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BASICS

Introduction

As you might have heard the rumor, or simply read behind the box, there's a new greenhorn in town by the name of Edgar. This frail and naïve fellow just arriving from a small city will soon be caught in a web of mystery, danger, crime, intoxication and personal ambition. The poor boy will most certainly need a helping hand, or, more precisely, a clicking hand.



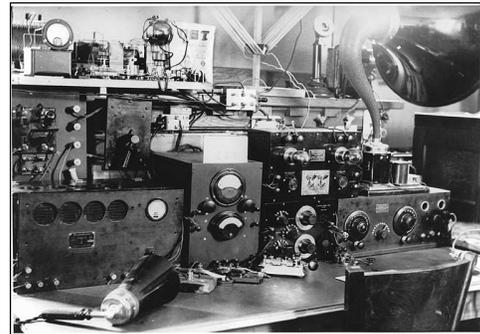
Others than you would have said: "I have problems of my own, why should I help this guy?" But since you are still reading this, we know you are of the heroic type, a guardian angel of digital characters in need. "I'm up to the challenge", you say to yourself, "just tell me where to click!"

Read on, and you'll soon be on your way to make Edgar happy ever after.

System requirements

In Edgar's world, the adventure you're about to undertake would necessitate a huge steam operated apparatus of many tons and spanning over numerous football fields. But in your own world of magical fairy godmothers, this will suffice:

- Windows XP
- 900 Mhz CPU (2 GHz Recommended)
- 256 MB of RAM (512MB Recommended)
- CD-ROM drive
- 400MB Free Hard Drive Space
- DirectX 9.0c or higher
- Sound card of some sorts



Installation

Just as trains need coal to move forward, your beautiful computer needs some data to operate its magic. To install the game, simply insert your CD-ROM, wait for the automatic interface to launch and choose to install the game. You can safely accept all default choices made by the installer but you are also free to change some of the options if you're comfortable with that.

If you've inserted the CD-ROM and nothing happened, it means the Windows CD *autorun* option has been disabled. Not to worry, you can manually get the CD-ROM to startup in numerous ways including this one:

- Click on the “START” menu on your *taskbar* (look down, it should be there somewhere).
- On the right panel, click on “Run...”. Then, click on “Browse”, select the CD drive on the “Look in:” bar at the top on the window, and finally double-click on “Install.exe”.

How do you like that clicking already? Don't worry, *Carte Blanche* is much simpler than your operating system.

Launching the game

If you've installed the game with the default options, you should find a *Carte Blanche* icon on your desktop. Simply double-click on it and buckle your seatbelt for some wild action.

Can't find the icon on your desktop? Try under “Absurdus” in the “All programs” section of your “Start” menu.

MAIN MENU

Beginning a new game

After the opening of the curtain and beautiful camera traveling in Edgar's hallway, click on “Begin” and voilà! We did say it would be simple...



Continuing a previously saved game

Click “Continue”, spot your last saved game and “load” it.

Quitting

You don't want to do that, not before you've played for at least a 15 hours!

PLAYING

General procedure

There are only two buttons in this game. This can certainly sound limitative, but with these two buttons you'll be able to talk, observe, review your items, practice

ventriloquism or even taxidermy. So this interface is not limitative, ok? It's simple, that's all. And that's a good thing!

The two buttons are the left and right buttons of the mouse. The right button will invoke the almighty interface, which will be dealt with later. Let's now focus on the left button.

Whenever you feel like doing something in Edgar's life, the left button is your way to go. Move the cursor on the screen until it's over the object you want to act upon and then click on it. You'll know if this particular object is interactive by seeing its name appear on the bottom area of the screen. After having done that, a menu will appear with all the interactions currently possible with this object. There are three types of interactions: *actions*, *items* and *competences*.



Clicking on the same object at different moments in the game will not necessarily give the same options. With the acquisition of clues, items and competences, Edgar will increase his possibilities of interaction.

Actions (blue menu items)

Actions allow you to do things with the clicked object. For example, you click on an iguana and you get two blue buttons: "Examine" and "Pet". If you choose "Examine", Edgar will take some time to observe this iguana. If you click on "Pet", well, just try and see what it does!

Items (green menu items)

Just like everybody in a liberal society, Edgar has the right to own things. Well these things may sometimes be used in conjunction with other things. Let's say there's a locked door and Edgar has a key with him. There are good chances the green "key" button will appear when you click on that door, and it might even unlock the door, who knows?

Competences (red menu items)

Remember the time when you couldn't solve integral equations? How young and innocent you were back then. Eventually, someone told you how to do it, and then the more equations you solved, the better you became! This is a competence of yours which has been increased by exercising.

Things are the same in Edgar's life. Whenever one of his competences can be used with an object, a red button will appear with a number between brackets.

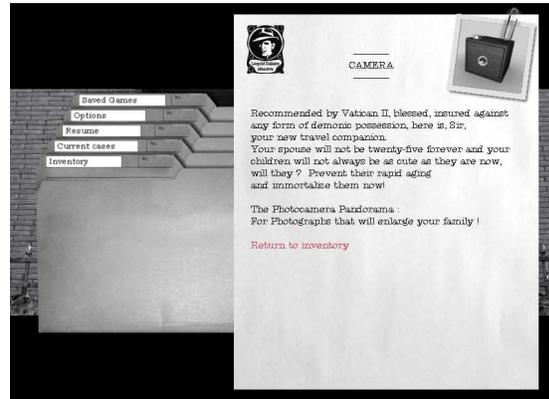
For example, if you click on a banjo and the red button: “Music [3]” appears, it means you can try using your music competence which is at the third level. If you succeed at playing the banjo, your music competence will consequently increase to the 4th level, which means you might later try playing something harder, a bell for example.

The interface

Click on your right button to display the interface. Everything red in the interface is clickable, everything black is interesting to read and talk about with your friends.

Inventory

This is the list of all worldly things in your possession. Click on any item to get first class sales pitch that will remind you of all the good reasons for carrying this thing around.



Current cases

However engrossing *Carte Blanche* might be, we understand that some special circumstances might make you lose your train of thought or a few lines of precious dialogue. You might have caught a glimpse by the window of someone scratching your car with a key, or your spouse tantalizing you with barbecue spare ribs. In any case, this section of the interface will keep track of things done and things to do in Edgar’s life.

Résumé

As all good members of the work market, Edgar keeps track of his competences in a classy yet efficient résumé. As Socrates once said to his myopic nephew: “Know yourself”.

Options

Different people on earth means different notions of comfort. Some like their games in English, others in French. Some like their sound effects and music loud, other don’t. Some like to see things clearly, others prefer to walk in eternal darkness.

Saved games

To save your game, simply click on the “Save” button below one of the five available saved games. Then you’ll be able to type something which will become the label of this new saved game. When you’re done, press the *enter* key to continue playing.

To restore a game, click on the “restore” button under the saved game of your choice.

QUITTING

At any time in the game (except while navigating the interface) press the *escape* key on the keyboard to exit to Windows. (We’re legally bound to include this option despite our firm opposition to it)

GETTING STARTED

If you’re new to adventure games and need some help getting started, here are a few actions you can do at the beginning of the game which should get you going smoothly.

- Right click to go in the interface.
- Read the letter your uncle left you in the inventory. He left you a car!
- “Examine” the commode.
- Take the key that lies on it.
- “Exit” back to the room view.
- Use the “Help wanted” ad on the phone to call your future employer.
- Exit to the hallway to go there.
- Talk to Malaki (if you dare)
- Try to exit the hallway by the door.
- You need a map to drive around town.
- Go back to your room.
- Take the map on the wall.
- Try to leave again.
- Click the “Agency” on the map and go get a job, you social parasite!

SUPPORT

Troubleshooting

When I try to run Carte Blanche, I am told the program can’t find the file D3DX9_28.dll (or something like that)

- You need Directx9c or later for the game to work. It comes with the installation of *Carte Blanche*, perhaps you’ve cancelled it without noticing.

Uninstall *Carte Blanche* and reinstall it paying close attention you don't cancel the Directx installation.

I have lost the focus on the game (either with alt-tab, or with another program popping up, or something else) and when I came back, there were some strange things in the display.

- Usually this will be solved by exiting a room and coming back. The changing of focus should normally not break the game, but it is best to avoid it.

There are strange visual behaviors in the game: flicking, slicing or other...

- Try to get the latest video drivers from your graphics adapter manufacturer (ex : NVidia or ATI). This will usually solve problems linked to display.

Everything's in black and white and the image is in a letterbox format. I've paid 1000\$ for a 21 inch True Color LCD monitor, /\$/|@&!!!*

- That's what you get for buying artsy independent auteur games.

Contacting us

Should you experience problems not listed in the *Troubleshooting* section, you can contact our support team at support@absurdus.net. Please be as detailed as possible in the description of the problem and include any knowledge you might have of your specific computer hardware and configuration.



This is for technical problems alone, and not for hints or solutions to puzzles in the game. It is not a dating line either, so please stop sending suggestive pictures and amorous sonnets. Keep them for the other email addresses on our website: www.absurdus.net.



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