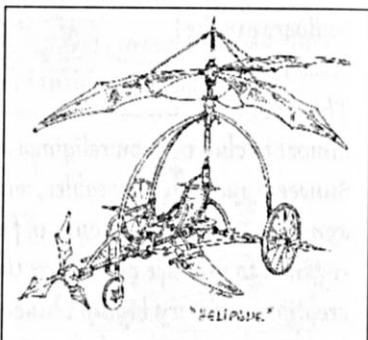


such as jewellery, knives, cups and so on. The craft of weaving also survived the cataclysm, but the materials are different from those used Before. Animal fibres are rare; the fleece of domestic and wild sheep are generally used to make blankets or for collars and coats. Vegetable fibres are the ones most freely available. A tough, stringy plant called ronge is used to make hard-wearing but terribly rough clothes.

Technology

Although some hyper-sophisticated equipment survived the cataclysm, the level of technology of Dark Earth has fallen extremely low. The secrets of how to operate the most complicated machines and devices were lost in one or two generations after the disaster, the survivors being too busy clinging on to life to bother about 'useless' skills. At present, only a few people still understand electricity and know how to maintain or repair simple machines. In Stallites all around the world, there are still a few inquisitive souls who seek to understand and use the almost magical technology of Before; such as electricity or the internal combustion engine.

Despite the presence of these relics of Before, daily life



has reverted to the Middle Ages. Fire is used for heating, lighting and cooking. Clothes are made from vegetable and animal fibres, tanned skins and salvaged materials (non-degradable plastic, metals).

Power is supplied by natural energy: wind engines, paddle wheels, steam engines, etc. Coal and mineral mines have been reopened and the work is often difficult and dangerous, but the energy that they provide is extremely precious.

Most of the vehicles are drawn by animals - tamed bears, dogs, oxen - but some ingenious inventors have developed wind-powered vehicles which sometimes work very well.

Trade and Barter

On Dark Earth, money does not exist, except in certain Stallites that have their own coinage. Trade is based on barter. All material goods are traded in this way: food, fuel, lighting, clothing, weapons... The objects with the greatest value are durable sources of light left over from Before: portable generators, electric lamps, oil lamps, etc. But these are often in the hands of the Sunseers. Firearms are also highly-prized, as is ammunition. Next in value are clothes, manufactured weapons (daggers, swords, crossbows), game and drinking water, foodstuffs from Before and everyday objects.

The Darklands

The Darklands is the name given to all the lands that lie outside the Stallitea, beyond the ramparts and the perimeter of the Well of Sacred Light. 98% of the Darklands are uninhabited, as life there is extremely hard. Only the hardest of wild beasts roam its desert wastes. But these lands are also haunted by the creatures, more dangerous than the most savage of beasts. The Wanderers, the men who travel the Darklands, linking one Stallite to the next, always have many terrifying tales to tell about the denizens of the 'land of shadows' that they have met or fought against. According to some of them, there are black fortresses in the Darklands, built and inhabited by extremely aggressive and violent men.



The Monasteries

Creatures are not the only population of the Darklands. Human refugees, called Monasteries, are tiny glimmers of hope in the darkness. These are small citadels, protected by strong defences (moats, ramparts, spikes, double gates) and armed men. In these Monasteries, communities of Sunseers are sometimes to be found, coming to the aid of travellers seeking sanctuary. A number of Monasteries are used as bases for expeditions to destroy the creatures and

shankcreatures. Also in the Darklands are buildings occupied by miners, in areas where the mines are too far from their home Stallite, and prison camps where life is particularly difficult.

Darkness and Light

On Dark Earth, life follows the rhythm of alternating darkness and light. The inhabitants of Dark Earth have mystical explanations for the cycle of day and night and other cosmic phenomena. For them, day following night, night following day is the materialization of the never-ending struggle between the Sun God and the forces of Darkness. Each night, many people believe that dawn will never come. But each day, the victorious sun reappears, and with it the life-giving light.

Inhabitants of Dark Earth see sunlight as a gift from their god. Its mystical character is reinforced by the violent winds that blow each day as the air warms up. The stars that can be seen at night through the holes in the Black Shroud are the distant flashes of battle between the Sun and Darkness. The Moon, which is only seen occasionally, is considered to be the messenger of the Sun God and sight of it is deemed to be a good portent for the Stallite over which it floats. When the first glimmers of light appear in the black dome of the sky, prayers are said to thank the Sun God for bringing light and heat back to his

people. And as night falls, all kneel before the symbol of the Sun God to ask his forgiveness for their sins and the return of day after night. The heat-stroke, sunstroke and loss of vision that befall the Wanderers who are not used to the light of the Stallites are interpreted as mystical signs. That is how the Sun God tests the Wanderers who dare to step into his sacred light. Those who are able to protect themselves from the effects of sunlight are accepted by the Sunseers and are then allowed to become Lightdwellers.

Technical Assistance

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3. Your Windows[®] version
4. How much memory you have
5. The exact error message reported (if any)
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9. Version of DirectX drivers
10. Total RAM installed in your computer

MSD Report

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```
copy d:\other\msd\msd.exe c:\windows\command
```

EXIT

EXIT

To generate your MSD report, first exit Windows 3.x or '95 and place a spare formatted floppy disk in drive A: and type:

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You can then print this report or send the disc to MicroProse (should this be required).

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