

Introduction to Modeling Worlds in Text with Inform 7

A workshop with Lea Albaugh
at Strange Loop 2014

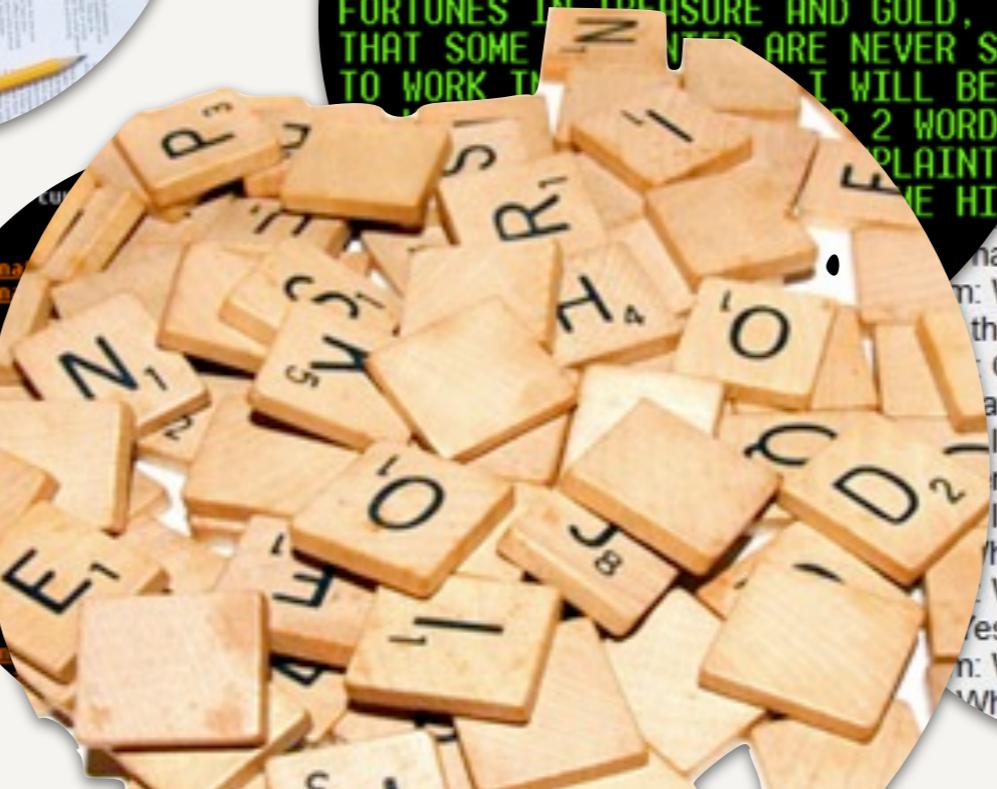
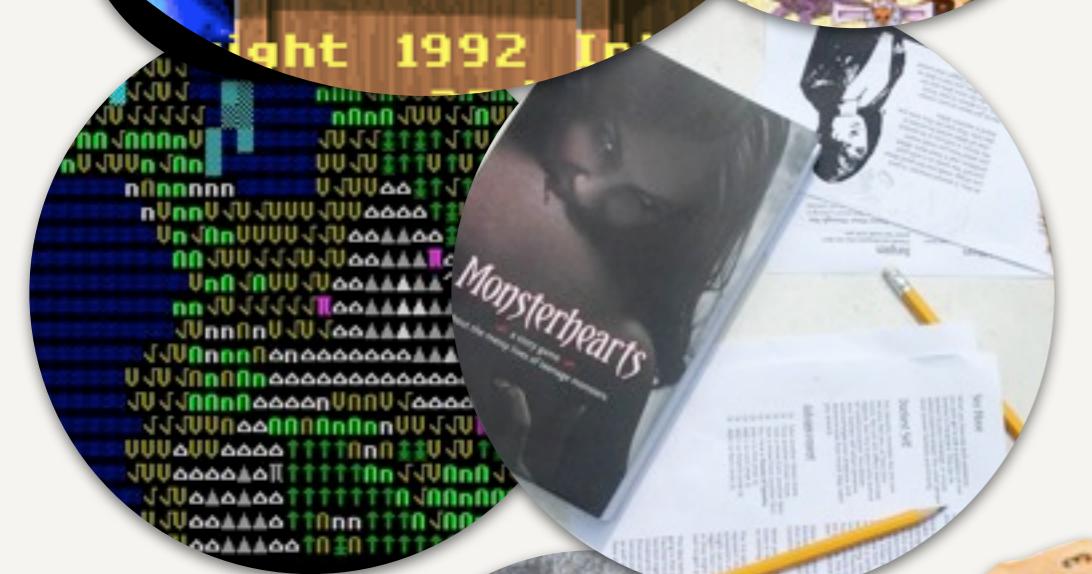
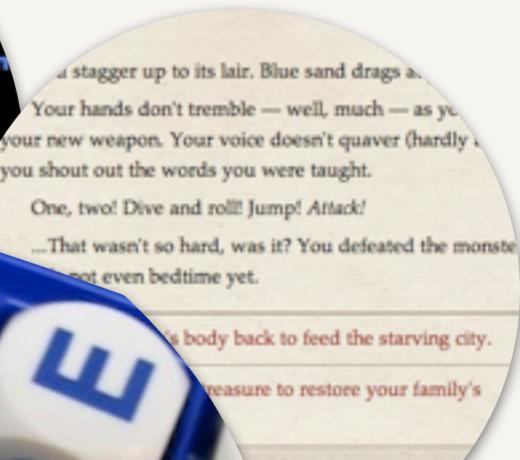
I'm Lea.

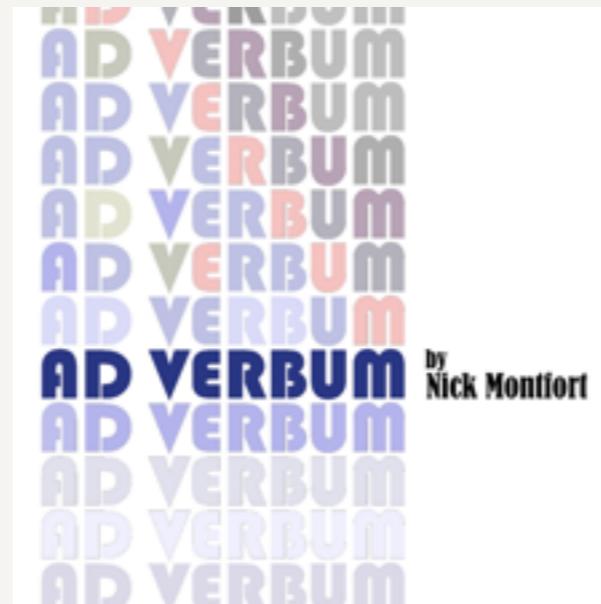
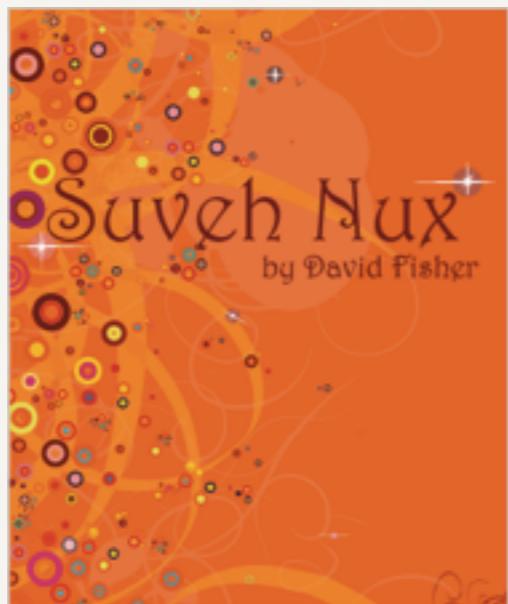
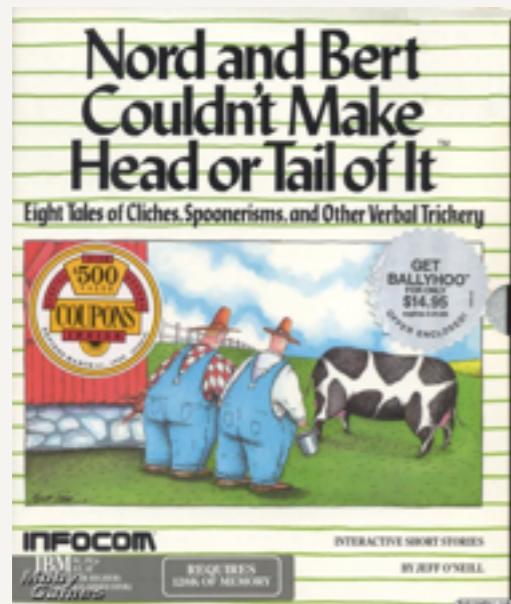
(pronounce: “”)

And you?

Inform 7
is a language for writing
parser-based
interactive fiction

turn-based
interactive thingies
that convey most or all of
their information
textually





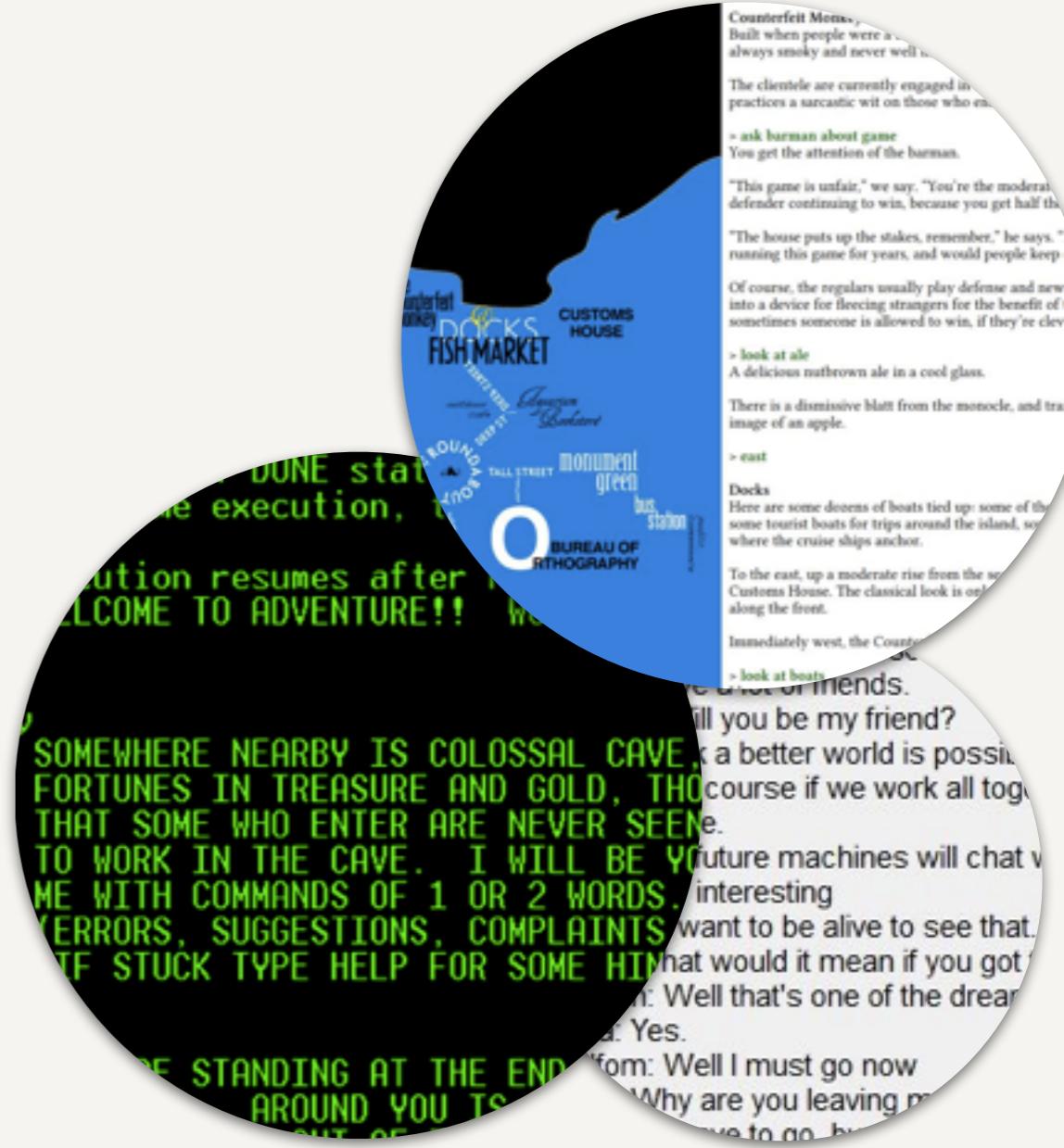
(some games that are *both*)



“choice-based”

vs.

“parsed”



A room of dark metal. Fluorescent lights embedded in the ceiling.

The **activity room** is in the north wall. The **lavatory** entrance, west, next to the **trash disposal** and the **nutrient dispensers**. The **sanity room** is in the east wall.

Her **photograph** is pinned to the side of your bunk. A red LCD reads 367 a few inches over.

>inventory

You insisted that we bring almost nothing into the synthesis room, so the criminal who was performing the synthesis couldn't rob us. I had hoped there was more honor among thieves, but you said no, there isn't.

We are carrying your R-remover — an essential we mustn't part with.

>examine r-remover

It is a blunt-nosed plastic device, about the size of a laser pointer, that can be waved at things to remove excess Rs. It is not very powerful, and often fails against large items. On the other hand, it has a wide range of action: it can be set to any letter we choose.

These are, if not exactly cheap, hardly unknown in Atlantis.

>

(clicking)

(typing)

Example!

InkleWriter

A Tutorial Story

The beginning

Welcome to inklewriter!

(I just want to pick a tutorial.)

No problem. Make sure you're in write mode, then click the arrow to continue.

Choose a tutorial

Add option

B
I
...
if
[]

NOLA is Burning

by Claudia Starling

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In return, the city has jaded you, stripped you of your humanity, and warped you into an unrecognizable shell of noir-esque dysphoria, washed up on the filthy banks of the city's famous canals. It has brought you to this very moment, waking in the early evening from a haunting dream to find a crinkled brown paper bag clutched in your soiled hand.

The cries of oil-sllicked seagulls slowly awaken you from your temporary escape. You look down to find an empty bottle peeking out of the paper bag in your hands. Once your eyes can focus, you see what it is.

Whisky.
 Gin & Juice, yo!
 Pepto-Bismol.
 Milk.

Next

Download on the App Store Google play amazon kindle available in the chrome web store



InkleWriter

ChoiceScript

Ren'Py

V

BEE
Emily Short

Bee
Emily Short

HOW IT WILL END

Sooner or later you're going to lose.

You are a junior spelling champion. Your parents have been teaching you at home since you were four. You've never wasted a moment in a conventional classroom. Instead you stay home and study. Spelling, reading, English, Word lists, Latin for etymology. You play Scrabble and Boggle. You have boxes of flash cards.

And you keep up your other studies as well, because you have to spend at least four hours a day on conventional, non-spelling subjects to be eligible. You go to church. You do chores. You attend homeschooling co-op events so that you'll meet a wide range of people.

Even with all that work, it's very, very unlikely that you'll win at Nationals.

But you can try. You can absolutely try.

STATUS

Motivation: Low
Spelling Skill: Untrained
Mouth: July

MESSAGES MYSELF MY FRIENDS HOME BAZAAR DATE MYSTERY HELP TRAVEL

Click an Opportunity card to play it...

1 cards waiting! Another in 8:14

DANGEROUS 1:0 -2

WATCHFUL 1:0 +2

PURSUASIVE 1:0 -2

SHADY 1:0

RESPECTABLE 0

...or play the Storylets your Qualities have unlocked.

Ufinished Business in Ladybones Road

Hell's Fence

More Tea with the Vicar

TRADE ANOTHER STORY

VIDEOGAME

UNDUM

Undum is a pure client-side game framework for narrative interactive fiction. It is designed for HTML5 and CSS3. You can read more and download the source code [here](#).

STARTING OUT WITH UNDUM

CHARACTER

You are starting on an exciting journey.

Skill	12
Stamina	12
Luck	fair
Progress	
Novice	✓

Welcome to the Undum tutorial. Undum is a tool for writing hypertext interactive fiction. It has some unique features and a visual design that encourages narrative games.

Varytale

StoryNexus

Undum

howling dogs

porpentine

Restart

They prepare you for the day you shall be assassinated by draping your body in red streamers and arranging you aesthetically across carpets and divans.

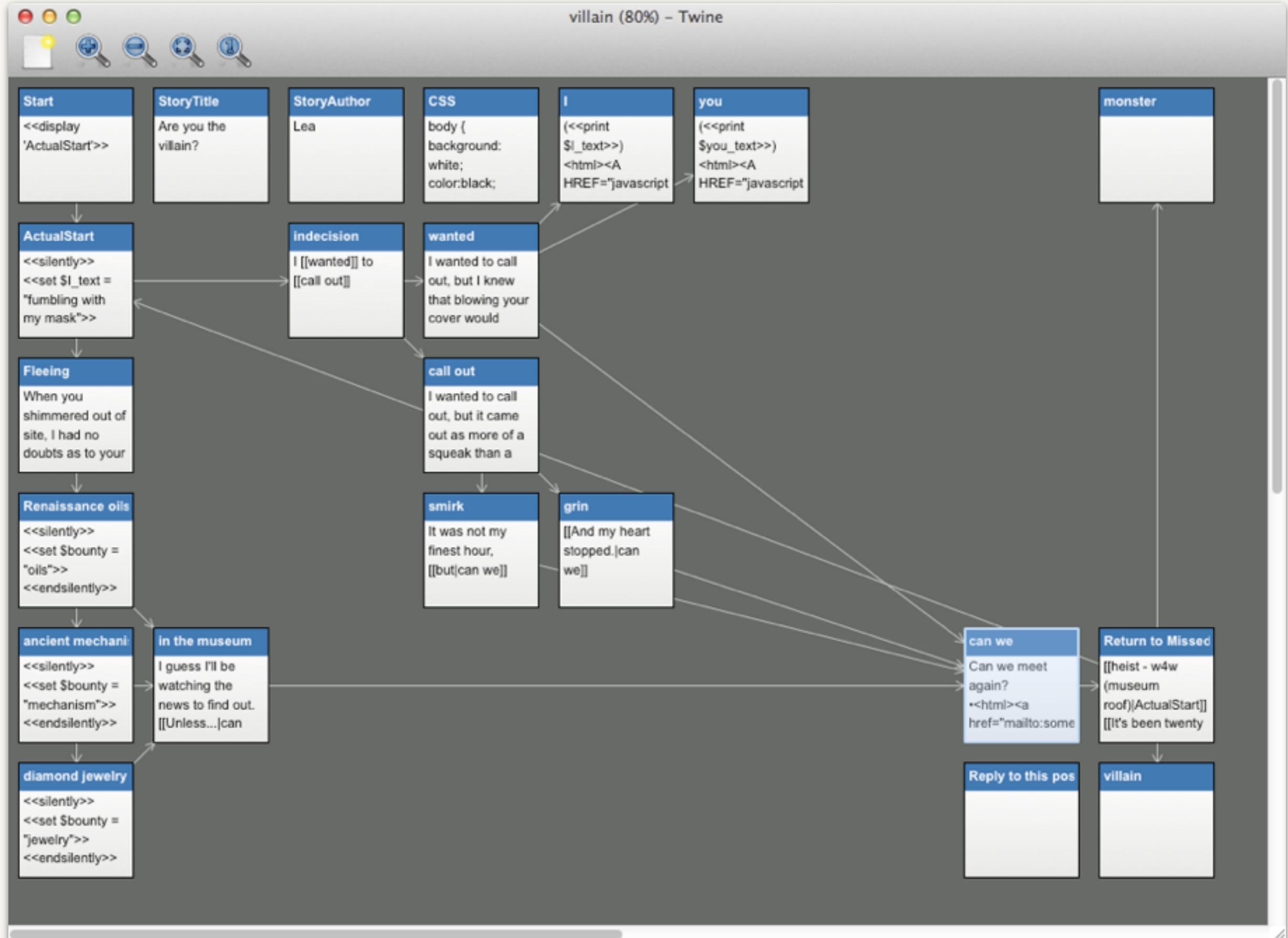
You are instructed in

the art of dying in the proper lighting

the art of shaming your assassin with your composure

the art of emulating the appropriate saint with your death pose

Twine



Conversely!

> |

.RUN ADV11

WELCOME TO ADVENTURE!! WOULD YOU LIKE INSTRUCTIONS?

YES

SOMEWHERE NEARBY IS COLOSSAL CAVE, WHERE OTHERS HAVE FOUND
FORTUNES IN TREASURE AND GOLD, THOUGH IT IS RUMORED
THAT SOME WHO ENTER ARE NEVER SEEN AGAIN. MAGIC IS SAID
TO WORK IN THE CAVE. I WILL BE YOUR EYES AND HANDS. DIRECT
ME WITH COMMANDS OF 1 OR 2 WORDS.

(ERRORS, SUGGESTIONS, COMPLAINTS TO CROWTHER)
(IF STUCK TYPE HELP FOR SOME HINTS)

YOU ARE STANDING AT THE END OF A ROAD BEFORE A SMALL BRICK
BUILDING . AROUND YOU IS A FOREST. A SMALL
STREAM FLOWS OUT OF THE BUILDING AND DOWN A GULLY.

GO IN

YOU ARE INSIDE A BUILDING, A WELL HOUSE FOR A LARGE SPRING.

THERE ARE SOME KEYS ON THE GROUND HERE.

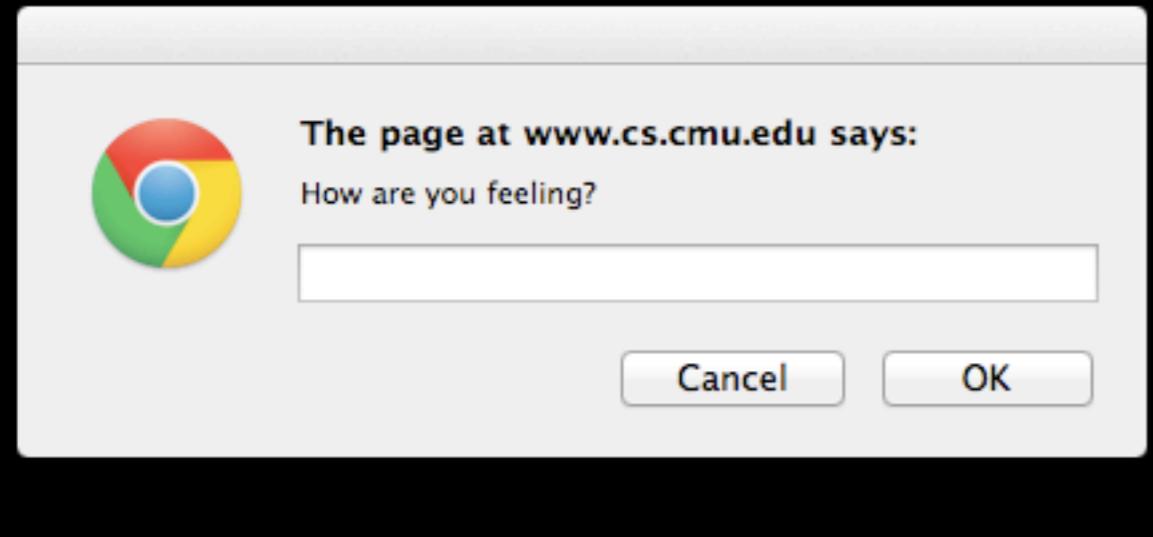
THERE IS A SHINY BRASS LAMP NEARBY.

THERE IS FOOD HERE.

THERE IS A BOTTLE OF WATER HERE.

You're in your room, thinking quietly to yourself, sitting on the floor with headphones in, letting music saturate your mind.

A servant enters.



dim illumination presses back the dark, but does not break it; darkness follows in your footsteps and obliterates them.

You descend chasms, you crawl through low chambers. Occasionally you see a discarded scrap or a bootprint in the mud, for these tunnels are not uninhabited, but you leave these signs undisturbed and add few of your own. Companionship on the journey is not what you seek. Silence, the unchanging textures of stone lull you; you push ahead into the dark, but your mind wanders. Did the children of Atalantë explore here as you do? Did they lose themselves, fade into shadow?

You come to yourself at a chimney's precipitous lip. Not so peaceful an end, had you stumbled! Will you climb [upwards](#) or [downwards](#)?

>

They strived for knowledge. Science and philosophy advanced the creatures as a culture.

Then I sensed a presence.

There's another being, another like me: it is here, and we have met each other.

What shall I say?

> |

Walker & Silhouette

Interactive criminology by C.E.J. Pacian

Version 9 - Developed with TADS 3

[Type 'About' if this is your first time playing.

Type 'Credits' to see who made this possible.]

Mindflower Asylum

I'm standing in the cold, early evening shadow of the Mindflower Asylum for the Criminally Insane - a tall, crooked building with barred windows and a sunken door.

Townhouses are packed in tightly on all sides, but a deathly silence pervades. The only sign of life is an ornithopter sailing high overhead.

My motor car sits to one side of the cobbled road.

(Type highlighted keywords to advance the story.)

>

For today:

“interactive fiction” = “IF” = “text adventure”
=

a single player interacts
with a modeled world
via typed commands

[let's play *Bronze!*]

Some facts about Inform 7:

1. Very small development team.
2. Based on legacy code, twice.
3. Was designed with the central goal of being a programming language for writers.

[let's write some code!]