

Captain Blood

Written by: Exxos, Philippe Ulrich, Didier Bouchon, Imagitec Design
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Captain Blood: instructions

Description Captain Blood is a very odd game. There is nothing else like it. Basically, it could be described as a space adventure / strategy game, but it is hard to categorise it. The whole game is viewed from the comfort of your command seat, inside your huge biomechanical space craft. From there, you control everything that happens in the game, as you travel through space, talking to aliens, and finding out information.

The aim of the game is to find and kill five clones of yourself. Blood (you) was split into multiples of himself, due to a freak accident. Each of the clones has some of your 'life fluid', and without it, you will die. You must kill the clones to regain the fluid. From inside Ark (your ship), you send communication probes down to the surfaces of planets, to communicate with any life-forms there might be down there. Using a system of icons, you can talk to these beings, trying to see if they have any information about the locations of the five clones. Of course, it's won't be easy, and there are a myriad of sub-plots, red herrings and tasks to work your way through before the end of the game. And all the time, the clock is ticking, and Blood's life is trickling away... The game is controlled by moving Blood's hand around the screen, and clicking on the ship's various icons. When you arrive at a planet, you can send a probe down (actually a living creature, called an Oorxx), which you have flight control of. Pilot it through the rocks and gulleys on the planet's surface, and eventually you may make contact with an alien of some kind. Then, using the UPCOM (a really cool icon-based communication system), you can talk to the alien. What about? Who knows...? The galaxy awaits!

ORIGINAL INLAY CARD TEXT

CAPTAIN BLOOD.

Scenario: Philippe Ulrich.

Software & Graphics: Didier Bouchon.

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THE ARK ACCORDING TO CAPTAIN BLOOD.

CHAPTER 1 (Fishy Goings On):

This sinister little tale started life one grey and drizzly winter's day. The city was soaked to the bone. A constant honking of angry car horns drilled and shook the air, even the dry if stuffy kind that hung around the 20th. floor of 10 Eezy Street, where a sheet of grimy paper taped to the door of number 7 vibrated arthritically. The writing on the paper said:

'BOB MORLOK. 'FOR PITY'S SAKE KEEP QUIET.'

"As if angry car horns could read...", thought the postman, shaking his head in disgust. He knocked. The door opened a fraction. "You Morlok?" "Gasp! How did you guess?", yawned a bleary shadow behind the door. "Special Delivery. Sign here!", snarled the postman wearily, sticking a greasy pad with ball point attached into Morlok's unshaven face. Managing a trembly if recognisable cross, Bob Morlok was handed a letter. Muttering what may have been "Thanks", he shut the door and looked around for the letter opener. Then he remembered what had happened the last time he'd used it and ripped open the envelope with his teeth instead.

'Your Royalties for the second quarter. Total before taxes=35c. 'Best wishes, your publisher.'

Bob tried but couldn't keep back a violent bout of nausea. He smoked his first Camel of the day. Thirty five cents to live on for three months! "I gotta program a major hit", thought Bob, "with a killer storyline. Or else." This attic room had a skylight. He gazed through it at the dripping rooftops and sighed. He was clean out of ideas. He shut his eyes and squeezed. Nothing came. Total block. Crushing his last butt into an overflowing ashtray, Bob announced to anyone who cared to listen (no one did): "Blood's dead. Stone cold dead as a dodo. He'll write no more games and his pseudonym will as of now disappear from all local Computarama shelves, forever." Bob Morlok sighed once more and decided on a breath of air.

The joint in Binary Street was open. Loud music poured out. He walked over to the bar and ordered a coffee. Beside him, some kids were noisily wiping out aliens on a video game. Bob turned to look. Intergalactic robots exploded with inhuman shrieks. The skinny kid locked onto the joystick was yelling triumphantly - He'd just made the hi score. Bob snorted, "What a zero!" The insult had the effect of breaking up the party atmosphere. "Oh yeah? Go ahead and beat my score, pops!", skinny snickered. This was what Bob had been angling for. His right hand closed over the stick and his left pushed 'PLAY'. The following carnage of screaming metal, green blood and exploding alien troop ships was all over in a few seconds.

Enemy losses were so sickeningly enormous that the score blocked on 999999. Without even looking, Bob typed in B-L-O-O-D as the latest hi scorer. "Y-you're B-Blood?", stammered skinny, who looked like he'd just swallowed a live Pac Man. "Gaze up in awe, junior", drawled Bob, kindly, "You've just lived through a major moment in your life." With that he turned and disappeared through the door, leaving behind one unpaid for coffee and a bunch of amazed kids. "That really zapped 'em", grinned Bob to himself. He was savouring the glory so much that he didn't see the old man walking towards him. Bob Morlok looked down at the old guy sprawling on the sidewalk. "Gee, I'm really sorry. Are you okay?", he asked, helping the other to his feet. "Sure, sure. Don't worry about it, young fella. Not your fault if I'm so absent minded." Suddenly, Bob's eyes switched on. "Wow! You can't be! You aren't! Damn it, you are Charles Darwin, the famous bio whatever." "No need to shout it out, son. There may be newspaper hacks lounging in the trash cans." "Oh yeah, sure. Say listen. Your books really made a major impression. All that stuff about super bonus scores for the fastest." "Yes, well, that's one way of..." "Hey, wait a minute. Aren't you supposed to be dead, theoretically?" "Let's just say I'm living incognito for the moment." "Wow! That's major. Hey, listen. Let me buy you a drink. No, really." Morlok guided his new friend into a nearby bar. They sat down close to a pinball machine. "Beer", said Bob, to the guy who was taking orders. "Water, please", said Darwin. "Water, huh?", muttered the waiter, and disappeared. "Interested in biology, are you, Mr., uh...?" "Blood. That's my name." "Blood, eh? My, my. Well, well." The old man's gaze centered on the pinball machine. He glowered. "Accursed invention. I've been working on video games for months. That's the reason I came here to Slick City - but who listens to an old dodderer called Mortimer Slithe?" "Slithe. Your pseudonym is Slithe? You could've done better than that!" "A long story. And unpleasant. I'm stuck with Slithe. Do you believe in aliens, Blood?" Bob was taken aback by the question. He stammered, "Well, you know, I, er..." But his lack of conviction went unnoticed. Slithe was getting into gear: "They're here!", he whispered, waving his cane toward the video game. Then looking Blood right in the eye, he thundered, "They're here! Pac Men are reproducing in millions! They actually exist, do you hear me!" Bob-Blood reeled in shock. The old man suddenly stood up and left the bar. Bob was too stunned to stop him. That was the last he ever saw of Charles Darwin.

CHAPTER 2 (And Bob Made Blood):

Back in his apartment, Bob's mind was still reeling. Darwin, Pac People, aliens...What if it was true? "Ye gods! If it's really happening, something's gotta be done!", thought Bob. "I know", he cried, "I'll infiltrate them. That's my new masterpiece! I'll need to create a being based on man, a kind of superman, completely competent like...like, MYSELF!" And while he raved, Bob was already at the keyboard, typing in the vital first instructions.

Months passed. List-outs snaked through all the available space. Ashtrays were piled on ashtrays. Bob programmed on.

Six months later, he had created a vessel called ARK, fitted with an onboard computer called a bio-consciousness. Still later, the ARK was placed under the command of his computer double: Captain BLOOD. His mission: Fight evil in all the computerised universe... Lastly, he created a bio-writer whose task would be to

recount the amazing saga in detail. Finally came the great day. He typed in the final momentous instruction: 'RUN'...

At that moment, something major happened: Bob winked out. I mean, he physically DISAPPEARED!

CHAPTER 3 (Report From Ark's Bio-Writer):

The Ark had materialised somewhere near Andromeda. Its shape corresponded down to the last hump to what Bob had programmed. You couldn't tell it apart from any other boring asteroid. Its stupendous mass prevented it from landing anywhere, but that was compensated for by the sheer amazingness of its biotech systems. Inside, in a very snappy conapt, lovingly done up by the program, a mummy looking like Bob sat in a padded armchair, in front of which a multitude of instruments flickered in the phosphorescent blue light diffracted by an enormous 3D screen that filled one whole wall of the conapt. The Ark bobbed gently in the magnetic tide. The bridge clock showed '000' when the screen came on, prolonging the conapt into infinity. The diamond-dust brilliance of Andromeda sparkled in the distance.

Blood came to life very suddenly. The first pains were awful: A tearing noise in his head, as if something had split his skull open. The pain gave way to a strange feeling. His first thoughts filled him with a sense of well-being: The passage from nothingness to superior Beinghood was now possible.

He tested his memory implants. Nostalgia filled his mind: A sandy beach at summer's end. Salty breeze, childhood, Disneyworld... "HONK here. Check sum implant: 10/10." "Medicheck in progress." The voice of Ark's bio-consciousness tore Blood from his daydreams. "Mission recall", it barked, "Please state orders." "Activate the neutrino scanner", croaked Blood, "and for pity's sake, don't bark so loudly. Try being normal." "Understood, Mr. Blood. Scanner on." "Attaboy", approved Blood, "Now, Mr. Honk, activate the local map." The map appeared instantaneously on the conapt screen. Blood studied it carefully. "Superimpose the radar image", he ordered. A myriad of flashing points covered the map. They were all converging on the centre, the Ark's position. Blood shrieked: "They're all over the bloody place." He wasn't exaggerating. The attack was as terrifying as it was sudden. The 3D screen revealed a pack of Invader-type craft, 5th. generation, bristling with weaponry. Blood didn't hesitate. Only one thing to do: Get out of there, fast!

At that moment, a deafening explosion shook the Ark. The starboard side of the Ark had taken a direct hit from a multiple warhead missile. "Hyperspace light now, dammit!", screamed Blood. "Understood, Mister Blood. Do you require a vessel status update in triplicate?", came the warm and caressing voice of the bio-consciousness. "Get us out of here, you moron!" Hardly had he finished, when he was thrust violently against the armchair by a phenomenal force. The Ark was plunging into Hyperspace. "Wow, we really outwitted those guys", sniggered Blood. "My lord, Captain: The ship has no significant damage. Some minor problems with the bio-weapon. I'll repair it immediately. The Hyperspace jump did not conform entirely to schedule. /.../... the jump was not interrupted, however. Oh, Glorious Heavens!" "Whak! Kalk! Whak's happening?", roared Blood. Fear gripped his soul. "The multiplex failed during the jump...Oh no!...The weapon has cloned you! At least thirty copies are loose in the destination galaxy!" "Whak? Are you crazy?" "Afraid not, Captain. And there's worse...You're short of vital fluid. The process of degeneration has already started." Kl kl kl kl kl kl klklklklklklklk...k.../////

CHAPTER 4 (Clones):

Kss ksystem bio-kss re-akssvated sk as ksoon askss the bio-consciousnesskss completed repairkss...

BIO WRITER TEST: ESSAY Subject: Describe a space ship bobbing in inter-galactic space.

UNIVERSAL TIME 45372.

Essay: The space ship bobbed gently in the magnetic tide. The galaxy shone with the brilliance of diamond-dust.

Mark: 7/10. Not a bad effort, but could do better. Temper those poetic flights. END TEST: Apt for service.

Blood had had a close shave. Moreover, during the jump, every space jock's nightmare had come true: cloning.

(The effects of cloning are hair-raising. There are now an army of Bloods, all but one of whom are fakes. The cloning process has triggered a gradual cellular degeneration in the original Blood. His only hope of survival is to find all those clones in the destination galaxy, in order to recover the vital fluid.)

A daunting prospect. Finding the NUMBERS (that was the name Blood gave his clones) among that mass of stars wasn't going to be easy. Meanwhile, Honk, Ark's bio-consciousness was working on a series of complex biomech supports designed to back up the Captain's weakening life systems. One by one, his heart, lungs, liver and kidneys were replaced by artificial organs.

Blood struggled courageously against a formidable force summoning him to become a wholly synthetic being: a ROBOT...

CHAPTER 5 (The OORXX Layer):

One night, Blood was violently aroused from post surgical coma (His cerebellum had just been removed): "Captain, I'm getting a weird message. The neutrino radar is saturated. Something's closing in on us!", exclaimed the bio-consciousness. "Glasp. Garks. Wha...", answered Blood. He was having trouble getting words out. His tongue felt swollen and his 100%% teflon skull hurt horribly. He managed to add, "Standard procedure, whatever that is." "Aye aye, Captain", replied the bio-consciousness, somewhat dubiously. Blood suddenly sat up. "What? Why didn't you wake me up, dummy? Activate magnetic shield, stop everything, switch on the radar screen." The screen glittered, then filled with radar echo. Not far from Ark, a vaguely oval object was speeding. Fast. At that instant, an alarm sounded and a message came up on the screen, printed in Universal Protocol/Communication: UPCOM(1). "SOS AM IN DISTRESS SOS GL GL HOC..." "Wow! Who the blazing Darwins are you?", rasped Blood. "I FEMALE OORXX SOS FAST..." "Boy, what a zappy dream I'm having", chuckled Blood. "WELL WHERE'S THE HELP...", the OORXX's message said on the UPCOM. "Sure, sure. Let's not get hysterical", retorted Blood, just a little irritated, "She's in a hurry as well. What do we do now, Honk?" The bio-consciousness thought for a moment. "The regulations are pretty strict on this. Ever since the NOSTROMO affair, it's forbidden to teleport strangers on board, Captain, unless they're in temporary cryogenic death status. I suggest teleporting her to the FRIDGITORIUM. She must, however, be willing. Otherwise the teleport won't work, as you know, Captain." "Yeah, yeah, I know. I tumbled the old Ripley dame before she got command of the old folk's home on Proxima. She told me about it", explained Blood, typing in the following message on the UPCOM keyboard: "Okay, we'll teleport you."

Days went by. Honk happily analyzed, studied and dissected the OORXX. One day... "Captain, hey, it's completely major, Cap, wow!" Honk seemed rather excited. "What? Calm down, kid, and don't call me cap. Now, what gives?" Blood wasn't in one of his better moods. The day before, Honk had fixed him up with bionylon skin (hi temperature no-shrink wash. Drip dry), and they'd been testing the hi temperature wash feature.

"If we modify, just a teeny weeny bit, the OORXX's genes, we can control the eggs and put together some really zappy biomissiles, with all space fish characteristics and amazing firepower as well. We could easily train the OORXX babies to go on suicide missions for you! You'd radio control them. You'd see through their eyes. Think of it. You could visit every planet in the galaxy without leaving the conapt. It's completely major!" Honk shut up for a moment, waiting for his master's verdict.

"You are DISGUSTING!", exploded Blood, "You are INHUMAN!"

"But, master, they're only OORXX!", protested the bio-consciousness. "Yeah, well, that's true", admitted Blood, pinching his silicon earlobe, "They are only OORXX. And they are officially extinct. And I'd be right here in my padded armchair, wouldn't I? Okay, let's give it a try!"

And so Honk reactivated the OORXX layer, and the first second generation OORXX babies were born.

CHAPTER 6 (Mastochok):

Honk spent a long time experimenting on the mother OORXX's genes. Sometimes the eggs were too big, sometimes too long. Huge babies were born that had to be ejected from the Ark immediately. The long babies had to be reeled onto special spools which were difficult to stock. Blood wasn't satisfied. He was too well aware of time passing, and with it his chances of survival. It was becoming more and more urgent to catch some NUMBERS so he could recuperate the vital fluid he so desperately needed. One night...

"Captain, Captain, I've got it! It works!", yelled Honk, "We can start testing." "At last!", exclaimed Blood, rubbing his original hands together. They were now covered in scales and the sound produced was like two crocodiles having sex in a packet of cornflakes. "Hyperspace. Target galaxy: Xunk 07. That's where I'd go", he added, confidently, "If I were them." "But Captain, you ARE them!", cried the bio-consciousness. "Eh? Sure. You're right. Let's go anyway."

Ark thundered. Several moments later, it fused into hyperspace. Blood admired the pretty time-space twirls on the 3D screen, their mathematical convolutions hovering at the brink of human understanding, hurling the mind into a vortex sublimated by the theoretical vacuum thus evoked and whose description is but a pale reflection in the rank and brackish water of a foul and bottomless swamp from which no escape may be envisaged...

Then, quite majestically, appeared a round and greenish ball in the infinite blue light.

"Mastochok", murmured Blood, "Planet of the CROOLIS!" He seemed ecstatic before the magnificent sight that was the planet Mastochok. "That's where they are", he declared, with the utter certainty of one who knows. He breathed raspingly to the accompaniment of hisses from his pneumatic lungs. He twiddled some very nice knobs on the control panel, selecting the Landing option. The baby OORXX slid into the lubricated ejection tube. "EJECT!", he cried, his eyes popping with emotion. The OORXX shot from the tube with a sound like a bottle being uncorked. "Ejected!", replied Honk, "I'm switching on the video circuits. From now on, the OORXX is you. Go easy on the stick." The OORXX came up on the 3D screen. The tormented surface of Mastochok was approaching fast. Too fast! "For pity's sake, pull back the stick. You're going to crash!", screamed Honk. Blood pulled back on the stick. Lots of pointy mountains appeared. The OORXX was skimming over them. "Down, down, gently. There!" Honk was clearly troubled by the Captain's lack of experience. "Careful! Aaah!"

A shuddering thump indicated that the OORXX had flown into a mountain top. The baby spacefish squealed in pain, bounced, then came to a halt nose to nose with the mountain. "YOU'RE GOING TO KILL THE THING!", roared the bio-consciousness, trembling with rage. "Okay, okay, calm down. Anyone can make a mistake. Anyway, the OORXX isn't damaged. Look, everything works fine." Blood handled the stick carefully, and the image began to move again. The OORXX once more travelled through the wild if strangely wonderful terrain. Suddenly, Blood saw the entrance to a gigantic canyon, and flew in. "The canyon of the CROOLIS", he murmured. The OORXX slid through the air with incredible agility, responding instantly to the slightest move of Blood's hand. The steep canyon walls sped by in a sound of gliders. Blood was in total control of the OORXX. And that's the mark of a true hero, whose speed of adaptation leaves common mortals far behind. And true heroes are immortal, as Blood felt himself to be.

They landed at the end of the canyon, as majestically as a bird of prey. Blood knew the CROOLIS were watching. A CROOLIS appeared onscreen. "UPCOM on, Honk", ordered Blood. Honk activated the UPCOM. "VAREUX OR ULVES?", asked the CROOLIS, sternly. "Vareux or Ulves?", repeated Blood, somewhat at a loss. "Uh", stammered the bio-consciousness, "better not answer that one. Vareux CROOLIS and Ulves CROOLIS are hereditary enemies." "I MAN", typed Blood, "I SEARCH NUMBERS, YOU KNOW?" "(LAUGH) I KNOW, BUT YOU TAKE ME TO PLANET ASCODA, THEN I TELL." "Ascoda, that's real bad, Captain. That's where the most dangerous MIGRAX on the universe hang out." "OKAY", typed Blood, "WE TELEPORT YOU." He pressed a button on the left side of the control panel. The Croolis vapourised on the 3D screen and rematerialised in the FRIDGITORIUM. It took on a blue colouring and looked fairly dead. "You're not going to accept, are you?", asked the bio-consciousness, horrified by his master's suicidal streak. "Yes", replied Blood, shortly, "I've got an idea. How do we get the OORXX back into Ark?" "Ah, well. That's something I haven't given much thought to. You see, they resist badly to landing. As a matter of fact, they self destruct", admitted Honk, ruefully.

Blood said nothing. Loudly.

"Hyperspace", he murmured. The plop of a new OORXX entering the ejection tube was heard. "Hyperspace on", replied Honk. Ark shot forward...

Ark rematerialised beside a pockmarked asteroid called OX1 45A (300). Blood ejected the new OORXX, who landed gently on OX1 45A (300). Then he activated the inverse teleport process. The Croolis disappeared from the Fridgitorium and found itself on an ugly, pockmarked asteroid. Blood watched on the 3D screen.

The UPCOM was working: "PLANET NOT BE ASCODA (SWEAR)", swore the Croolis. "Wow! That guy's been zapped!", chortled Blood. "Yeah!", sniggered the bio-consciousness. "Okay, let's see if he'll tell us where the NUMBERS are", said Blood. He typed on the UPCOM keyboard: "WHERE BE NUMBERS? ANSWER CROOLIS!" "(SWEAR!) (SWEAR!) YOU BRING BACK ME THEN?", asked the Croolis. "YES", keyed in Blood. "PLANET ZULU COORDINATES 124/674", admitted the Croolis, grudgingly. "THANKS BYE", answered the Captain, on the UPCOM, "And now let's get to Zulu. Hyperspace, Mr. Honk!" "Hyperspace, sure thing, Captain." Honk was relieved. Ark tore off.

On asteroid OX1 45A (300), the Croolis was babbling insane diatribes: "I'll get that son of a Vareux, by the glabration of my Croolas..."

CHAPTER 7 (The Final 5 NUMBERS):

800 years later on the edge of galaxy BABY1...

The medireport came through on the telox. An incadescent meteor tore through space with a scissors sound. Blood read the report slowly. Cellular degeneration was increasing since the last report. A frightening question came up from his synthetic throat:

"Honk, how long can I live without the vital fluid of the NUMBERS?"

"312 Universal Time Units", replied the bio-consciousness, "Permit me to augment your optimism levels: Your metabolism can't afford despair, and I've isolated a suicide impulse in the B Cortex of a bulb gene in your right brain." "Go ahead", acquiesced Blood, "Have the last 5 NUMBERS been located?" "Negative. They are equipped with radar scramblers."

'Five NUMBERS are left, hidden somewhere among those stars', thought Blood. Five damned NUMBERS, waiting for him, warned by the MIGRAX, who were only too willing to sell the information for a price. Five clones of himself, ready to defend their stinking NUMBER hides: one, two, three, four and that son of a bitch NUMBER 5.

Blood shouted, "How many OORXX does Ark have?" "18 adults. The bionic layer has laid 14 missiles which will be operational in 5 Times", replied the metallic voice of Honk.

"Direction Ondoya", ordered Blood, "Reactivate the layer, lock the georadar on target, pump up the nuke shield, we'll need it. We're gonna zap those guys!"

Ark tore off thunderously. Down in the Pram Zone, the OORXX layer squeaked in pain, and three more slimy missiles rolled down the birth ramp.

End of report from Ark's bio-writer.

(1) UPCOM. Universal Protocol/Communication. A system conceived by Honk, in response to the difficulty of talking with people who use unfamiliar languages. Honk's system translates simultaneously, using icons to signify words or ideas. UPCOM is able to detect those signs that are understood by the being you're talking with. This allows a speedy evaluation of the being's personality. If its vocabulary contains only icons symbolizing food and drink, it's pretty easy to figure out the being's intellectual level.

A BRIEF GLOSSARY OF FAUNA ON HYDRA:

IZWAL: Peaceful and generous beings. Look almost human. Very cultured. Masters of science.

BUGGOL: Beings with a particular social behaviour, being obsessively democratic. All belong to YATANGA, which is the only political party around and whose one aim is to defend democracy as obsessively as possible. The President's term of office is not fixed. As soon as a BUGGOL attains a majority, he is elected. Since all are eligible for high office, Presidents tend to change very frequently, sometimes every 5 minutes. At the time this story begins, the BUGGOL remains on ROSKO. He can't be elected, owing to the shortage of electors. He would need two more votes to become President of planet ROSKO. An imposter (a YUKAS), who doesn't even live on ROSKO has got himself elected in a fixed election. ROSKO is now in political upheaval.

YUKAS: Belligerent and underhand characters. No class at all. Little is known of their customs.

CROOLIS: Separated into two distinct evolutionary branches: Vareux and Ulves. Each has always hated the other.

MIGRAX: As their name suggests, they are great travellers. Highly intelligent, they carry the news around the galaxy. Excellent negotiators. Their slyness is legendary.

ONDOYANTES: Originally from planet Ondoya, these are dream creatures. They appear beautiful to those whom they like, and ghastly to those they detest. This way, everyone knows where he stands.

TRICEPHALS: Very interesting genetically. These guys have three android heads, each of which is equipped with an amazing tongue.

SINOX: Hardworking and intelligent, the Sinox are the technology whizzkids of the galaxy.

ANTENNA: Simple creatures, the Antennas are really very friendly. Maybe too friendly.

TUBULAR BRAINERS: The only race so far known to have tubular brains. Their intelligence is quite particular and difficult to grasp.

TROMPS: Inoffensive creatures, if somewhat stubborn. Their hair is highly prized as snuff by the Sinox.

ROBHEADS: In a far off age, Hydra was invaded by bionic armies of android combat-robots with orders to take charge for a few thousand years. When the Hydrans got fed up with them, things went hideously sour for the robots. A few decapitated units managed to keep some systems functioning. They are the Robheads. They're just robot heads with a few memory zones still working. Completely harmless, they just lie there. They can't even reproduce, unless some passing geneticist...

KINGPAKS: Ridiculous creatures who smoke Tromp tails (supposedly aphrodisiac) and eat pills. Not very smart. Rumour has it that they inspired the early Pac Man versions.

NUMBERS: Blood's clones. There are 5 of them; Number 1, number 2, number 3, number 4 and that son of a bitch number 5...

INSTRUCTIONS FOR PLAY.

SAVE TO DISK:

In CONTROL PANEL mode, insert an unprotected formatted disk into your drive. Click on the DISK icon when the onboard clock has passed 5 minutes. You cannot save a game during the first five minutes of play. The icon should flash for several moments if the save has aborted. In that case you should check your disk and try again. The saved file is called 'BLOOD.GAM'.

LOADING A SAVED GAME FROM DISK:

In CONTROL PANEL mode, insert your disk containing the saved file 'BLOOD.GAM'. Click on the DISK icon BEFORE the onboard clock has reached 5 minutes. You cannot load a saved game after five minutes of play. Should you wish to load a save game after the five-minute time limit, you'll have to reset the computer and reload the program.

Only sneaky types and defective clones save the game after every action! You're neither of those, are you?

EXTERIOR VISION:

Simply click on this icon to switch from CONTROL PANEL mode to EXTERIOR VISION.

To come back from EXTERIOR VISION to CONTROL PANEL mode, click on any inactive button (eye).

GALACTIC MAP (CHOOSING A DESTINATION):

In CONTROL PANEL mode, click on the GALACTIC MAP icon to access a view of the HYDRA galaxy.

HOW TO USE THE GALACTIC MAP:

First select your destination's X co-ordinate. You do this by clicking on the red vertical selection bar, which you then drag onto the desired X co-ordinate. In the left window you can see the co-ordinates of Blood's finger. The right window displays the chosen co-ordinates (the co-ordinates for the point of intersection of the selection bars).

Next, select your destination's Y co-ordinate. You do this by clicking on the red horizontal selection bar which you then place on the Y co-ordinate of your choice. As previously stated, the chosen destination co-ordinates are at the point where the two selection bars meet.

When you have chosen your destination co-ordinates, strap yourself in and click on the HYPERSPACE icon.

To speed up the HYPERSPACE sequence, click the right mouse button at the beginning or during the sequence.

OORXX CONTACT MISSION (LANDING AND PILOTING THE OORXX):

In EXTERIOR VISION mode, click on the OORXX CONTACT MISSION icon. The OORXX is teleported and lands immediately. You then have total flight control of the OORXX with your mouse. You can climb, dive and turn. You are advised not to fly into mountains. If the planet has defence systems, you should fly as low as possible. When the OORXX is detected by the enemy, two red arrows will start to cross the screen towards each other. When they meet in centre-screen, the OORXX blows up. To avoid having your OORXX destroyed in this way, dive as far as you can, until the arrows disappear.

Lifeforms in the Hydra galaxy have a weird habit of living at the very end of canyons. You'll have to find the canyons. The OORXX is equipped with a lifeform detector, which is a red aim symbol. It will follow the mouse's movement on the screen. When the detector flashes, that means you're flying the OORXX in the right direction. If an arrow shows up beside the detector, that means you must turn in the direction the arrow is pointing to get onto the right heading.

When a lifeform is found at the end of a canyon, the OORXX is programmed to land immediately. If the planet is deserted, the OORXX will land, extremely exhausted. If you are currently transporting a being in the Ark's fridgitorium, the TELEPORT icon will activate so that you can teleport the being onto the planet, if you want. To do so, just click on the TELEPORT icon.

OORXX DESTROY MISSION (DESTRUCTION OF A PLANET):

In EXTERIOR VISION mode, you can teleport an OORXX onto a planet, in order to destroy it. Just click on the OORXX DESTROY MISSION icon. The planet will be irretrievably zapped.

OORXX GEOPHOTO MISSION (SURFACE SCAN):

In EXTERIOR VISION mode, you can teleport an OORXX into low orbit to collect aerial pictures of the planet. A special detector will indicate whether the planet is equipped with a defence system. To activate this mission, click on the OORXX GEOPHOTO MISSION icon, once for a medium altitude scan, and once again for a low altitude scan. To return to normal mode, click on the EXTERIOR VISION icon.

UPCOM MODULE (UNIVERSAL PROTOCOL OF COMMUNICATION):

Once contact has been established with a sentient lifeform in a canyon, or when a being has been teleported from the Ark's fridgitorium, the UPCOM comes on automatically.

The UPCOM is a system of communication using icons. The UPCOM uses a number of windows, which will each be described.

The dictionary window: at the bottom of the screen. This icon dictionary uses two sideways scrollings, one rapid (activated by clicking on a red elevator bar situated under the dictionary icon), the other slow (activated by placing Blood's finger over two red-striped boxes situated on either side of the dictionary icon).

By moving Blood's finger over the dictionary icon, you can read a simultaneous translation of the icon into human language. The translation window is just above the UPCOM.

The conversation windows: situated above the dictionary icon, and separated by a central mouth.

a) the left hand window: reserved for the lifeform you're communicating with. To translate his (or its) messages, move Blood's finger over them. As long as the central mouth is moving, the being hasn't finished saying what he wants to say. Click on the central mouth to read the next sentence. When the mouth stops moving, you can start sending your message. It is possible to understand the sentences spoken by the being, if you learn his language. Each icon represents a specific speech sound.

b) The right hand window: reserved for your use. You can enter your messages by clicking on the icons of your choice in the icon dictionary. A small cursor under that window may be moved in order to insert an icon. Simply click on it. A delete option is available - Click on the icon situated to the right, under the window. To transmit your sentences, click on the central mouth.

You can teleport a being into the fridgitorium, if the being agrees. At that moment, the TELEPORT icon will be enabled. To teleport the lifeform, click on the TELEPORT icon.

Your conversational partner can, for reasons best known to himself, break off the discussion at any time.

If you want to leave the UPCOM during a conversation, click on the triangle at the right of the screen, under the DELETE arrow.

TELEPORT:

This icon is used to teleport a being from the planet into the Ark's fridgitorium. The icon will not be enabled until a being with whom you are in conversation consents to be teleported. If the icon is enabled and if you want to teleport the lifeform, just click on the icon.

DISINTEGRATE THE TELEPORTED BEING:

When a life-form is teleported to the fridgitorium, you can decide to destroy the lifeform by disintegrating it. If it's one of the numbers, Blood will recover some of his vital fluid and survive a little longer.

FRIDGITORIUM:

It's a cryonization container where teleported beings are conserved. The beings in question must give their consent because the teleport system uses psychic energy generated by the being's will, a little like hypnosis. For security reasons, living beings cannot be teleported into the Ark, so they must be cryonized and stocked in the fridgitorium. The fridgitorium has a disintegrate crematorium feature, which you can use if you feel like it. This feature recovers vital fluid, and so Blood can use it on the Numbers. All other forms of vital fluid are unfortunately incompatible with Blood's organism. NOTE: Pacemakers are automatically extracted before cremation, so there is no risk of explosion during the disintegration phase.

THE OORXX BIRTH RAMP:

The layer is incorporated into the Ark's structure, in the pram zone. This area is completely sterile, of course. The newly-laid baby OORXX are propelled onto the birth ramp immediately after a stress-free birth. The layer is able to lay endless numbers of babies.

TIME:

Onboard time is displayed on the clock, in Earthling minutes and seconds. The UPCOM takes account of the minutes only. 60.45 means 60 minutes and 45 seconds, which comes to HOUR 60 for the UPCOM. The game is limited to 45 realtime hours.

THE ARK'S POSITION (X, Y):

This window indicates the X, Y co-ordinates of the Ark in the Hydra galaxy.

THE ? COMMAND:

When the OORXX has already been placed on a planet, it may be reactivated, which saves you from having to pilot another through all those dangerous mountains.

When the Ark stops after a hyperspace jump, near a planet you've already visited, simply switch to CONTROL PANEL mode by clicking on a closed (disenabled) button. The ? command is then available and enabled. Click on it to reactivate the OORXX. You will inevitably catch up with the character you talked to the last time.

PLAYING HINTS:

CAPTAIN BLOOD's Ark stops near an inhabited planet at the start of the game. The HYDRA galaxy is biggish, boasting 32,768 inhabitable planets noted on the map. Not all of them actually have thinking lifeforms living on them, so it's easy to get very lost and see nobody for millions of years. That's why it's a damned good idea to note down the precise co-ordinates of inhabited planets before plunging into the immensity of unknown space. That way, you can always get back to a familiar place. Ask any space jock: trusting your luck is a non-viable survival option.

The program recreates the galaxy each time you begin a game. This means that co-ordinates of inhabited planets are not valid from one game to the next.

Bear in mind that Blood is degenerating. Don't be surprised if his hand gets the shakes from time to time: it's normal. It's also a bad sign! HE MUST GET HIS VITAL FLUID BACK. That's the only way he can regenerate. To recover the vital fluid, Blood has to find the NUMBERS and disintegrate them in the Ark's fridgitorium.

This software explores a new concept, the BIOGAME. The characters can evolve, be born, die, trade information and generally get on with their own independent lives. Strange things can happen: planets can appear or disappear overnight, the behaviour of matter is out of our control!

You can transport beings from one planet to another but you'll have to win their trust first. Study their behaviour closely, because knowing who you're dealing with can mean the difference between life and death.