STAGE FRIGHT

Text Adventure
By Mike McCauley

FOR USE WITH ADAM™

MAKING A BACKUP

Before you play, you should make a working copy of
STAGE FRIGHT. To make a copy, simply use any
"image backup" backup utility (like our own KopyKat
program). If you don't have a backup utility, you
should get one, because it's important that you
make backup copies of all your valuable software.
Once you have made a working copy of **STAGE FRIGHT**,
use that medium only; store the original medium in
a safe place.

LOADING STAGE FRIGHT

You'll be happy to know that **STAGE FRIGHT** is auto-
loading. To load, simply insert the **STAGE FRIGHT**
medium into drive #1 and pull **COMPUTER RESET**. The
software will begin loading. After a few moments
the title screen will appear, followed by the Game
Options Menu.

LOADING-TIME

We have taken several steps to make the loading-
time of **STAGE FRIGHT** as fast as possible. The main
two programs have been saved in "binary format"
(using **Intel-LOAD V1.0**) for super fast loading
(over 10 times faster than normal!). We have also
done a couple things that make the loading-time of
the data pack versions of **STAGE FRIGHT** much more
efficient. First, ADAM "homes" the tape, after
loading in programs or data, in the "background" of
program execution to help make subsequent loading
faster. Second, we have custom placed the **STAGE
FRIGHT** files near the center of the data pack –
making access to them by the data drive much
quicker.

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**STAGE FRIGHT IS A MULTI-LOADING GAME.
DO NOT REMOVE THE DATA PACK OR DISK
FROM THE DRIVE DURING GAME PLAY.**

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BASIC INFORMATION

The first problem you're going to run up against is a screen asking you all kinds of personal questions like if you want to play a saved game, see the intro message, and whether you want to be an actor or an actress. The first parts are simple - you can't play a saved game if you haven't saved one yet, and you'd better look at the intro message, it's really kinda interesting (all about who you are and how you got into this mess). As to the last question, that's nobody's business but your own. Choose carefully though, you can't change halfway through (this game does a lot of neat things, but come on now!).

KEY INFORMATION

This is an adventure game - it's like reading a book where you decide what the hero is to do before you turn each page. Those of you that have played games like this before already know that anyway and those who haven't are now more confused than ever. This one works different than the others anyway, so I'm going to explain it all to you whether you want it or not.

You will be given information on the screen about where you are, where you came from, how you got here and where you can go from here and what is here where you are. Simple, right? What you've got to do is to tell the game what it can do with its story. You get to do this in two - count them - TWO ways.

(Have you finished counting yet?) The first is by TYPING IN SENTENCES. These are special sentences. They are simple sentences. Begin each sentence with a verb (take, give, renounce, prestidigitate, etc.), usually. End the sentence with a noun (cat, dog, pickle, Johnny-jump-up, etc.), usually. Make sure that the noun at the end of the sentence is the thing that you want the verb to refer to. (Or,

"...the thing to which you want the verb to refer" for those who don't want to use a preposition to end a sentence with). If you tell the game, "TAKE THE LITTLE BROWN FULL-SIZED MODEL OF PRESIDENT LINCOLN'S EAST CLOSET OFF THE CRYSTAL CUPCAKE", it would think about it a while and then conclude that you wanted it to put a cupcake in one of your pockets.

The parser (a fancy word - ignore it. It just means the "things-you-type-in-figure-outer".) does have some very nice features. It knows the difference between "PUT ON" and "PUT DOWN" and things like that. It also doesn't care if you use lower case or UPPER CASE letters. It also knows all kinds of punctuation, such as a question mark (?), hyphen (-), period (.), and apostrophe ('). Can YOU say "APOSTROPHE", boys and girls?

The parser is also smart enough to tell apart words that you might not think it can. It can tell "HOME-RUN" from "HOME RUN" and "HOMERUN" and things like that; so make sure you type in exactly the word YOU want it to think about. (BIG FAT HINT - Look at the way a word is spelled in the messages that the game gives you.) Oh, it might also try to outsmart you by pretending you meant something other that what you did; for instance, suppose you see a "BOX OF MATCHES" and you say, "SMOOSH ALL OF THE MATCHES" and it says, "I DON'T WANNA". Maybe if you tried, "SMOOSH EVERYTHING IN THE BOX" it might say, "OK, I SMOOSHED THE BOX. NOW WHAT?" Got it?

By the way, remember I said there were two ways to communicate with the game? Wanna hear the other one? SPECIAL FUNCTION KEYS! Real big time stuff. Here's a run down:

A MOVING EXPERIENCE

Don't bother typing in commands like "GO EAST". They won't work. Use the ARROW KEYS. The top arrow moves you NORTH, the right one moves you EAST, etc. You come to a stairway and what do you do? Simple. Push the HOME key and the top arrow to go UP and the HOME key and the bottom arrow to go down. (There will be a quiz.)

SMART CHOICES

The SmartKeys (top of keyboard, numbered I II III IV V VI)
are used to get you through things quickly like setting up
the game. Just do what the screen messages tell you.

SAVING IT

To save a game in progress or to jump to a game you saved
earlier, use the STORE/GET key. The screen will tell you
what to do from there. You can save up to six games on the
medium using the SmartKeys (remember them?) to label the
saved games. Using a key deletes the game that was
previously saved by that number.

QUIET!

If the little "beep" bother you, use the CLEAR key to turn it
off (and back on too). The beep is to remind you not to
start typing until the game is ready.

INVENTORY

Use the PRINT key to see what you're carrying, wearing, etc.

LOOK AGAIN

If the room messages scroll off the screen as you're
conversing with the game, the INSERT key will clear the
screen and re-display the messages. Special messages, such
as those resulting from actions that you have just taken, may
NOT reappear.

DROP OFF

In case you panic and want to drop everything, use the DELETE
key to save time. This will NOT trigger any follow up
actions that dropping individual objects might have.

GETTING IT ALL BACK

Now you want to pick up the whole mess at once?   You guessed
it, use a key.   This time it's the MOVE/COPY key. Look out
though, you will then be carrying everything. If you wish to
be "wearing" anything, you must put it on before or after
using the MOVE/COPY key.

ESCAPE

Bet you can't guess which key breaks you out of the program.
Right, the ESCAPE/WP key. "CONT" might get you back in. If
not, try "RUN".

KEY SUMMARY

When you type in a command, use the RETURN key to enter the
message. When you use a special function key, do NOT use the
RETURN key.   Also, do not try using a special function key
after you've started typing a command. It will just be
ignored.   First backspace to erase the command and press
RETURN, then use the special function key.

WHAT'S BEHIND IT ALL

Would you believe this thing is HUGE.   I mean we're talking
JUMBO, JOLLY GREEN GIANT, GODZILLA! It took four BASIC
programs using seven binary files to pass information back
and forth and four sequential text files to hold all the
terrible puns and clues and things like that. That in itself
doesn't necessarily need to impress you, but what the program
does will (I hope).

One small, ittsy-bittsy disclaimer - the thing is crammed
into every nook and cranny possible (I even checked out the
video display memory. You should have seen what it said to
me about that!) so at the tightest moments, the poor computer
has less than 200 bytes of memory left out of the original
25944!   It's really trying very hard to keep everything

straight, but if it seems just a tad confused if you enter a
four-line command just after it printed out a five-line
message, give it a chance. (Seriously, if you do get an "Out
Of Memory" error, enter "RUN". That should clear the
deadwood enough to squeak you by.)

WHAT'S IN IT FOR YOU

The object of this game is to win.   So far, so good.   The
game messages will give you more details, but in general,
there are three "rounds" to the game, each with a new goal
and new problems (as well as most of the old problems from
the previous rounds).

ROUND I leaves you trapped in the empty (?) theater building
and you must find the clues and tools to overcome a dozen
traps and obstacles to get out.

ROUND II sends you back in to get rich, overcome another half
dozen traps and find a second way out.   The added twist (as
you'll find out) is that it is impossible for you to take the
treasure with you, but you must to win.

ROUND III is where life gets hard. You get sealed back in
again, and now you must perform a rescue (and you're the only
person in the place), retrieve a special object (that is
located in a non-existent room - map the game very carefully,
you'll see what I mean), and for the final bow, you must come
up with the miracle of getting out of this place while all
the exits remain sealed.

SMALL HINTS

This game is a little unusual in that it is laid out on a fairly realistic map of a theater. It is a rectangular field, several layers deep. **MAP IT CAREFULLY.** It will be the only way to tell where you are at times, and at times, it could mean your "life". (For instance, you cannot walk on the grid directly above the stage without taking the proper precautions, so it is important to know when you are at the edge of the grid.)
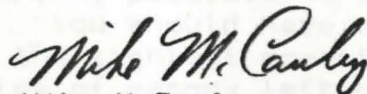
MOST of the time, you will want to look at, read, move, and/or take everything you come across (what the exceptions might be are something I won't tell, and you can sit on it). Of course, there are MANY sequential events in the game, so something that didn't work at one time might work later, and something that was dangerous at one time might be safe later. There are clues EVERYWHERE, even in this paragraph.

BIG HINT

As in all games of this type, the most important thing is to get a feel for the thinking that went into the game. There are enough red herrings and blind alleys to keep things interesting, but there is an overall style to the clues, puzzles, and solutions. You must see the pattern to be able to interpret the more subtle clues. In fact, the final challenge is presented with the message, "YOU FIGURE IT OUT IF YOU CLAIM TO BE SO SMART".

BREAK A LEG

That's theater talk for "Good Luck!"

Mike McCauley
Father of **STAGE FRIGHT**

ABOUT THE AUTHOR...

Mike McCauley, 40, single parent, respected Insurance Safety
Engineer by day, dabbler in "the impossible" by night.
Honorary Life Member of and holder of the 1986 "Golden
Sweatshirt" award from the Conejo Players Theater in Thousand
Oaks, California for coming up with "impossible" props (e.g.
an 8 ft. tall pink ostrich with fully animated face, a
mushroom with a built in smoking chimney, a 40 lb. watermelon
capable of being drop-kicked across stage, trick knives,
guns, crossbows, logs, lions, deer, snakes, graphophones,
pinball machines, coffins, and teacups that dissolve on
stage).

My first computer experience was in college in 1969. My term
project had a bug that refused to die until the computer
center technician had me drop the deck of IBM cards onto the
floor to randomize my data. It worked.

STAGE FRIGHT is an offspring of my hobby of doing "the
impossible" (probably because I usually foul up the simple
stuff — it's been said of me that if asked the time, I tell
how to build a watch).

After playing some of the "early" text adventure games for
the ADAM, I decided to try my hand, but, instead of just
trying to do a "better" game, I decided to do the impossible
in terms of complexity and sophistication, and in many ways,
STAGE FRIGHT gives assembly language programs a run for their
money. (I'm also extremely humble.)

NEED HELP?

There are times when even the most brilliant adventurer gets stumped. That's when *THE STAGE FRIGHT CHEAT SHEET* will come in handy. This is the other booklet that came with your **STAGE FRIGHT** package. This booklet includes dozens of hints and tips from Mike McCauley to help you get through **STAGE FRIGHT**. Resist the temptation to peek at the hints at the first sign of trouble, or (heaven forbid!) flip through all of the hints at once!

The booklet is structured into forty questions. Each question is followed by two number/letter combinations -- which direct you to the appropriate hints or clues (some are better than others). Play the game as long as you can **without** breaking the seal on the booklet. And **then** only look at the hints to the problems you **really** can't figure out by yourself.

DON'T USE THE HINT BOOKLET
INSTEAD OF YOUR OWN MIND!!

Mike McCauley
Father of STAGE FRIGHT

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Please send along a letter with all defective returns explaining in detail the problem.

Stage Fright concept, program, and puns by Mike McCauley.

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