



**EPYX**

COMPUTER GAMES  
THINKERS PLAY

*Byron  
Coons*

**THE  
NIGHTMARE**  
by Marc Russell Benioff



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## DREAMING . . . OR IS IT REAL?

*“night mare (nit’mar), n. 1. a terrifying dream in which the dreamer experiences feelings of helplessness, extreme anxiety, sorrow, etc. 2. a condition, thought, or experience suggestive of a nightmare in sleep: the nightmare of his years in prison. 3. (formerly) a monster or evil spirit believed to oppress persons during sleep. [ME; see NIGHT MARE ^2]*

—SYN. 1. *phantasmagoria. See dream.*”

—From THE RANDOM HOUSE DICTIONARY of the ENGLISH LANGUAGE, Random House, New York, 1966

How do you awaken? I do it by degrees. One moment I’ll be buried in sleep, then I gradually become conscious of comfortable old friends . . . the feel of the soft, cotton sheets on our double bed . . . the sweet singing of robins, nesting in the old apple tree, behind our bedroom window . . . the scent of the fresh garden blossoms on our bureau.

When I open my eyes, I always look first at Paul’s picture on my nightstand. Even though he has been gone for almost four years now, his dear face still, somehow, makes the world seem right every morning.

*WIDOW, n. A pathetic figure that the Christian world has agreed to take humorously, although Christ’s tenderness towards widows was one of the most marked features of his character.*

—“THE DEVIL’S DICTIONARY” by Ambrose Bierce, 1881

How do you awaken? I just have. But, there are no friendly sheets around my body or bird songs . . . delicate bouquet or familiar face to greet me.

I just woke up. It is cold, damp, and silent. I am all alone, shivering in my nightgown, standing in what appears to be the main hallway of a gigantic, old castle.

I’M SCARED!

*A very young girl—call her Emma—  
Was seized with a terrible tremor.*

*She had swallowed a spider  
Which stung her inside her—  
Gadzooks, what an awful dilemma!*



Before me is a huge, brass-plated, double door, filled with mysterious shapes and figures in basic relief . . . like Goya's famous doors.

The flickering light from the torches, jutting out from the walls on either side of the door, makes it difficult to see the detail. Mercy—I'm not too sure that I wish to see it clearly! Looks sinister . . . filled with satyrs, grinning skulls and other horrors.

I'm sure that, even if I had the strength to pull them open, I will not be able to leave through those doors, as there is a huge bar across the door, secured by a rusty, old padlock.

GOD. . . HOWAM I GOING TO GET OUT OF HERE?

*"What is the question? . . .*

*What is the question? . . .*

*If there is no question, there is no answer."*

—Gertrude Stein's last words.

From "FAMOUS LAST WORDS"

by Barnaby Conrad,

Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1961

Do you dream in color? All of our children asked me that. Until this minute, I never really gave it much thought. I always smiled, answered I never remembered enough of my dreams to tell whether or not they were in black and white or color.

*"To die, to sleep;*

*To sleep: perchance to dream: ay, there's  
the rub:*

*For in that sleep of death what dreams  
may come,*

*When we have shuffled off this mortal coil,*

*Must give us pause."*

—HAMLET. Act II, Sc. 2, by William Shakespeare

If I'm asleep, then I must dream in color. The walls . . . a dirty, greenish-grey, like the slime that collects around the edges of a pool of stagnant water. The floors are worn smooth as if—O' MY— IS THAT SOMETHING COMING THIS WAY DOWN THE CENTER HALL?

*"When will you pay me?*

*Say the bells at Old Bailey.*

*When I grow rich,*

*Say the bells at Shoreditch.*

*Pray when will that be?*

*Say the bells of Stepney.*

*I am sure I don't know,*

*Says the great bell at Bow.*

*Here comes a candle to light you to bed,  
And here comes a chopper to chop off  
your head."*

—Old English Nursery Rhyme.



IT'S GETTING CLOSER! A pale mauve glow . . . like Edith Peckenworth's bedroom curtains. Never liked mauve . . . especially with white polka-dots on yellow wallpaper.

Well, mister apparition, I just don't want to meet you right now. Better hurry down the hall to the left . . . find somewhere to hide until I can figure out what to do.

So alone, helpless! Probably no one knows that I've gone. Wish Edith were here with me!

*"My wife lies dead, and here she lies,  
Nobody laughs and nobody cries:  
Where she is gone to and how she fares,  
Nobody knows and nobody cares."*

—Epitaph on a tombstone in Painswick  
Churchyard, Gloucester, England

The next time that I have nightmares sending me off to gloomy castles, I certainly wish that my unconscious mind will have sense enough to let me be wearing slippers. Floor is so cold that it's sending icy tingles clear up to my fingertips!

Is that thing still following me? Good gracious, it is! Better hurry a little faster.

This place certainly is desolate. Nothing but bare stone walls with burning torches sticking out of them every hundred or so feet.

A DOOR! Can I hide in there? O' NO—IT'S LOCKED!

*"Twas brillig and the slithy toves  
Did gyre and gimble in the wabe;  
All mimsy were the borogoves,  
And the mome raths outgrabe.*

*'Beware the Jabberwock, my son!  
The jaws that bite, the claws that catch!  
Beware the Jubjub bird, and shun  
The frumious Bandersnatch!'"*

—JABBERWOCKY by Lewis Carroll

Better run a little . . . hall goes to the right here. Thank goodness, Hester has forced me to jog with her.

"Who knows, we might run into Prince Charming out there on the trail!"

Prince Charming indeed! Didn't I try to laugh the idea off? Bless her, she wouldn't let go.

"Gee, how will I ever get the will power to go out, run on foggy mornings, if you don't keep me company?"

Hester, Hester . . . my sweet precious little girl, if you could only see your mother now, running for her life down some strange hall, in some abandoned wild place, from something that she doesn't know what . . . and your mother is getting so very, very tired.

THERE'S A STAIRWAY!

*"Do not go gentle into that good night,  
Old age should burn and rave at close of day;  
Rage, rage against the dying of the light.*

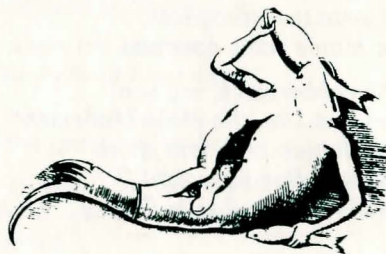
*And you, my father, there on the sad height,  
Curse, bless, me now with your fierce tears,  
I pray.*

*Do not go gentle into that good night.  
Rage, rage against the dying of the light.*

—DO NOT GO GENTLE INTO THAT GOOD  
NIGHT by Dylan Thomas

Goes down. Dark! Where does it lead? A dungeon? Looks steep. Can't see the steps. Too real to be a dream. Watch out I'm slipping . . .

Good god—I'm falling! O' NO—PAUL . . . PLEASE HELP ME!



## HOW TO PLAY THE NIGHTMARE

Ever go through a 'haunted house' late at night, all by yourself? You did! WOW . . . quite an experience wasn't it?

Imagine for a moment that, for some reason, you couldn't get out. The doors were locked . . . the windows barred, and you were being chased by all sorts of dreadful creatures. If you didn't solve the mystery . . . find the keys or some way to free yourself in just a few hours, you would have to remain there forever!

Now, as one of my favorite radio hosts, the Hermit, used to say, "Turn out your lights. Turn them out!"

AND TURN ON YOUR COMPUTER.

### 1. GETTING STARTED

ARE YOU DREAMING . . . OR IS IT REAL?

SUDDENLY, YOU FIND YOURSELF TRAPPED IN A GIGANTIC, OLD CASTLE . . . LOST IN A MAZE OF HAUNTED CHAMBERS, AND PURSUED BY FEARSOME MONSTERS.

Begin the game by plugging in a joystick. Then carefully follow the special instruction sheet found inside the game box on HOW TO LOAD the game. (If you don't have the instructions, call our Customer Service Representative.)

Answer the prompts as they appear. When the main program displays, you will see yourself as a tiny figure, surrounded by a black background inside the castle. You are on the first floor by the main entrance.

You move by pushing your joystick in the direction you wish to travel. The castle has four floors: first, second, third, and a spooky dungeon. When you come to a stairway, and wish to go up or down, step on the stairs. The program will automatically boot, temporarily blanking out the screen, and then display another floor of the castle.

*HELPFUL HINT: The first time you explore the castle, it might be helpful to draw a rough map of each floor, before going to the next floor. It will save you time when you return to that floor.*

Many doors of the castle are locked and require keys. If the computer responds with the message, "THE DOOR IS LOCKED!!," then you must find and pick up the key for that door, before you can enter that room.

Other areas require that you must first obtain certain magic objects, before you can enter or pass through them. For example: In order to enter the Bird Room, you must first pick up an umbrella. To get by the gargoyle in The Tunnel of Death, you must first obtain the quarterstaff, in order to destroy him.

If you attempt to enter or pass through an area, and the computer responds with the message, "THE DOORWILL NOT OPEN," then you will have to obtain a specific magic object, in order to do so. Both keys and objects must be found in a definite sequence. Finding these treasures also increases your power.

Each time you find something, the computer will name it. Most of the time, that will tell where to look next.

*HELPFUL HINT: Early in the game, when you can obviously see that there are still other keys or objects remaining to be picked up on any given floor, it might be wise to try to get them before you move on to next floor. We suggest that you begin your search in the dungeon.*

## 2. YOUR OBJECTIVE

IS TO ESCAPE FROM THE CASTLE BEFORE YOUR NIGHTMARE BECOMES REALITY AND YOU ARE TRAPPED THERE, FOREVER!

Therefore: you have a time limit of eight hours 'real time' in which to set yourself free. After 8 hours the computer will declare you dead. At that point in the game, you will be given the option of "Reincarnation." That means that you start over at the beginning of the game. You will receive a new time limit and lose all of the keys or objects that you have gathered previously.

## 3. WHAT TO AVOID

As you search the castle, you will meet and have to overcome many nasty menaces, such as the Rat Pack, the Mistress, the Ghost, and others.

First, try to avoid allowing one of the monsters to kill you. These unpleasant surprises are a constant threat. They tend to hang around the main hallways and attack you every chance that they get. You have one advantage—the computer warns you every time one is near.

When one attacks, you have the option of either doing battle or fleeing. If you flee, you will suddenly find yourself in another part of the castle.

If you choose to battle the monster, follow the computer's instructions. They are self-explanatory. The computer calculates your power versus the monsters and determines the winner. If you're slain, you will be given the option of "Reincarnation." Choose it, and you will be back at the start of the game.

*HELPFUL HINT: During the early stages of the game, while your power is low, it might be prudent to avoid battle with any of the monsters altogether. Your chances of winning are less at that time.*

Also, try to avoid walking through the walls. You can't! The computer sounds, "BANG!" and prints out, "OUCH!!" Then you will have to back up, in order to continue your journey.

## 4. KEEPING TRACK OF YOUR STATUS

Every so often, the computer will display your status: the length of time that you've been playing and your amount of power. The longer you play and survive, the greater your power.

Any time you press the red button on your joystick the computer will display on your screen a menu with a choice of: Inventory, What Floor You're On, or Saving Game. By moving your joystick slightly, you can direct the pointer to your selection. Then press the red button. The computer will exercise that choice.

The Inventory shows: how many keys and objects that you've collected so far, how long you've been playing in computer time, and your present power.

If you select Save Game, the computer will store your game in a special file. Then, when you wish, you may start up your game again at the point where you left it. But, be warned: when you use this save feature it also erases any old game previously stored in that special file.

## 5. ADDITIONAL HINTS

The final enchanted item that you must find, in order to leave the castle, is Your Mind's Eye. You will find it at the end of the Tunnel of Death.

This tunnel is guarded by four terrible guardians, who will not let you pass unless you have the right magic objects. One of the most horrible is Moriu. He was beheaded years ago, by the former owners of this castle, for a crime that he did not commit. Only when his lost head is returned to him will Moriu be able to rest in peace, and allow you by his guard post in the Tunnel of Death.

**GOOD LUCK on your search! You will need it to ESCAPE THE NIGHTMARE!!**

