

# THE SERPENT'S STAR



— **ULTRASOFT** —

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An Animated  
Adventure

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## The Story So Far:

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It was some consolation that the Tibetan government had confiscated the scrolls Francisco Roboff had stolen from you, Mac Steele, some months past.

But you must have the scrolls again! You had had them long enough to know they referred to a city of immortality, held in some strange state by the powers of a marvelous gem. The scrolls repeatedly talked of a blue star sapphire, THE SERPENT'S STAR, belonging to a dragon god. The size of the stone was given in some ancient measure, but your best guess is that the stone is huge; easily approaching 50,000 carats, and would undoubtedly bring 25 million dollars! The historical significance of the stone began to pale next to its value. The scrolls told of the ageless city of Kara-Koram, held in the spell of THE SERPENT'S STAR, but you did not have time to determine where the city was.

You knew that 10 of the 13 scrolls were now ensconced in the Potala, a fortress disguised as a palace in the city of Lhasa, the capital of Tibet. You have plotted and schemed for months to enter the country, whose government had particularly bad memories of you from your previous visit and angry departure. The officials did not consider Roboff's theft of the scrolls from you as significant, only that they had recovered their revered writings. But that was in the past. Now you are close! You have entered the Potala and made it to the library the scrolls are stored in. It seems too easy. All you have to do is break into a glass case and remove the scrolls . . .

## The Serpent's Star

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THE SERPENT'S STAR is made possible by the use of **ULTRA**, a specialized adventure and graphics generation language in 6502 Assembler that produces full-screen animation in a wide variety of circumstances. **ULTRA** allows a full-color Hi-Res screen (stored in about 1K, for the technically minded) to be drawn quickly enough to give the illusion of movement. THE SERPENT'S STAR represents a combination of animation, professional looking graphics, entertaining sound effects, sophisticated text handling and speed that has not been seen in the Apple adventure genre before.

## Starting the Game

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### Equipment Required

THE SERPENT'S STAR must be booted in a 48K Apple II or IIe DOS 3.3 system. The impact of the exceptional graphics is greatly reduced on a black and white system, so a color television, or better yet, a color monitor is highly recommended.

### In Case of Trouble

If you have any difficulty booting the disk, please consult your DOS 3.3 manual for its troubleshooting suggestions. If THE SERPENT'S STAR disk will not boot, and operation of your system is otherwise perfect, please contact your Ultrasoft, Inc. dealer for a replacement. Please see the Warranty statement for details.

### Use of Both Sides

In order to support the complexity and sophistication of the graphics and copious text in THE SERPENT'S STAR, and to provide you with this quality of software at a reasonable price, both sides of the disk are used. It is necessary to flip the disk only when the appropriate point is reached in the play of the game. You will be told exactly when to flip the disk. The **SAVE GAME** and **RESTORE GAME** instructions give more details relevant to this topic.

## Syntax, Hints

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The text-handling capabilities of THE SERPENT'S STAR are exceptional, and you will enjoy testing them to their limits. If a room has more text that can be presented at one time, [waiting] will be printed in the lower left corner of the screen. Typing any key will present another three lines, until all text has been shown and the game's **OK>** prompt returns.

### Sentence Structure

The game understands full sentences as well as the truncated English typical to the seasoned adventure player. **LOOK AT THE BOOK OF MATCHES** is understood to be the same as **LOOK MATCHES**. The game expects each command to have a verb and an object, and understands modifiers when they are appropriate. A verb without an object may be incomprehensible. Multiple verbs in a single command are very confusing to a computer as well as people. **GO EAT KICK** is equally hard for either to interpret. A number of examples of statements **ULTRA** does not understand and its responses, are listed in the next section.



## Syntax, Hints cont.

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### Word Interpretation

THE SERPENT'S STAR has a large vocabulary, but be aware it uses many more words than it understands. If one does not have the desired effect, try synonyms or rephrasing the request. If the system does not understand what you have typed it will respond in a number of ways:

When **ULTRA** does not recognize anything —

You type: **FERNAP**

**ULTRA** responds: **I don't understand FERNAP.**  
(Nobody knows what 'FERNAP' means.)

When **ULTRA** does not know an object or no object is in the command —

You type: **GET FERNAP**

**ULTRA** responds: **I don't recognize an object in GET FERNAP.**

You type: **GET**

**ULTRA** responds: **I don't recognize an object in GET.**

**GET LAMP**

**ULTRA** responds: **You don't see a lamp anywhere around here.**  
(When you left it elsewhere.)

When **ULTRA** doesn't know a verb or no verb is in the command —

You Type: **FERNAP GUN**

**ULTRA** responds: **I don't recognize a verb in FERNAP GUN.**

You Type: **CHEW GUN**

**ULTRA** responds: **I don't recognize a verb in CHEW GUN.**  
(**ULTRA** doesn't know what **CHEW** means.)

You Type: **GUN**

**ULTRA** responds: **I don't recognize a verb in GUN.**

When you use a verb that **ULTRA** recognizes with an object that it recognizes but thinks inappropriate, it will tell you so.

Bear in mind that **ULTRA** finds only the first five characters significant, so typing in **INVEN** for instance, has the same effect as typing **INVENTORY**. Words are fully spelled out in the examples for clarity.

## Commands

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### RESTART GAME

will start the game at the beginning without needing to reboot the disk.

## **Commands** cont.

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### **DIRECTIONS**

A direction is considered to be a verb by the game. **NORTH** or **N** will attempt travel to the north. Please note that directions requiring more than five characters must be abbreviated to be understood. **NW** must be used instead of **NORTHWEST**, which would appear the same as **NORTH** to the game. The same is true for **NE**, **SE**, and **SW**. Other valid directions to try are **UP** or **U**, **DOWN** or **D**, **FORWARD** or **F**, **BACK** or **B**, **RIGHT** or **R**, **LEFT** or **L**, **ENTER**, **EXIT**, **IN** and **OUT**. Additional synonyms are used but you will be left the task of discovering them.

### **INVENTORY, SUPPLIES, EQUIPMENT**

Lists the items you have in your possession. There is a limit to what you can carry, which you will surely find!

### **LOOK, EXAMINE**

Shows you the details of the area you are in, usually but not always mentioning objects that may be relevant to your quest. This information may be different than that provided when you first enter a room or place, so it is always useful to ask.

### **SEARCH**

Will find things that **LOOK** and **EXAMINE** may not. If you don't **SEARCH** you may miss many valuable clues.

### **GET ALL, TAKE ALL** (other verbs may be supported)

Will get everything in the area you can carry.

### **DROP ALL, PUT ALL** (other verbs may be supported)

Will drop or deposit everything you have at your feet.

### **GET ALL BUT** (object), **TAKE ALL BUT** (object) (other verbs may be supported)

Will get everything in the area you can carry except the (object) in question.

### **DROP ALL BUT** (object), **PUT ALL BUT** (object) (other verbs may be supported)

Will drop everything you have at your feet except the (object).

**SOUND OFF/ON** will cause sound effects to be turned off or on.

**QUICK TRAVEL** will cause briefer length travel.

**NORMAL TRAVEL** will cause normal length travel.



## **SAVE GAME**

### **BE SURE YOU HAVE AN INITIALIZED DOS 3.3 DISK BEFORE CONTINUING.**

Your place in the game, along with any possessions (or handicaps!) you may have acquired can be recorded to a SAVE GAME disk. Only one game may be saved to each disk, so multiple disks will be needed if several players wish to save their places.

- 1) Type **SAVE GAME** (return).
- 2) You will be prompted to remove the game diskette and insert a blank, initialized diskette in Drive 1.
- 3) Press (return) and your place will be saved to the disk. If you see **Error During Disk Action**, chances are you do not have an initialized DOS 3.3 disk. Please follow the prompts and try again, but be sure you have an initialized SAVE GAME disk. SEE YOUR DOS 3.3 MANUAL FOR INSTRUCTIONS ON INITIALIZING A DISK.
- 4) To resume play from that point, remove the SAVE GAME disk and reinsert THE SERPENT'S STAR disk on the side indicated and press (return).

## **RESTORE GAME**

This command allows you to pick up in the game where you left off with the **SAVE GAME** command, above.

- 1) Boot the game diskette from Side A in Drive 1.
- 2) Type **RESTORE GAME** (return) and wait for the prompt.
- 3) Remove the game disk and insert the SAVE GAME disk.
- 4) Type (return). You will be prompted when the saved game has loaded. If you see **Error during Disk Action!**, you are not using a valid SAVE GAME disk. Follow the prompts and try again.
- 5) Otherwise, Remove the SAVE GAME disk and reinsert the side of THE SERPENT'S STAR disk indicated, and press (return).

## **Multiple Commands**

You may enter as many commands as will fit in the 37 character 'window,' provided that they are separated by a comma, period, or the words **AND** or **THEN**. The commands will execute sequentially, sometimes very quickly, until a significant event or an error occurs at which point execution of the command string is terminated. For instance, if mid-way in a string of commands you are killed, the rest of the actions are no longer relevant. If you type **KICK RUN AND GO NORTH THEN PICK UP THE BOX, ULTRA** will respond with an error message when it sees **KICK RUN** and the remainder of the command is ignored. A string of valid commands such as: **GET ALL, LIGHT MATCH THEN LIGHT LAMP** will execute perfectly.



## Helpful Hints

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If THE SERPENT'S STAR is one of your first adventure quests; Congratulations! You've made an excellent beginning. A few suggestions from experienced adventure-players may be of help:

- 1) Map everything on a piece of paper! Many mazes are too complicated to map in your head.
- 2) Examine all things at all times. Nothing is totally unchanging.
- 3) **SAVE** the game frequently. It will save much frustration.

### WARRANTY

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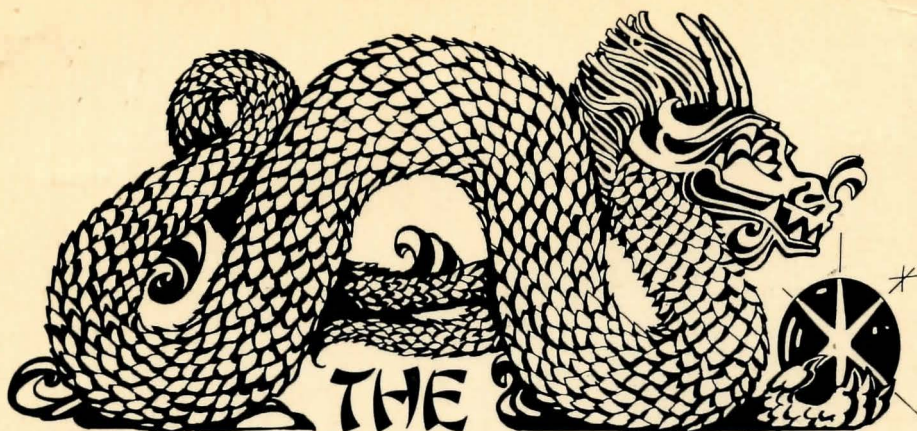
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# THE SERPENT'S STAR

An Animated Adventure  
(two sides)

**Animation!** The feeling of motion is created by drawing a series of Hi-Res screen with split-second timing. You are not just told that you are moving from place to place, you see and feel it! Traps have more realism. Puzzles are more involving.

**More Phenomenal Graphics!** Each picture is drawn by a professional artist and then transformed into ULTRAvision™, Ultrasoft Inc.'s exclusive graphics language.

**Readable Upper/Lower Case Character Set!**

**Intelligent Text Interpretation!** The ULTRAcodes Interpreter was designed to make playing the game more life-like and playable.

Margot Comstock Tommervik, Editor of **Softalk** magazine, considered the precursor to **The Serpent's Star** to represent "... major breakthroughs in adventure graphics." She found the puzzles "absolutely delightful" and anticipated "great pleasure and more surprises following the progress of this innovative company."

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Requires: 48K Apple II, one Apple Disk Drive, and DOS 3.3.

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