

Apple][plus • 48K RAM DOS 3.3 • 64K RAM PRODOS

Realm

Rays of Nightmare

A Retro Adventure Game

Realm

Rays of Nightmare

By **Daniel Gordon**

© Daniel Gordon, 2021, release 1.1.1

Cover: Stylized representation of a pyramid gate, similar to the map sprite.

The gardener hath gathered up this autumn's leaves. Who shall see them again, or who wot of them? And who shall say what hath befallen in the days of long ago?

- Lord Dunsany

A STRANGE LETTER

In your wanderings, you come upon a lone orc, apparently under some kindly enchantment. He presents you with a note from his lord:

“I am Xavier Francis, eighteenth Baron Lemphocym. I faithfully serve the High King in the west, who sits even now, it may be, on the throne of Castle Trueblood, surrounded and besieged.

But I am no longer in the realm of Arrinea. I dwell in unpeopled Fonkrakis, seeking a means to stop the nightmares of Mordock, whose dark arts are now so potent, that all he dreams is made real, and monsters, crawling up out of nitrous caverns, trouble all the realms.

Mordock! The talented Archwizard of my grandfather's day. Spurned by the Lady Leothria, he descended into forbidden knowledge and madness, until finally he learned the secrets of the Pyramid Gates, created ages ago in the time of legend. An intricate key of precious metal admits the visitor to the inner pyramid, by arts so strange, that after passing through, he cannot recall the mode of passage. But once inside, even stranger arts speed him to other realms, by means of a colored prism of glass, set upon a tall pedestal shimmering with spectral light. My own Archwizard believes this prism channels the motive force of the dreams of Men, confounding the boundaries that separate nightmare from reality.

Forty years ago, my Arcane Council and I discovered scribbled parchments, left behind by Mordock, before his disappearance. Laboring long over the notes of the one-time genius, we found a complete set of keys and prisms in

a secret chamber, apparent products of an early experiment. We judged that while these prototypes are flawed, they are nonetheless operable, and might be used to lead a force of arms through the Pyramid Gates, to vanquish the nightmare dreamer. And so, taking my leave of the High King, I led a strong army into the realms beyond.

In cryptic Wornoth we found him, in an ethereal sea of everlasting night, filled with deadly spectres. At its center stands the Iron Tower, the stronghold of Mordock, and from its gates issued Wraith Lords, and our assault was turned back. Retreating to unpeopled Fonkrakis, we came to the abandoned Black Fortress, built long ago by they who built the Pyramid Gates. By the strength of this place we have survived, and I have lordship in Fonkrakis. But in the early days of the war, the Pyramid devices were taken, and so we are trapped here.

Now rumor has to come to us that intricate devices of precious metal, and prisms of colored glass, have been seen, even in Arrinea. The beasts that took them kept them as treasure, and this treasure has changed hands many times, and moved from place to place by many paths. For the enemy sends forth the rays of nightmare at will, no longer needing any device, and the creatures of nightmare move freely among all the realms.

We have a plan, but I am grown old, and the Arcane Council is grown old, and our time is past. We need new heroes to make Arrinea once again the realm of peaceful dreams. Find the key to the Fonkrakis gate, find the prism and put it on the pedestal there, and find me in the Black Fortress!”

The friendly orc gives you a bound document, prepared by the arcane council. He says it contains everything they dare put in writing. The rest you will have to discover along the way, or when you reach the Black Fortress. As he turns to leave, he remembers something, and from his pocket he produces a smoothly polished stone. Handing it to you, he says: “Here is the surfacing stone.”

PAGES FROM THE ARCANES COUNCIL FOLLOW

Preparing for the Quest

The following “configuration” guidance is not understood by the council, but we have divined that it is important to the quest.

CONFIGURATION

First decide whether to use DOS 3.3 or ProDOS. If you are limited to using 5.25” floppy disks, or only have 48K, you must use DOS 3.3. Otherwise ProDOS is highly recommended.

Graphics are best viewed using a color monitor based on cathode ray tube technology¹. Modern display technology will give an approximation of what was intended, but will look subtly wrong.

DOS 3.3

The DOS 3.3 version is distributed on four 5.25” floppy disks. Start by booting the setup disk. Use the CONFIGURE menu to assign each disk to a particular drive. The more drives you have, the less disk swapping you will have to do. The master disk and the setup disk should always use drive 1. In the typical two drive configuration, it is probably most convenient to set the monster disk to use drive 2.

You will also be led through matching program pauses with the speed of your vintage computer or emulator, by trying different loop counts. On a vintage machine try 0, on an emulator running full speed try 50000. This helps with displayed items, but not sound. Sound will only be

¹ The AppleWin emulator can be set to mimic a color CRT.

played correctly on a vintage computer, or on an emulator that slows down automatically for the speaker². You can experiment with trading off emulator speed for sound fidelity as you play the game, but remember to reconfigure the pauses whenever the emulator speed changes.

Once you accept the configuration, it will be saved to both setup and master disks, so you may need to do some disk swapping.

ProDOS

The ProDOS version is distributed on a single 3.5" floppy disk. Boot from this disk, and use the CONFIGURE menu to adjust program pauses (see above). You will be prompted to save the configuration when finished.

If you want to use a hard disk, copy the REALM directory to the hard disk. To run the game on the hard disk type

```
RUN REALM/START.REALM
```

GENERATE THE PARTY

Select GENERATE A PARTY. You will be led through selecting the class, race, and abilities of the four members.

Character Classes

Fighters are proficient with all weapons and armor, and can take the most punishment, but cannot cast any spells.

Wizards are the least proficient at fighting with weapons and armor, but have the mightiest arsenal of spells. They

² The Virtual][emulator has this facility.

cannot wear armor heavier than leather, but are the only class that can use wands and staves.

Clerics are master healers, and powerful clerics can even raise the dead. They are somewhat better fighters than wizards. Only clerics can use rods and amulets.

Thieves are, well, thieves. They have a good chance of successfully stealing from the merchants you will find in towns. They are fair fighters, but cannot wear armor heavier than leather.

Monks are rigorously trained in bare-handed combat. They deliver light blows very rapidly. They cannot wear armor heavier than leather. They can learn a few cleric spells, have some skill at theft, and get an agility bonus.

Paladins are nearly the equal of the fighter in combat, but their religious knowledge also allows them to cast limited cleric spells. They can wield a special sword called a HOLY BLADE, which can dispel the undead.

Rangers are good fighters, with enough arcane knowledge to cast limited wizard spells.

Character Races

Dwarves are tough, and are at home in subterranean places. They can spot traps in dungeons. Cannot be clerics, monks, paladins, or wizards.

Elves are intelligent, and natural spell casters. Their spells seldom fail. Cannot be clerics, paladins, or thieves.

Hobbits are agile, and unobtrusive. They get a bonus when attempting to steal. Cannot be monks, paladins, rangers, or wizards.

Humans are both intelligent and charismatic, but have no other special advantages. Can be any class.

Character Abilities

Strength affects damage done with weapons.

Intelligence affects the wizard spells you can learn, and also affects success at stealing.

Wisdom affects the cleric spells you can learn, helps prevent spells and magic items from wearing out, and reduces the chance of spell failure.

Agility affects the ability to land hits with weapons, and the ability to steal.

Charisma affects prices you can negotiate with merchants, and the chances of hearing something useful at the pub.

ENTER THE GAME

DOS 3.3

If using DOS 3.3, a party must be deployed before entering the game. When you deploy a party, the data for the party is moved to the master disk. If there is already a party deployed on the master disk, it will be recalled back to the setup disk. Select option 3 to deploy the party you just created. After this is done you no longer need the setup disk, until you decide to try a different party.

Boot the master disk and you are underway!

ProDOS

If using ProDOS, there is no need to deploy. Press 3 to enter the game, choosing any party from the menu.

In the Countryside

You start out in the Realm of Arrinea, near the City of Ophenius, with Castle Blackmoore to the north, and the Dungeon of Darkness to the east. You can easily find the city and castle. You may have to look closer for the dungeon. Look for a small entrance at the base of the mountains. Until you get your party off the ground you should stay in this area. Right now you are vulnerable.

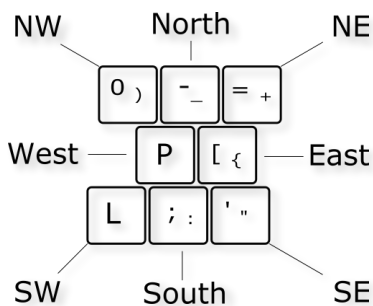


Figure 1: Movement

You can move around the countryside using the key arrangement shown in figure 1, and/or the arrow keys³. Notice you can move diagonally. You will see that there are different types of terrain, including fields, forests, water, and mountains. You cannot move across water or mountains. Later on you may acquire a ship which

allows you to cross the water, and certain spells and devices allow you to fly over the mountains. In other realms, you may encounter lava fields, or exotic terrain like ether. Other commands that may be issued in the countryside are:

- A) scuttle adjacent ships
- B) board ship
- C) cast readied spell

³ Up and down arrows are only available on Apple //e.

- E) enter town, castle, or dungeon
- F) fast status
- I) inventory swap
- Q) save game and/or quit to menu
- R) ready armor/spell/weapon/item
- U) use readied item
- X) exit a ship, or descend (if flying)
- Z) status
- Ctrl-S) toggle sound
- Ctrl-P) pray to the One

As soon as you start moving around, you will notice the word FOOD in highlighted text. This is a warning that you are running out! You can get it three ways: buy it in town, steal it in town, or find it in dungeons. Walking in the countryside consumes food the fastest. Taking advantage of diagonal movement can save some food.

You have to make a decision whether to use your gold to stock up on food, or buy better weapons and armor. If you have spell casters, it is probably worth visiting the library or temple, as the fee is not large. If you have a thief this is the time where he is most useful.

Never forget your objective is to gain access to the pyramid gates! They are located on three different islands around the mainland. But even after you find them, you will need the right key and prism to pass through.

PRAYERS TO THE ONE

The fate of your party is affected by your decisions, and by a deck of fate cards in the hands of the One. Each time you pray, the top card is removed, changing the outcome of the next preordained event, whether for good or ill.

In Towns & Castles

Movement in the town is the same as in the countryside, except here there are streets, walls, doors, and merchant tables. You can move into the same square as an ordinary townsman, but the guards will block your movement. To leave the town simply walk out the way you came in. You can't save the game in a town, but there are three additional commands:

- A) attack a town denizen
- S) steal from a merchant
- T) transact with a town denizen

Town denizens will never attack you without provocation, but if you attack them they will fight back, and the guards will pursue you and try to kill you. To attack, move adjacent to the target, and press (A) followed by a direction key.

You can speak with townsfolk by moving into their square and pressing (T). Most of them will simply say "hello," but occasionally they will have something unique to offer, including things relevant to the quest. Look for a slight difference in how these special townsfolk appear.

To steal or transact with a merchant, go to the merchant table, standing opposite the merchant, and press (S) or (T), respectively. You can sometimes tell the type of business by the clientele. If you are caught stealing, expect no quarter in this time of nightmare, the guards will try to execute you. Early in the game, you should try to evade the guards. To do this you must use diagonal movement, superior wits, and the fact that the guards cannot occupy

the same square as another denizen. If you escape the town your crimes are forgotten.

TOWN MERCHANTS

Food - the food shop simply sells food. Nominal price is one food per gold. You can try to steal from the food shop.

Pub - stop by the pub for Arrinea's famous mellow mead. You may hear some interesting rumors.

Library - for a small fee wizards and rangers can use the library and learn wizard spells. You are given magic units to spend based on level and intelligence.

Temple - for a small fee clerics, paladins, and monks can use the temple and learn cleric spells. You are given magic units to spend based on level and wisdom.

Weapons - Weapon shops sell the standard arms: dagger, axe, mace, morning star, longsword, broadsword, two-handed sword, and bow. You can try to steal.

Armor - Armor shops sell leather, chain, and plate armor. You can try to steal.

CASTLES

Castles are where you will find Arrinea's kings and lords, along with their servants, advisors, and armies.

Most castles have an alchemist, who, in addition to selling potions and magic items, can completely heal the party for a small fee. He can also resurrect a fallen character, but the price is much higher.

Castle Blackmoore is the home of the Sage, who can enhance your power as you gain experience.

You may discover other things in castles, things that we cannot reveal in these pages.

In Dungeons

Dungeons are the place you will see the most action, earn the greatest wealth, and find the most powerful magic. Dungeons have eight levels, starting at the surface, and proceeding down into the ground. When a monster sees you it will immediately pursue and attack, unless you are very powerful, in which case it may flee. Evading monsters in a dungeon is difficult, because dungeons usually consist of narrow corridors connecting small rooms. Dungeons also contain booby traps. As with towns, you cannot save the game in a dungeon, but there are three additional commands:

K) climb ladder

G) get treasure

S) use surfacing stone

When you enter a dungeon, you will descend on a ladder to the first level. To climb back out, simply enter the square with the ladder and press (K). When you find a ladder down to the next level use the same command to descend, but be wary! As you descend the monsters become ever more powerful. The ladder back up will of course be right where you came down.

You will find chests full of food or gold. To get what is inside, enter the same square with the chest and press (G). Occasionally you may set off a booby trap.

If a monster neither flees nor attacks, it is likely a special monster guarding a treasure trove. You should try to kill this monster (move into its square to trigger combat) and

get the treasure. This is the only way to get certain powerful magic items.

To help you survive in dungeons, we provided you with one of our most powerful artifacts, the surfacing stone. No matter how deep you are, simply press (S) to return to the surface. Remember, however, you cannot do this during combat. Also, we are not sure it will work in the dungeons underneath the Iron Tower.

HAZARDOUS TERRAIN

In addition to traps, dungeons can be filled with fire and lava. If you try to walk through these hot zones, you will be badly hurt or killed. As you gain experience, if you make frequent visits to the Sage, you can sustain more of this damage. There is also a cleric spell that allows you to walk through fire unharmed.

Combat

The combat system is turn based. You have the advantage of going first. Each character in the party can use the turn to

- A) attack,
- C) cast a spell,
- R) ready an item or spell,
- W) withdraw,
- P) pass,
- Ctrl-A) auto-attack

After each character takes their turn, the monsters take their turns. They can either attack, cast a spell, or use a special attack. Some monsters can apply status effects which cause the affected character to lose turns.

Notice that if you use your turn to switch weapons, you lose an opportunity to attack that turn. Similarly, if you prepare a new spell, you cannot cast it on the same turn. So before you enter a dungeon it is a good idea to make sure the party has everything ready for combat.

BATTLE LINES

The (W) command is a toggle that moves characters between battle lines. Every character starts on the front line. The front line characters can attack with melee weapons, but are also subject to attack from the monsters. By withdrawing, a character can move to the rear. Characters at the rear are safe from the monsters, but they cannot attack using melee weapons. They can still attack

using either a bow or certain spells. The rear is the perfect spot for a wizard. The rules of the battle lines are:

1. Characters cannot withdraw to the rear if it would leave fewer than two characters on the front lines.
2. If a character is killed, and less than two front line characters remain, the battle lines are reset.

There is a desperation move you may like to know: you can throw a dagger or axe from the rear, but if you do, you cannot get it back.

ATTACK AND DEFENSE

You can use elemental attacks to gain an advantage over certain monsters. For example, using a fire spell on an icy white dragon does bonus damage. On the other hand, a flaming red dragon is immune to such attacks.

Your armor defends you against standard attacks from the claws, teeth, and weapons of the monsters. You are also defended from this type of attack by certain spells and magic items.

Some monsters can cast spells, including spells that cause the victim to lose turns. Armor does nothing to stop these attacks, but certain magic items and spells can protect you.

Some monsters have elemental attacks, such as the fire breath of a red dragon. Armor does not stop these attacks, nor does any magic item. To survive them you must either be very tough, or rely on certain cleric spells.

Spell Catalog

Spells are divided into active and passive spells. An active spell, like PHANTOM ARROW, has a chance of being exhausted after each use. A passive spell, like DISPEL MAGIC, is cast automatically when you ready it, and continues to operate until you unready it. Passive spells are not exhausted until you unlearn them at the library or temple.

SHARED SPELLS

Sleep (active) - Put up to 3 monsters to sleep for 4 turns.

Stone (active) - Turn one monster to stone. Caster must be on the front lines (monster must be touched).

Paralyze (active) - Paralyze one monster for 4 turns.

Knock (active) - Use this spell to open doors in towns, castles, or dungeons.

Shield (passive) - This gives the caster protection that is the equivalent of plate mail armor.

WIZARD SPELLS

Phantom Arrow (active) - Shoot phantom arrows at one or more monsters. Number of arrows increases with level.

Fireball (active) - Shoot a ball of fire at one monster. Damage increases with level.

Lightning Bolt (active) - Shoot a bolt of lightning at one monster. Damage increases with level.

Ice Storm (active) - Rain hail on up to six monsters. Damage is fixed.

Radiation Cone (active) - Bombard one monster with withering radiation. Damage increases with level.

Bombardment (active) - Bombard up to four monsters with screaming meteors. Damage increases with level.

Disintegrate (active) - Disintegrate up to 3 monsters.

Doom Arrow (active) - This phantom arrow unerringly finds a vulnerable spot, killing the victim instantly.

Kill (active) - Utter a phrase that kills up to five monsters. Must be on the front lines to use.

Passwall (active) - With this spell you can pass through walls in towns and castles, but it does not work on the living rock of a dungeon wall.

Fly (active) - This spell allows the whole party to fly, passing over any terrain, at least in the Realm of Arrinea.

CLERIC SPELLS

Dispel Magic (passive) - Protects the whole party from spells, and adds even more protection for the caster. Can be cast by more than one character for greater effect.

Protection 1 (passive) - Protects against fire and ice. Allows you to pass through fire or lava unharmed.

Protection 2 (passive) - lightning and radiation

Protection 3 (passive) - life draining and psychic attacks

Protection 4 (passive) - poison and acid

Heal 1 (active) - Heal wounds

Heal 2 (active) - Heal wounds, more powerful

Heal 3 (active) - Heal wounds, most powerful

Raise Dead (active) - Raise a dead character.

Purge (active) - One monster is purged by fire. Damage increases with level

Condemn (active) - One monster is condemned, and struck by lightning. Damage increases with level.

Magic Items

Magic items are usually found in dungeons. Here we catalog some of the more well known items. There are other magic items we choose not to disclose herein. Some magic items are perpetual, and some can expended, in a way similar to spell exhaustion.

Enchanted Weapons are denoted with a plus sign, e.g., DAGGER+ is an enchanted dagger. These do more damage, and hit more often, then their ordinary counterparts.

Enchanted Armor is denoted with a plus sign, e.g., PLATE+ is enchanted plate armor. This is more effective at deflecting blows, and also causes your enemies' spells to fail more often.

Wands and Staves - No wizard should be without these. When your spells are exhausted you can always use a wand or staff for similar effect. They have power approximately equal to that of a third level wizard spell.

Rods are to the cleric what wands and staves are to the wizard. The FIRE ROD and LIGHTNING ROD are perpetual, while the powerful ROD OF RESURRECTION is expendable.

Legendary Swords have extremely powerful enchantments. A VORPAL BLADE has a good chance to decapitate a monster instantly killing it. A HOLY BLADE in the hands of a paladin can dispel the undead, and add to his armor. A DEFENDER adds the equivalent of plate armor to the wielder's defensive rating.

Amulet of Protection - Gives a cleric additional armor, almost the equivalent of enchanted plate armor.

Amulet of healing - Clerics can use this to heal themselves or another character. Can be expended.

Potion of Passage - Any character can use this. Pour it on a door or even a wall to open a way through. Can be expended.

Flying Carpet - If you obtain this remarkable treasure, the party can fly over any obstacle outside. This cannot be used in towns, castles, or dungeons.

Any item that is not a weapon or armor is readied in the weapon slot. For example, a cleric who wants to use the amulet of protection cannot attack with a weapon at the same time.

Monsters

Here we gather information to help prepare you for the monsters you will encounter. They are listed in approximate order of strength.

Orcs, goblins, ogres, trolls, cyclopes: evil creatures from the abyss, they will simply attack you with weapons. Trolls can regenerate.

Knights: corrupted human warriors, they have fallen into the service of Mordock.

Giant spider, giant scorpion: they attack with fangs and claws, and can deliver a poison sting.

Ice monster: from a nightmare on the cold, high peaks of Wornoth, they attack with a cone of bitter cold, or a freezing paralysis spell.

Roc: this giant bird attacks with beak and talons.

Giant: he can take a lot of punishment, and deliver mighty blows with his huge sword.

Disruptor beast: can attack with a sonic blast. There is no known defense against this attack.

Djinn: an air elemental, can attack with lightning

Efreet: a fire elemental, can attack with fireballs

Spectre: can attack with life drain, or sleep spell

Ghoul: can attack with life drain

Caec: apparently an enchanted, mechanized contrivance, it attacks the mind with a psychic shock.

Hydra: this many headed dragon attacks with tooth and claw, or phantom arrows, and quickly regenerates. He cannot be decapitated.

Cephalomage: these strange wizards seem to come from an unknown realm. They have a devastating psychic attack, and are also fond of the paralyze spell.

Lich: this undead wizard can drain life, and has a more powerful sleep spell than the spectre.

Aphian: slithering out of nightmare bogs, it can attack with an electric shock.

White dragon: Apart from tooth and claw, attacks with frost breath, or ice storm spell

Red dragon: can attack with fire breath, or fireball spell

Gold dragon: the lord of dragons, can attack with radiation bolt, or paralyze spell

Wraith lord: these lords of the undead can attack with a massive life drain, and can turn you to stone for 10 turns.

Further Information

Finally, we have received strange symbols, by means of an unknown clairvoyance, perhaps it is a message from the One:

<https://github.com/dfgordon/Realm>

What this peculiar arrangement of glyphs may portend, the arcane council has not fathomed.

Acknowledgements

Thanks to my parents for having the foresight to buy an expensive computer in an era when it was not common. The game is my own work, although various aspects were discussed with friends and family, long ago.

The recovery project was made possible by a number of free and commercial products, including power supply kit from ReActiveMicro, Floppy emu from Big Mess O' Wires, CiderPress, AppleWin, and Virtual][.

Some aspects of the game design were influenced by the Ultima series, and Dungeons & Dragons, as they were known circa 1980.

Special thanks to Tolkien, Dunsany, Lovecraft, and Poe.