

BEYOND

CHALLENGING SOFTWARE

DOOMDARK'S

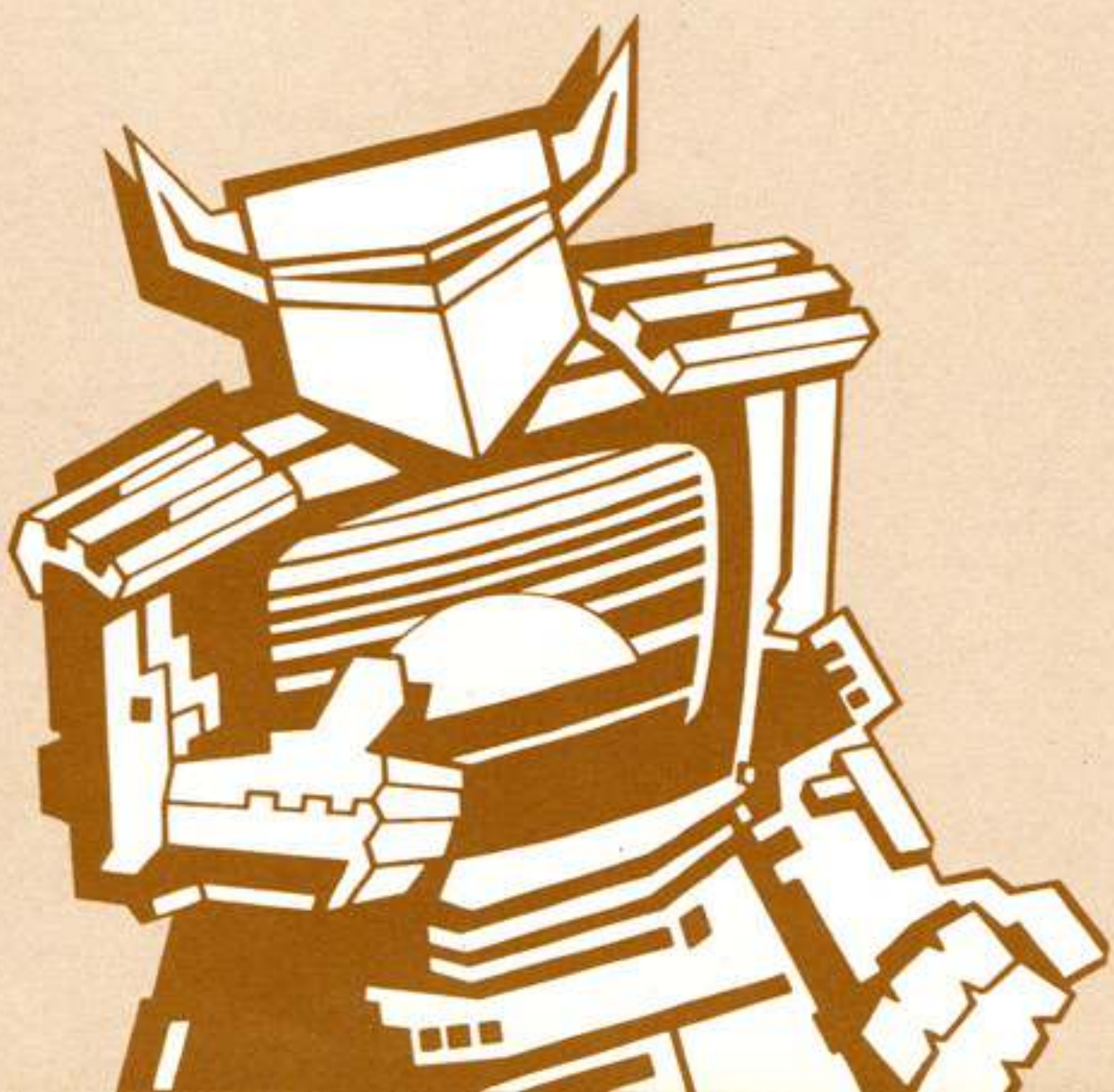
RAVAGER



Spectrum
in 48K

by Mike Singleton







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Using this booklet

Welcome to the second Epic game in the Midnight trilogy, Doomdark's Revenge. This booklet does not represent an iron discipline which must be fought through before you can enjoy the game, but we hope it will help you to get the most out of it.

When you have loaded up, put the keyboard overlay onto your Spectrum and start to press the top direction keys to look around the bitter landscape of Icemark. Mike's introduction opposite should whet your appetite and make you realise the depth of the challenge which awaits you. Turn to the Game Play section and experiment with the keys marked on the overlay.

By now we hope you'll be keen enough to read the little novelette which forms the first part of this book and sets the scene for the struggles ahead. It should help you to fit into the role.

As play progresses just turn to the relevant guidelines to help you over puzzles and inform you what you must aim for in certain situations. We've tried not to give too much away to prevent you making some exciting discoveries for yourself, but we think we've covered enough to allow you a real chance of completing this demanding adventure.

And when you have finally defeated it, remember that the challenge isn't over yet, the third part of the trilogy, possibly the most exciting yet, is still to come, when Mike will send Morkin down to the warmer lands which lie below Midnight itself, to find **The Eye of the Moon**.



FOREWORD

It is many moons now since the Lords of Midnight first appeared out of the soft, wearing gloom. Those of you who took up their challenge and rode with them to battle against the cruel Witchking will need no reminding of that epic struggle. But now a new epic tale unfolds, the story of Doomdark's Revenge.

The Lords of Midnight was the first game to use "landscaping", which allows the player to view the world through the eyes of the characters and commanders he controls, to move through it as if he truly were riding across its broad plains, through its deep and silent forests, between its towering mountains. Doomdark's Revenge uses the same technique but paints on an even broader canvas that yields no less than six thousand map locations and forty-eight thousand panoramic views — one for every byte of RAM in your Spectrum!

The game itself involves both quest and warfare, bold exploration and careful strategy. You can play on your own or with friends; there are enough different characters at your command for all the family to join in your struggle against Shareth Heartstealer, Empress of the Frozen Empire! On the following pages, you will find the tale of the Moonprince and his son, Morkin, when peace befell Midnight after the War of the Solstice. And the tale of Shareth's anger which brought a premature halt to the rejoicing. This you must read if you are to put on the mantle of the Moonprince and do battle against the Cold Empress in full knowledge of her dread powers. Further on you will find the "Guide to Play" which, of course, is vital reading too.

I wish you luck on your quest and hope you enjoy the game as much as I enjoyed writing it!

THE ICEMARK CHRONICLES

CHAPTER ONE — PEACE



The way was obscure but he moved onwards, little caring what he moved towards. The trees thickened and the darkness of the forest closed in upon him, yet he hardly noticed; his thoughts were frozen; tomorrow unimaginable, today forgotten, yesterday a strange dream that had happened to someone else, — if it had happened at all. Now that the thing was destroyed, what else was left to do? All the fear Morkin had held at bay for so long, because he had to succeed was unleashed with that success. His mind was just a wilderness now, bleaker than the Plains of Despair.

Elsewhere, time still moved. The burden of the Witchking's cold dominion had lifted from the lands of Midnight like a sudden waking from nightmare. At first, not daring to believe that their ordeal was over, the people simply took quiet and solitary pleasure in the respite. Then, as dawn followed dawn and the dread did not return, the day of tidings came. Doomdark is finished! The Witchking is dead! Rejoice, we are free! Borne on the wings of whispers, the message took flight and sped across Midnight, bringing laughter and song to hearts that had too long been empty of all but despair.

In its wake, the warriors of the Free made their weary way home, welcomed as heroes of old in each village or hamlet on the way, yet longing beyond all for the welcome of their hearthfires and the glad faces of their kin. South from Ushgarak, Luxor's great army trudged a desolate path, at Kor the army turned and plunged into the Forest of Dreams. No signposts marked their way but the Fey, gathering magically out of the gloom of the trees bearing lanterns and firesticks, lit a deep road into the darkening forest to their hidden fastness, the fabled Citadel of Dreams.

The victorious army made camp beneath its shimmering walls. The city was in turmoil as it set about to prepare a vast feast of celebration. All through the encampment ran rivers of children, festooning the soldiers with garlands and ribbons and begging tales of the war. Still, a sadness lingered, the memory of friends irrevocably lost, of brothers' spilt blood, of the cold implacable Ice Fear that had stricken so many good men.

Tarithel did not remain at the feast. As night fell and the city put on all the raiments of light it could find, she slipped quietly into the forest. Her father would not notice; with all the grand and puissant Lords of the Fey and the Free gathered here, he would scarcely have a moment to spare. He would expect her presence, but he would not notice it. Though there was no doubting the greatness of the triumph, what part had she in a warrior's carnival? In the silent, dreaming glades,

lit only by starlight and with the song of the forest as the only fanfare, Tarithel would whisper her thanksgiving to the dead and the living and the dying.

The deep shadows of the forest wrapped the girl in long gowns of grey and she slipped through the twilight like a wraith, swiftly, silently trailing between the colonnades of trees. Far from the clamour of the city she wandered, letting the forest lead her down its secret ways, letting her mind mingle with the slow and ancient thoughts of the dreaming trees to catch glimpses of Midnight's long-forgotten summer, the birth-pangs of its green dawn and the dark dance of death auguring autumn. Gradually her pace slackened, as if the rhythm of the forest had seized her lithe limbs and urged a gentler motion upon them, until she halted at last in a deep glade. There she stood, flanked by tall towers of green, waiting and watching just as the forest had waited and watched down the long ages. Gently she swayed, a young sapling in the midst of its elders, 'till softly the dew gathered like stars in her sweeping tresses and bedecked her green cloak with glistening jewels.

The boy rode past her like a ghost, unmoving, unseeing. Tarithel called out to him but he did not turn. Then, suddenly struck with fear for him, she whispered a strange, wordless song, swift of rhythm yet slow at heart and as clear and broad of melody as the wind rushing through the tall grasses of the open plains. The boy's horse lifted its head, turned and cantered up to her, nuzzling into her cloak as it stopped beside her. The boy himself stirred too and turned his puzzled eyes upon her.

She saw him then, as the moonlight struck down through the trees and bruised his face with its stark brilliance, lost in desolation. His eyes were as cold as death, his mouth a thin scar frozen on a face of stone, yet Tarithel seemed to see behind this mask and sense a greeting in his icy gaze, a hint of laughter in his barren eyes. She smiled warmly.

"I bid you welcome, sir, to the Forest of Dreams. Will you not tarry a while? 'Tis a long and lonely road you follow."

The boy was silent for a moment and then he laughed bitterly.

"I follow no road, I simply ride," his harsh words softening even as he spoke. "I go where my horse takes me; if he has led me here I should be thankful, for fairer vision than thee I have never seen."

Suddenly, the boy's marble face was lit by the faint fire of a blush and he turned his eyes from Tarithel to gaze intently at the snow on the ground. Tarithel shivered inwardly, sweet delight and bitter apprehension mingling and clashing within her as his words touched her open heart, his gauche compliment, his hopeless statement of no intent, his simple and unbroken pride. She loosened her mind to let his dreams flow into her yet she felt nothing but the slumbering, ageless reveries of the Forest. Somehow, he had sensed her intention and had drawn into himself so swiftly that his mind was intangible. She gasped with wonder.

"Come," she said, "Let us find shelter. The night grows long and cold."

The boy smiled. "Then you must ride with me; I cannot ride and have you walk."

Tarithel laughed softly.

"And can you not walk?"

"I can," he replied, then lowered his voice, "But I would rather we rode, together."

With a nimbleness that surprised him, Tarithel took two swift steps, grasped his arm and leapt up behind him onto the horse. Wrapping her warm arms around his waist, she brought her mouth close to his ear and whispered, "The path to the left, gallant knight."

Suddenly, the boy spurred his horse forward; like an arrow unloosed from a taut bow, they galloped across the frozen glade into the deeper darkness of the Forest of Dreams. The boy laughed in delight, the girl clung tightly to him, knowing he expected her to, and the stallion snorted with pleasure, stretched out its swift legs and ran for sheer joy after so many days of dreary wandering.

It was but a few minutes before they broke out of the forest again and saw before them the Citadel of Dreams, its high towers glimmering like amber in the glow of a thousand torches, its sheer walls bright with the banners of the Fey and the Free, its great gates decked with flags and lanterns. Before it lay another city of tents and pavilions that shivered and shimmered as the air trembled in the heat of bonfires that bejewelled the dark plain. The boy reined in his stallion and gazed in awe.

"What is this place?" he asked. "Why this carnival? How can they?"

Tarithel felt the boy's muscles stiffen and begin to tremble. His growing fury was unmistakable.

"How can they do what?" she asked, gently.

"How can they rejoice, how can they rejoice?"

"This is the Citadel of Dreams, stronghold of the Fey, Imlath Quiriniel, Jewel of Midnight. Before you lie the armies of Luxor the Moonprince, bearer of the Moonring, the War Ring of the House of the Moon. They have journeyed here from the gates of Ushgarak itself. They rejoice — surely this much you know — because Doomdark is defeated, slain by the sword of Prince Luxor himself!"

The boy slumped forward, buried his face in the stallion's long mane and began to sob uncontrollably. Tarithel leant forward to try to comfort him, whispering gentle questions and words of solace, but he would not speak or listen. At length, she dismounted and led the boy and his stallion across the open snow, through the ranks of lanterns and bonfires and merrymakers, through the high arches of the Gate of Dreams, along the bustling streets, to a deserted courtyard deep within the Citadel.

In the midst of the courtyard stood a green oak. Lamps flickered in every branch, casting dancing rainbows on the worn cobbles under its vaulting canopy. Beyond, a fountain tumbled molten silver into a shivering pool and, further still, on a plinth of marble, blazed a bowl of green and golden fire that sent a trembling mist of light and warmth throughout the stillness. The peace of the courtyard seemed to fall upon the boy and his sobbing slackened. He slid down from his horse, letting Tarithel take his hand, letting her lead him to the side of the fountain pool, then letting himself down to rest beside her on the sitting-stones by its bank.

Tarithel wrapped her arms around him and hugged him tightly, as though he were a small child who had grazed his knee. Gradually, his sobbing ebbed away.

"Tell me what ails thee," she whispered.

The boy eased away from her. He took her hands in his and raised his head to gaze at her steadily. His eyes were sparkling with gladness as his mouth suddenly creased into the broadest of smiles.

"I thought he was dead," said the boy in a rush of words. "I thought the War was lost and Midnight doomed. Rejoicing! I thought they were rejoicing for Doomdark's victory. I thought I'd found it and destroyed it all in vain. Too late to help, too late for anything. I don't know where I've been since. What did it matter? If the Foul One had won, nothing mattered anymore; everything would be wilderness. Why bother finding haven? There would be no haven, there would be no peace, there would be no warmth, ever. I thought he was dead, but he lives!"

"Who? Who did you think was dead? What did you destroy? You talk in riddles that I cannot fathom," said Tarithel, but the boy seemed not to hear.

"When I cast it into the lake, it shrieked and screamed as it dropped towards the water. Even the air about it seemed to thicken, as though the thing was trying to save itself by freezing the very wind. It fell so slowly, like a knife dropped in syrup. I thought it might stop. Then, when it touched the water, came a crack of thunder as it shattered and flew apart. Suddenly, the lake erupted with boiling clouds of steam that caught and melted the fragments even as it burst asunder."

"I leapt and danced for joy. It was gone, forever. The task was done. It was over! Then, as the lake stilled and the clouds of steam thinned away to nothing, a rolling peal of laughter boomed from the North and an icy yet velvet voice spoke to me. 'Fool,' it said, 'You are too late, you puny child. Luxor is dead. His mighty armies are maggot-fodder now. Xajorkith has fallen and burns even now; Corelay has been ravaged and every man, woman and child put to the sword — if they were lucky! The Fey fawn at my feet. All you have done me is a favour. It is so tiresome having to dispose of obsolete possessions.' Then the laughter rolled again and slowly dwindled away. For days, perhaps moons since, I've just wandered aimlessly. There was no point after that, no point at all."

The boy's eyes glazed over as he remembered. Another moment and he would be lost again in the silence of his long ride. Taking his shoulders in her hands, Tarithel shook him until he was jogged back to wakefulness.

"What did you destroy?" she insisted.

The boy looked at her quizzically, as if this were no puzzle at all.

"Why, the Ice Crown of course."

For the moment, Tarithel was aghast. Then, she shook her head and laughed softly.

"That is the sweetest answer I have ever heard. 'Why, the Ice Crown of course.' A mere bauble, a deed of no more consequence than . . . than casting away an old cloak. You must be Morkin, then, son of the Moonprince."

Tarithel looked at the boy as though he were a dream that might suddenly vanish. He gazed back at her, wistfully.

"Yes, I am Morkin," he said, "But your name I know not."

"I am Tarithel, the daughter of the Lord of Dreams and Lady of the Forest, since my mother relinquished the right on the eve of the Solstice."

"But you are so young and the Forest — I have wandered in this Forest for days — it seems to have no end!"

"I am as old as you, my Lord, and though you be but a boy, you have travelled half of Midnight on your quest. Was **that** an easy task?" said Tarithel, fiercely.

Morkin laughed and shook his head. He looked up slowly and fixed his eyes upon hers. He could not believe the completeness of her beauty, still less the longing and love that shone in her face, no more than Tarithel could believe the rapture with which he beheld her. Neither could look away, neither could speak, so fierce and tender was the fire they saw kindled in each other's glistening eyes.

Blindly, their hands touched and twined. Morkin seemed to melt inside as he felt the warmth of her slender hands seeking and finding his, Tarithel felt a fresh, cool wind blow through her as his firm but yielding grasp closed upon hers and slowly, like two branches bending towards the same brilliant light, they drew closer together until their lips touched in the gentlest of kisses, to part swiftly as though each had brushed a candle-flame. They looked at each other, bewildered by themselves. Then, suddenly overwhelmed by longing and delight, Morkin took Tarithel in his arms, crushing his lips against hers. They clung to each other tightly and, as they kissed, they seemed to become one fire, one flame burning in the cold, clear night.

Though the stars span overhead, though the night seeped away like a dark liquid running from a crystal goblet, their thirst for the heady wine neither had tasted before stayed unquenchable. As the sounds of feasting waned and the footsteps of homecomers rang in the cobbled streets, Tarithel led Morkin within and took him along the winding corridors to the Western Tower.





CHAPTER TWO – THE FROZEN EMPIRE

Kahangrorn rang to her cries. Though she raged and screamed for her slaves, none dared to approach her. The messenger who had brought the news had been disembowelled on the spot and her hands were still bloody with his entrails. She stormed at the thick stone pillars of the great hall and clawed at their unyielding flesh as if she would tear them apart and bring the tall roof crashing about her.

"I will bathe in his blood! I will feast on his flesh! How dare he? How **dare** he usurp me?" she ranted.

Flecks of froth flew from her lips and she span round and ran the length of the hall to the heavy oak doors. She flung them apart as if they were mere matchwood, then sped through the dark corridors and up the twisting stairways to the battlements of the Fortress of Kahangrorn. Standing on the southern walls, staring like one demented into the blue distance, she shrieked forth a storm of filthy curses. Shareth the Heartstealer, Empress of the Icemark, dread ruler of the Frozen Empire, was distraught.

The object of her invective was Prince Luxor, Lord of the Free and Moonprince of Midnight. Though it was two moons now since the War of the Solstice had come to a sudden end with the fall of Ushgarak, the news of Doomdark's defeat had travelled north at a snail's pace as the last cohorts of the Doomguard struggled across the Frozen Wastes towards the sanctuary of Icemark. Only six out of six hundred men had completed that terrible journey but fewer still survived the road that led from the Outlands, through the Kingdom of the Giants, to the borders of the Frozen Empire. Just one warrior reached the gates of Kahangrorn, only to find death there at the hands of the Empress, by way of thanks for his travail.

None but the Wise knew that Doomdark, in earlier moons, had himself journeyed through the northern wilderness and found the ice-locked land of Icemark. And few even of them knew that there, in brief union with a cold Queen of the North, he had spawned a daughter. She was called Shareth and was, perhaps, the only thing that Doomdark had ever loved. The Witchking left her in Icemark for her own safety, fearing that some would seek to use her against him, but his long-roving vision kept watch over her. As she grew and matured in evil under Doomdark's distant tutelage, she gathered about her the trappings of power and came to rule a kingdom if anything, more foul than his.

When she learnt of Doomdark's death at the hand of Luxor, she was not stricken with grief, for grief was beyond her. Her consuming fury sprang from other sources. Someone had dared to touch her father, had dared to challenge and destroy her flesh and blood. To Shareth, it was almost beyond belief that a pitiful Prince of the Free had the temerity to take that pleasure from her, so long had she planned in gruesome detail the murder of the Witchking and the seizure of his domains. Doomdark had tutored her too well in his own ways, for her to feel anything but delight at the thought of disposing of one whose power outweighed hers. The insistent ache for power and dominion burst to sharp pain when she learned that the Moonprince now ruled Midnight. Midnight was hers! Midnight was hers! Though Doomdark might not have planned it so, believing foolishly that his only daughter loved him in return, and crying out even with his dying breath, "Avenge me, Shareth, avenge me!" she was about to wreak a terrible revenge upon the Free and their Moonprince.

The battlements of Kahangrorn darkened as the storm clouds gathered, summoned from the ice-barriers of the North by Shareth's wails and shrieks. Safe in their watchtowers, the soldiers of the Iceguard tried to joke.

"The she-hag's brewing up a hurricane!"

"Someone's going to catch it, mark my words."

"Nothing like a good dose of plunder and frightening to clear the air, that's what I say."

"I'll wager two-to-one it'll be the snivelling Dwarves who get their come-uppance this time."

"Nah! Haven't you heard? Some nancy prince from south of the Wastes has tickled her fancy – she's blowing him a kiss, that's all!"

Shareth raised her long arms to the sky and cried into the wind, uttering words no man could understand. The storm, however, seemed to leap and swirl as her strident voice pierced through the air. Across the Frozen Empire, from Fangrorn to Imiriel, the dark sky became a boiling turmoil. Then, as Shareth shrieked, the great storm gathered itself and sped southwards across the Icemark.

Shareth turned and fled to her tower, her fury spent for a while. Her private room there had no walls or windows or ceiling, only mirrors. The Empress flung herself upon the silken sheets of her bed and looked up at herself. She liked what she saw. The anger of the past hours had brought a rare flush to her cheeks and now that she had set her revenge in motion, her marble-sculptured face had softened to perfection. With slim and nimble fingers, she smoothed the white satin of her gown.

"I am so beautiful!" she cried, "I will make the whole world love me!"

She smiled seductively at herself and then turned to look in a different mirror. Like her father, the Witchking, Shareth had only ever loved one thing in her life and followed his example faithfully; he loved Shareth, so did she. Night after night she fell asleep surrounded by her own ravishing reflections. Even in dreams she did not escape herself, and she woke each morning feeling more beautiful, more irresistible than ever.

"I will journey to Talorthane tomorrow," she whispered to herself, "And have the Giant for a while. His praises are so clumsy but he loves me so **much**!"

The arch Empress began to giggle like a maiden. Dreamily, she stroked her long, white arms and wriggled from the bed. She approached one of the mirrors closely, blowing a soft mist of breath onto its polished surface, then watched entranced as the mist melted away and her own image took form again before her. She twisted her face into a grimace and bunched up her shoulders.

"Your hair is like an eagle's nest, my love and your nose is as cold as a mountain," she bellowed at herself, finally collapsing back on the bed in fits of laughter at the wit of her parody.

Night fell swiftly upon the Icemark, hastened by the storm that flew from the North. From the great City of Varangrim, a motley battalion of Giants gathered swiftly together at the approach of the storm clouds and marched towards the borders of the Frozen Empire, hoping to forestall the onslaught that such foul weather was apt to carry in its wake. Likewise, from Carudrium and Carorthay, the Dwarves sent forth their warriors towards Fangorn to challenge, if needs be, the marauding Iceguard.

Further south, in the City of Imorthorn, the Lords of the Fey met in council to discuss the import of the great tumult in the sky. Some were for raising the alarm at once and marching on Thigrak and Glormane, fearing that the Dwarves had betrayed them to the Heartstealer. Others were waiting, reasoning that even if the Dwarves had betrayed them, it would be better to fight the Iceguard in the deep and tangled forests than to march forth onto the open plains. The Lord of Imorthorn, however, was adamant that the storm was destined for other lands.

"You will have heard by now, surely my Lords, of the war that has been raging in the lost land of Midnight far, far to the southwest of our Icemark. Though it is now two moons since its conclusion, the news of the Moonprince's victory has travelled slowly. Rumours of a secret traffic betwixt the Heartstealer and the Witchking have come to our ears for many moons now. Indeed, on the eve of the Solstice itself, did we not waylay a band of dark and foul warriors riding north from the Gate of Varenorn? I know it is many, many moons since any of our number has dared its terrors but that is the only passage we know of that still leads to Midnight. I am sure the Heartstealer sends the storm not against us but against this Luxor, this fabled Moonprince of Midnight. Look, even now the storm turns southwest!"

The Lord of Imorthorn raised his arm and pointed to the tall windows of his hall. The council turned and looked out at the dark, flying clouds. There was a murmur of agreement and then confusion as they argued what they should do if this was indeed the truth of the matter. At length, they agreed that their brothers in the land of Midnight, the Fey of the legendary Forest of Dreams and other forests now long forgotten, must be warned of the peril that approached them. Meanwhile, they should make ready for war, for there was no foreseeing Shareth's plans. If she had designs upon Midnight, the route of her armies might well pass through the Kingdom of the Fey and there was small hope that such a passage would be peaceable.

Accordingly, as the night deepened, the Lord of Imorthorn climbed to the Tower of Hawks and took his swiftest bird, a white falcon, from the mews. Round one of its jesses, he wrapped a thin strip of parchment, fastened it there with hot wax and pressed his seal upon it. Then, unhooding the falcon, he spoke softly to it and lofted it into the turbulent sky. In a moment it was gone, winging its way towards Midnight and the Citadel of Dreams.



CHAPTER THREE – THE COURT OF THE MOONPRINCE

Tarithel and Morkin tarried long in the warmth of each other's company before they rose to meet the day. Then, side by side, they rode out through the Gate of Dreams towards the pavilions of Luxor and his Lords. The crowds of soldiers and townsfolk parted, with a flurry of whispers and questions, and closed in again behind them, staring in wonderment. But when they dismounted at the doorway of Luxor's pavilion, Morkin found the way barred by a sentry.

"You cannot pass, sir. Prince Luxor is in council and will not be disturbed."

"I fear he will be if you bar the way to his son, good soldier. Pray let us pass."

The whole assembly turned as they entered and the Moonprince leapt to his feet at the unasked-for intrusion. At first he looked puzzled, not expecting to see such slight and slender figures approach. Then, suddenly recognizing the boy, his countenance lightened and filled with joy. He flung his arms out high and wide.

"Rise, my Lords!" he shouted, "My son has returned!"

Shining with pride, Luxor cast aside his chair at the high table and rushed to greet the boy as he climbed, hand-in-hand with Tarithel, the steps to the dais. He stared fondly at the boy for a moment, then clapped a hand to his shoulder.

"Morkin, my boy! Others would return haggard and drained from such a quest as yours, but you have thrived! Is it two inches or four that you have grown?" laughed the Moonprince.

Morkin smiled, suddenly rendered speechless. Then, finding his tongue, he said, "Father! Once I thought never to see you again but you have won the great victory and stand before me alive and well. I may have grown in height but not so much as in happiness to see you once more!"

There was a murmur of approval at this from the gathered Lords. Few had set eyes on the boy before but his courtesy warmed their hearts to him. Rumour, which had it that he was brash and wild, they now put aside. Luxor turned to them and raised Morkin's arm up high.

"This is the boy who saved us at Ushgarak, who, as we fought our bloody way through hordes of Foul creatures to the gates of the Witchking's palace and felt his cold breath clawing at our strength and our courage, smashed the heart of his dread power and lifted the burden of the Ice Crown's terror from us! Salute him, my Lords. Though mine was the sword which plunged into the Foul One's heart, this is truly the hand that slew him!"

The assembled warriors lifted their swords high into the air and cheered loud and long. Morkin tried to tug his hand down, but Luxor kept a firm grip until the applause had dwindled. Then the Moonprince turned back to the boy.

"My son, I would thank thee for simply being still alive, but now we all have cause to give thee our thanks. If there is a gift that lies in my power to grant, name it and it shall be yours."

"Father, do not praise me so; the victory was yours! You slew the Witchking, your armies took Ushgarak, your skill and vigour brought him to his knees," said the boy fiercely.

"Your part was as much," insisted the Moonprince, "More! Do you imagine we could have succeeded without you? I speak not now as your father, Morkin, but as Moonprince of Midnight; name your wish. The Lords of Midnight will not countenance your refusal."

"I fear it is not yours to grant, my Lord," said the boy.

"How so?" asked Luxor, puzzled and disturbed by this strange turn of events. "Tell me your desire!"

"The hand, tomorrow, of this fair maiden who stands beside me: Tarithel, Lady of the Forest of Dreams. That is my wish, Father."

Morkin looked up steadily into the eyes of the Moonprince, as if daring him to say aught against his ambition. Amongst the assembled Lords, there were more than a few swiftly stifled guffaws and the company was suddenly beset by an outbreak of coughing and clearing of throats. Luxor stayed impassive, as if he had not heard the words his son had uttered. Then Morkin turned to Tarithel and Tarithel turned to him. The smiles that passed between them left no doubt as to the candour of the boy's resolve. Stiffly, the Lord of Dreams rose to his feet and began to speak.

"My Lord Moonprince," he began, "This is my only daughter who stands before you. Her hand may not be yours to give but, if she wills it, I would give it gladly to your son."

"I do, Father, I do!" cried Tarithel suddenly.

"Then let this be a token," said the Lord of Dreams, "That the Fey and the Free are now as one

under the protection of the House of the Moon. My consent is given."

With that, the Lord of Dreams sat down again. There was turmoil, then, amongst the gathered company. Loud cheers and congratulations filled the long pavilion. The Moonprince smiled and waited till the tumult died away.

"Your wish seems granted, Morkin, and a fairer daughter I could not hope for. Yet you are both so young. Think upon it, both of you, before you tie a knot that all of time cannot undo."

His words were hardly from his mouth before they both answered, almost in unison, "We have, my Lord!"

The Moonprince turned to his council and laughed, as if in appeal to them.

"What can I do, my Lords? I have given my word," he said. Then turning back to face Morkin and Tarithel, he softened his voice and added, "So it shall be. On the morrow you shall wed. All that remains now is to celebrate this happy, unlooked-for moment. Come, sit with me, and we will talk of the things that have passed 'fore the new feast begins — a feast this night of love, not war!"

Many tales were told that day, many battles fought again by tongue. Luxor's high council, summoned to decide the fate of Doomdark's old dominions, put aside its purpose and fell to reminiscing. The mead flowed, brave deeds grew braver, terrors waxed more terrible yet and the day drew slowly on. Yet, before evening fell, a strange event came to pass. A white falcon flew in through the open doorway of the pavilion, circled thrice above the high table, then came to rest on the shoulder of the Lord of Dreams. As the rest of the company stared in amazement at the bird, Tarithel reached a gentle hand towards it and nimbly untied its jesses. Then, at a soft word from her, it took flight again and disappeared from the pavilion.

Tarithel handed the message attached to the leather thong to her father. He puzzled at the seal for a moment, then broke it apart to unravel the parchment. The ancient Fey runes he found there surprised him; his skill in them had not been lost but it was many moons since he had needed to use it. He read the message slowly and carefully before turning to Luxor. His expression was a mixture of astonishment and concern.

"My Lord Moonprince," he began, "This message hails from lands beyond our ken, from the cold Icemark which has been severed from Midnight for a thousand moons and more. A Lord who calls himself Imorthorn writes it, addressing himself to his brothers Fey of the Forest of Dreams. It warns of a great storm flying from the North towards Midnight and of the evil designs of one he calls the Heartstealer upon our fair land. He also calls her Empress of the Frozen Empire and hints that she may have made some pact with the Witchking before his demise. I know not what to make of it but one thing is certain — it was indeed written by the hand of a Fey. The ancient runes are known to few of us and none, to be sure, of others."

The Moonprince shook his head slowly, as if lost for anything to say. A heavy burden seemed to have fallen on his shoulders. At length, he spoke.

"If this message bears the truth, then it seems our long struggle is not over yet, but surely this Imorthorn cannot be right. The Frozen Wastes lie between us and the lost land of Icemark. Why else was a falcon sent to bear these ill-tidings to us? I cannot see how any Empress of the North, however evil her intent, can threaten the peace that now befalls Midnight. The Wastes would destroy armies a thousand times stronger than Doomdark's before they ever reached our borders. As for warning of a storm, should we sharpen our swords, wax our bowstrings and prepare to do battle against the wind and snow? This message makes no sense," said the Moonprince, wearily.

"We can at least tighten the guy-ropes of our tents and wear thicker cloaks," shouted the Lord of Ithorn. "Perhaps this Lord Imorthorn is a dealer in furs and cannot find market for his wares!"

The company of Lords broke into laughter at this. More ribald suggestions followed and the portent of the strange message was forgotten in the general merriment. Yet Luxor remained troubled. He drew the Lord of Dreams aside and spoke to him quietly.

"My friend, see what more you can discover of this matter. Though I cannot see how, I fear this message is more timely than we imagine."





CHAPTER FOUR – THE STORM BREAKS

A dark and starless night fell upon the Forest of Dreams as, high overhead, the vanguard of Shareth's storm gathered. Long past midnight, the feasting finished and the two cities of stone and of cloth fell silent under the lightless sky. Though the parting would be brief and tomorrow he would be joined forever with Tarithel, Morkin could not sleep. He wandered restlessly around the encampment, pausing at the dying campfires to gaze into the embers and wonder what the future held for him and his beloved Tarithel.

In the distance, he heard the vague rumble of thunder and instinctively drew his cloak more closely about him. He thought of the strange message from the Icemark. Turning to the North, he peered into the chasm of the sky where soft-flickering flames of lightning lit the heavy clouds. A shiver ran through him; this was no ordinary storm; there was something unnatural in the way it moved, in the far distance churning swiftly southwards yet overhead almost motionless.

An urge suddenly betook him to see once more the sweet glade where Tarithel had found him. In a few minutes, Morkin was on his horse and riding slowly through the blackness of the forest, his way lit only by memory. Whether it was Morkin or the stallion who truly found it is difficult to say, but eventually he emerged into the broad clearing where the snow glowed on the frozen ground like a pale, phosphorescent pool. The stallion walked to the heart of the glade and waited there while the boy peered around himself, trying to conjure out of the darkness his meeting with Tarithel.

Above, the storm clouds thickened and deepened and circled over the Citadel of Dreams, as though searching for something. Thunder cracked and lightning raked the steep walls of the great fortress, scouring the stone with its blinding fire. Sheets of hail hammered at the rooves and windows of the tightly huddled houses and the taut canvas of the encampment. The wind wailed through the empty streets, tearing at slates and shutters, rending proud banners, flinging itself at the tall wooden gates till they groaned and shrieked at the onslaught. The turbulence flew outwards from the Citadel, whirling through the ancient trees of the Forest, stripping them bare and snapping their stout limbs.

Into the clearing where Morkin sat rushed a flurry of debris and flying leaves, yet at the very centre of the glade the air remained unruffled. Suddenly everything grew still. Then, a moment later, a torrent of sharp and icy hail sliced down. The stallion, not waiting for command from its master, started for the shelter of the trees but before they reached the edge of the clearing a single bright tongue of blue fire licked down from the tormented sky and seared into the ground before them. The stallion reared, throwing Morkin into the snow, then rushed off into the darkness.

Stunned and half-blinded, the boy clambered to his feet to go in search of his terrified steed. Once again, the lightning struck down ahead of him, so close that he could feel its heat on his face, feel his skin tingle and tremble as its power crackled through the air about him. Then the storm loosed off bolt after bolt after bolt until the boy was trapped in a circle of raging, incandescent fire. So fierce was the raw power that danced around the boy that his very muscles seized and locked. Helplessly frozen there by the lightning, he could only stare into its blinding blue flame until consciousness fled him.

Suddenly, the storm relented, the lightning stopped abruptly and the unconscious boy slumped to the ground. Above, the towering clouds simply melted away and the bright stars gleamed in the sky once more. The calm that followed was profound; the Forest seemed to hold its breath and wait, as if suspecting that the slightest whisper would bring the terrible tumult raging through it again.

Morkin lay unmoving, wrapped in strange dreams. A woman stood before him beckoning gently. Somehow he knew he was hopelessly in love with her. As she stood there smiling, radiant in her beauty, he ran towards her open arms yet he seemed to draw no closer. Her deep, crystal eyes mocked him. You must run more swiftly to catch me, my love, she seemed to say, you must run more swiftly.

As he ran, the ground gave way beneath him and he began to tumble down a dark chasm. The wind rushed swiftly past him and he seemed to fall for hours before he saw a tiny point of light glimmering in the yawning space beneath him. The point grew and grew as he fell until it became a room into which he was falling from the dark and open sky. Upon a silk-strewn bed lay the woman

who had beckoned him, her sheer and perfect beauty now naked to his enraptured eyes. But, as he tumbled, an invisible hand seemed to reach out and slow his downward flight until he hovered above the sleeping figure, almost able to reach out and touch her, but not quite.

So the dream ran on, the woman who had beckoned appearing again and again, each time her beauty more ravishing and voluptuous than before, each time the boy seeming to move inexorably towards her open embrace but never completing that final distance.

Morkin woke with no memory of the night that had passed. His mind felt blank and numb. A tall stallion nuzzled him as he lay in the cold snow, trees that were high, bare and broken enclosed him, but beyond that the boy knew naught. Only a single, urgent thought filled his mind. North, it whispered, North! You must ride swifter than the wind. In a daze, he hauled himself onto the stallion's saddle. He looked around himself bemused, then, shaking off the last shackles of sleep, urged the horse forward. Northward they galloped, and were quickly lost in the deep tangle of trees.

Morkin riding northward

CHAPTER FIVE – THE GATE OF VARENORN

Morkin was not seen again. No word of him was heard, no trace of him could be found. Three days later, Tarithel disappeared as well, taking with her one of her father's swiftest mounts. The Moonprince despatched messengers far and wide but of the fate of Morkin or Tarithel not a whisper returned. The armies camped 'neath the battlements of the Citadel of Dreams dispersed and wound their way southwards to home and hearth and kin. Only Luxor remained with a thousand riders of his Houseguard, waiting for news.

For three moons, none came. Then, out of the North rode Rorthron the Wise, bearing ill-tidings. When news of the boy's disappearance had reached him, he had ridden to the broken city of Ushgarak and then West across the Plains of Despair to the Tower of Doom itself, hoping to find some clue to Morkin's fate. In Ushgarak he had found nothing but at the Tower he had unearthed a letter addressing itself to "My dearest Father, Doomdark, Witchking of Midnight," and signed, "Your ever-loving Shareth, of the Frozen Empire."

His suspicions roused, Rorthron had turned his far-reaching vision Northwards across the Frozen Wastes to the land of Icemark, but he could not penetrate further than the southern borders of a grey and desolate domain he imaged must be the Empire spoken of. Shareth, it seemed, had powers too. In the swirling mists at the grey borders, she conjured up an image of herself, radiant with cold and piercing beauty. She challenged him fiercely to try his powers further and when he refused, she laughed scornfully.

"You are all so puny and pathetic! Soon I will have you all in my power," she had crowed, "Tell this to your precious Moonprince: I have his son in my grasp already. The boy is mad with love for me and lies at this very moment locked in one of my less pleasant dungeons, pining piteously for my embraces. When I am ready, I shall set him at the head of my armies and send him back to Midnight to shatter the peace you snivellers are so fond of! Seven moons from now I, Shareth, Empress of the Icemark, will ride forth to avenge Doomdark, my beloved Father. The Frozen Gates I shall tear down. Midnight I shall lay waste and through the portals of Xajorkith I will pass, triumphant. All shall adore me and despair! Or, if the Moonprince prefers, let him ride to hammer at my door and find defeat more swiftly!"

Fearing that Shareth's words were not an idle boast, Rorthron had ridden East with all haste and came at last to the Tower of Lorgrim. There he learnt that the Frozen Gates had cracked open at the last new moon. A lonely figure, riding northwards, had plunged into the dark caverns beneath the barrier ice before a sudden, thunderous ice-fall had closed the Gates once more. Rorthron tarried no longer but sped south to the Forest of Dreams.

To Luxor, everything now grew clear – the strange warning of the white falcon, the murderous storm that heralded the disappearance of Morkin, even Tarithel's sudden absence so soon after the first vanishing. She had surely guessed Morkin's peril, as surely as she divined the slow, slumbrous songs of the dreaming trees. Though doubtless many leagues behind, she would have followed, listening for the distant whispering of his bewitched and troubled dreams. The Moonprince hardly paused before deciding upon the course of action that must be taken.

Northwards at once they must ride; any delay would only serve to allow Shareth time to gather her power more fully. Against failure, the Lord of Dreams would remain in Midnight to marshal the Fey and the Free but Rorthron would ride with the Moonprince to the Frozen Gates. Swiftness was the watchword, to strike at the Empress while she felt safe and secure. Before the

hour had passed, the riders of the Houseguard of the Moon thundered north towards Lorgrim with Luxor and Rorthron at their head. Banners swirling, helms and spears gleaming in the clear noon sun, they swept through the Forest of Dreams like a torrent.

They rode without pause, passing Droonhenge at Midnight, reaching the Plains of Fadrath by next morning. Never had an army ridden so swiftly. By nightfall of that day, the Tower of Lorgrim rose before them, flanked by the grim wilderness of the Icy Wastes. Only at the foot of the Frozen Gates did they come to a halt. The jagged ridge of ice gleamed blood-red as the westering sun cast its fading brilliance on the cold towers and barren pinnacles. The Gates themselves, black and cavenous mouths that led to secret ways beneath the glacial ice, were closed, blocked by mountainous shards that had toppled from the ice-ridge above.

Few hearts did not quail, but Rorthron, seizing his staff in his right hand, galloped forward and charged at the great bergs that stood before them. As he rode, his deep voice boomed out across the wilderness, quelling the insistent wails of the North Wind and echoing back in a thousand fragments from the endless walls of ice. His words held no meaning for those who heard them, but all could sense they were Words of Power. The army waited breathlessly for fire to leap forth from his staff. No such spectacle ensued; instead, the ice seemed to turn to molten glass and sink back into the precipitous face of the barrier ridge, parting like a curtain as it slithered backwards. Suddenly the jaws of the Frozen Gates were revealed and Rorthron, now a mere speck in the distance, rushed into the throat of their age-long darkness.

The Moonprince and his riders cheered and sprang forward after him. Swiftly the darkness swallowed them and there, in the mouth of a broad tunnel, they paused to look one more time upon the fair land of Midnight. Rorthron's commanding voice spurred them to swift motion again.

"Ride swiftly, my friends, ride swiftly! The spell will not hold! If we tarry, the Gates will come crashing down upon us."

Now, at last, his staff burst forth with fire and Rorthron launched himself into the black depths beyond like a blazing comet. The Moonprince and his riders galloped after the fleeing light with as much speed as they could muster. The crack and thunder of exploding ice that followed them as they rode left no doubt in their minds as to the truth of Rorthron's words.

Though soon safe in the bowels of the earth, the cohorts of the Moonprince pressed on with all speed. The last road to the Icemark was dank and malodorous, broken, slithery and pitted. Curses and oaths filled the rank air. Tired beyond mere exhaustion, none wished to pause. Finally, after many hours of dark passage, the army emerged into the clear night of the Icemark.

Luxor turned and looked up at the deserted towers and walls of the Gate of Varenorn, Guarding the northern entrance of the road to Midnight. He smiled.

"It seems our haste has not been in vain, Rorthron. The witch looks not to guard herself against us," he said.

"Perhaps, my Lord Moonprince, perhaps, or perhaps she has simply left the door of the coop open to entice a fox. It was your hand that slew Doomdark; it will be your death she desires most of all, even though she lusts after all of Midnight," cautioned Rorthron.

"If I fall, so be it; the safety of my son is paramount."

"If you fall, Luxor, so will Midnight. Creatures such as Shareth feed on their own success and quaff the power of their victims. She will be unassailable, I fear, if her vengeance is assuaged."

"Then do you advise me against this course, Rorthron?" asked the Moonprince.

"No, my friend. The boy must be rescued; 'twould be unthinkable to leave him in such foul hands, even were it not that the Heartstealer has the power to twist him and use him against the land of his birth. We are caught in a cleft stick, I fear."

"Rorthron, we must strike at the source of her power, at her stronghold, wherever that may lie. I have no doubt you speak truly, yet her arrogance may still be used against her. If she expects anything, she will expect us to attempt no more than a rescue before fleeing from the Icemark. Let us instead strike at the vitals of her cold Empire! While Doomdark's daughter lives, Midnight will remain in mortal peril. Let us rid ourselves of this pestilence in a single stroke!" said Luxor forcefully.

"Indeed, my Lord, I see no other way. Nothing would more imperil Morkin's life than an army hammering at the gate of his prison. But come, we must all rest before the day breaks. We are strangers in this land and may be forced to follow unforeseen paths before we win through; we must find friends as well as enemies."

When dawn broke, the Moonprince mounted his charger. He took once more the Moonring,

last of Midnight's great Rings of War, and slipped it on his finger, where it had not rested since the slaughter of Doomdark. Then, he lofted his hand to the sky, the Moonring blazing there like a fragment of the rising sun. As its glad power shone out, a rousing cheer came from the long ranks of riders.

"For Midnight!" cried Luxor, "For Midnight and the Free! Hear me, Shareth Heartstealer; we ride to tear the Frozen Empire asunder!"

Rorthron whirled his staff about his head, flinging a storm of golden fire into the chill air, the trumpets of the heralds blew a proud fanfare, and the cohorts of the Moonprince rode forth from the Gate of Varenorn into the Icemark.

Far away, in a deep and dreamless forest, Tarithel reined in her horse and paused, listening with her mind to the whisper of hope that rippled through the morning mists. The Moonring is unveiled, she thought to herself, the Moonprince rides! She too had travelled the dark road that led from Midnight to the Gate of Varenorn, searching for many days along the ridge of the Frozen Gates before finding a crevice that would let her through. Now, with all hope of finding Morkin's trail lost, she was journeying towards rumours of the City of Imorthorn in search for any scrap of news, in search of any person who might remember his passing. Though she had seen the new moon turn to full and wane again, she had found no trace of him. Despair had worked its way with her and she rebuked herself constantly for keeping her fears to herself when she rode off in pursuit of her Morkin, even though at the time those fears had been so vague and formless that she could not have put word to them. Only when it was too late to turn back for help did she realise the immensity of her task, and feel the cold, implacable power of the Heartstealer's dreams.

The thought, now, that Midnight was roused and that its mighty Lords marched upon the Frozen Empire warmed her like a fire. She put aside her doubts and despair.

"Morkin, I will find thee, my love," she whispered. "No ice, no storm, no sword or shaft shall keep me from thy side, no hagwitch's twisted dreams shall come between us. Let her fling a thousand foul armies in my path, still I will find thee!"

Tarithel rode on towards Imorthorn. The webs of time shook softly and a shiver trembled across the land of Icemark. Many tears were about to be shed, much blood to be spilt.

The wind howled.





GUIDE TO PLAY

To load Doomdark's Revenge, type LOAD "" and then press ENTER. The game will then LOAD and RUN automatically.

Starting off

Before you begin play, place the keyboard overlay on the keyboard of your Spectrum. When loading is complete, the title screen will vanish and instead you will find yourself looking through the eyes of Luxor the Moonprince upon the chill land of Icemark. From now on, single key presses will control your actions, something you will find useful as you gather diverse Lords of the Icemark to your banner and come to make decisions for them all.

Saving a game in progress

The data for Doomdark's Revenge can be saved and verified at any stage of the game. To save a game in progress, you must first press the key marked SAVE on the keyboard overlay. It should only be pressed at a time when the computer is waiting for you to press an option key; at any other time it will have no effect.

When you press SAVE, a screen of instructions will appear and after saving is complete, the verification will automatically begin. You should then rewind the tape and press PLAY on your recorder. If verification was successful, you will be returned immediately to the game. If not, you must choose between trying to verify again or continuing the game. If, for some reason, the verification does not occur at all (for instance, the tape is still blank), use any old Spectrum tape to verify. The verification will fail, of course, but you will then be able to continue the game and attempt a fresh SAVE if you wish.

The data for Doomdark's Revenge is saved without a header so don't forget to label the cassette you are saving it on. We recommend that you keep separate saved games on separate cassettes.

Loading a saved game

First, of course, you must load the Doomdark's Revenge program. Then, at any stage during the game, you can load the data for an old game by pressing the key marked LOAD on the keyboard overlay. Don't try this unless you already have some saved data to load!

If loading is successful, you will be returned immediately to the game but you will find yourself in the situation stored on your data tape. If loading is unsuccessful, you must choose between trying to load again or continuing with the current game. If, for any reason, loading does not occur at all or you suddenly find you have no Doomdark data to load, use any old Spectrum tape. The loading will fail, but you will be able to continue your current game.

Abandoning a game

Doomdark's Revenge contains so much data that there is no room in RAM to hold a copy of the start-up conditions. Therefore, you can't simply start a fresh game at the press of a button. Instead, you must either load the entire program back or load the data from a game you have already saved.

Loading the entire Doomdark's Revenge back in takes some time but loading saved data is much quicker. Therefore we recommend that you make a copy of the early stages of Doomdark's Revenge by pressing SAVE either at the very start of a game or during your first few moves.

Keeping track

Because Doomdark's Revenge presents such a vast canvas for you to make your mark upon, we have provided a facility whereby you can keep a printed record of each game as it progresses. Of course, you will need a printer compatible with the Spectrum and you will doubtless need a lot of paper. Pressing the COPY key at any stage of the game will print-out the screen you are looking at.

You and the computer

You, the player, take the role of Luxor, the Moonprince of Midnight. By virtue of the Moonring, which lends you the Power of Vision and the Power of Command, you can control those characters in the land of Icemark who are friendly to your cause, looking through their eyes at the surrounding landscape and guiding them in their many tasks. Some will be just individuals, some will be commanders at the head of whole armies; when you move a commander, his army moves with him.

The computer plays the part of Shareth the Heartstealer, Empress of the Frozen Empire and controls the characters and armies under her sway. It also guides the fortunes of the many independent characters you will find in the land of Icemark, making impartial decisions on their behalf. Independent characters may be persuaded to join your cause, but equally may be persuaded by Shareth to fall in with her.

Victory for the Heartstealer

Shareth the Heartstealer has one single goal, the destruction of Luxor the Moonprince, he who slew her father, Doomdark, Witchking of Midnight and who, in her eyes, usurped her rightful inheritance. Her cold powers are, even now, greater than Doomdark's ever were and if Shareth can bring about the death of the Moonprince, Midnight will inevitably fall under her sway eventually, Shareth, therefore, wins the game outright if Luxor is slain.

Victory for you, the Moonprince

Many choices face Luxor, the Moonprince. Should he simply rescue Morkin and retreat to the Gate of Varenorn and thence to Midnight? Should he seek to limit Shareth's power before returning through the Frozen Gates? Or should he seek ultimate victory and, risking all, attempt to destroy her forever?

Accordingly, Doomdark's Revenge allows for different kinds of victory, some lesser, some greater, but **before** any of these victories can be claimed, Luxor **must** return safely to the **Gate of Varenorn**. The most basic victory that can be achieved is the rescue of Morkin, Luxor's son. He must be brought, alive and well, to the Gate of Varenorn. In this task Tarithel, Fey daughter of the Lord of Dreams, will be the main protagonist but she will not succeed alone.

Greater victories can be won by bringing other characters safe to the Gate of Varenorn. Tarithel's safe return is important and so is Rorthron's. The spoils of war play their part too. Bring to Varenorn any of the Crowns of Icemark and your victory will be the greater. It will be the greater still if you discover and return with any of the arcane objects upon which Shareth's power depends. Knowledge of these must be found during your struggles.

If, by any chance Morkin should be slain, only one victory remains to Luxor — Shareth's complete destruction. How this can be achieved, you must discover during your travels through the Icemark but be warned, it is no easy task. If Morkin dies, Luxor, racked with grief, will diminish in power.

The greatest victory of all is the destruction of Shareth and the safe return of Luxor, Morkin, Tarithel and Rorthron to Varenorn. Upon this event, glowing letters will flame on the surface of the Moonring, revealing to Luxor the ancient Watchwords of Midnight that when spoken will awaken all the land to whatever peril gathers. With these words at his command, the Moonprince will be sure to protect Midnight for as long as he lives.

Victory is acknowledged when you press the NIGHT key. You will then be told of the greatness of your triumph. Defeat, however, will immediately follow upon Luxor's death. After victory or defeat, only the LOAD key and the COPY key will continue to function.

Selecting a character

At the beginning of the game you have three characters under your control. These are LUXOR the Moonprince, RORTHRON the Wise and TARITHEL the Fey. You can select any of these by pressing the key marked with their name. MORKIN also has his own selection key but this will not work until you have released him from Shareth's spell of enchantment. When selected, the display will switch immediately to that character's point of view.

To select other characters (which you must rally to your banner during the course of the game) you must press the SELECT key. When you do this, a list of all the characters you control

will appear, together with a list of the keys that will select them. Press one of these selection keys and the display will switch immediately to that character's point of view.

If you control more characters than can be listed on the screen, the message "More . . ." will appear at the bottom of the display. Press the key marked MORE to view the rest of the list.

Controlling a character

Doomdark's Revenge is not an ordinary adventure game and controlling the characters does not require you to guess at the right phrase of command. Instead, you have four basic options, each available at the press of a single key:-

1) Look

On screen will appear a landscape corresponding to the view that the character sees in the direction he is looking at the time. During the LOOK option, you can turn the character to look in another direction by pressing one of the compass keys: NORTH, NORTH-EAST, EAST, SOUTH-EAST, SOUTH, SOUTH-WEST, WEST and NORTH-WEST.

2) Move

When this key is pressed, the character will move forward in the direction he was last looking. When he reaches his new location, he will continue looking in that direction and a new panorama will appear. Characters cannot move during night nor can they move into the Icy Wastes that surround the Icemark. Other factors may also restrict movement – exhaustion, cowardice and so on.

3) Choose

The CHOOSE screen presents you with a list of special options and the keys you must press to obtain each. What special options are open will depend upon the situation the character finds himself or herself in but they also reflect the particular personality of the character. So, the choices open to a greedy character will seldom include acts of generosity, nor the choices open to a cowardly character include brave deeds.

4) Check

There are four **CHECK** keys. They enable you to access detailed information concerning the character you control and the situation he or she is in.

a) **CHECK PLACE:** Gives you general information about the time of day, the place and what your character may or may not have found there.

b) **CHECK BATTLE:** Gives you details of any battle or skirmish your character has been involved in.

c) **CHECK ARMY:** Gives you details of your own army, any other army in the same location and any army in the location immediately ahead of your character.

d) **CHECK PERSON:** Gives a run-down on the personality of the character you are controlling. Beware – some personalities may change as the game progresses!

You can press the **LOOK, MOVE, CHOOSE** and **CHECK** keys at any stage during any of the four basic options and the new screen will appear at once.

More . . .

Sometimes there may be no room on a screen to print all the relevant information. Whenever this happens, the message "**More . . .**" will appear at the bottom of the display. Pressing the key marked MORE will access the remaining text.

Night and Dawn

The game begins on the day that the Moonprince rides forth from the Gate of Varenorn into the Icemark and proceeds by day and by night. During the day you can move any or all of the characters you control, together with any armies that accompany them. The distance a character

can move in one day depends on the difficulty of the terrain and whether he is riding or walking as well as his general vigour. You must learn by experience how far you can travel under given circumstances. However, there is one important thing to remember: when you travel directly north, south, east or west you are moving just one league at a time; moving in any other direction, you are travelling along the diagonal of a square, a distance of approximately 1.4 leagues. This will therefore take you longer and leave less hours of daylight for your journey.

Each character has his own, individual "clock" and when he has exhausted his hours of daylight, night will fall for him. He will be unable to make any further movement until the following day. Other characters under your control, however, will still be able to move.

Once you have moved all the characters you wish to, you must press the **NIGHT** key. This lets night fall everywhere and signals the beginning of movement for the forces of the Heartstealer. Independent characters will also move at this time. There will be a pause as the computer "thinks" and rumours of battle and other events may appear on the screen. Soon, however, the night will be over and the message, "Dawn breaks" will appear on the screen.

To begin the new day you must press the DAWN key and then you will be able to control your characters afresh. **IF YOU DO NOT PRESS THE NIGHT KEY OR THE DAWN KEY AT THE APPROPRIATE TIME, NOTHING FURTHER WILL HAPPEN AT ALL!**

THE WARRING FACTIONS

BATTLE



Minor skirmishes involving individual characters can take place at any stage during the day and will have an immediate result. Battles between armies, however, are not decided until the day is over.

You are **NOT** able to move an army into the same location as an unfriendly army by using the **MOVE** key. Such a decision is always a special option that you must select using the CHOOSE option. Some of the commanders you control may be so afraid that the possibility does not occur in their list of options.

Two options can move an army onto unfriendly ground, **ATTACK** and **APPROACH**. **ATTACK** should be used if you want to fight a battle regardless of the other commander's intentions. **APPROACH** is like going forward under a flag of truce; you may be able to parley with the other commander and perhaps persuade him to join your cause. On the other hand, he may well ignore your flag of truce and fall upon you. The **APPROACH** option should be used with some caution, for if battle does follow, you will be at a disadvantage compared to **ATTACK**.

Once battle has been joined, the character will not be able to move until the following day. You can, however, move other characters into the same battle if you wish. At the morrow's dawn, the outcome of the battle will be known to your commanders. If the enemy has lost, his armies will have been destroyed or have fled, leaving the battlefield in your possession. If the enemy has won a decisive victory, you will find your characters (if they still live) scattered and bereft of troops. If, however, the battle continues, you can move your commanders away that dawn or leave them there to fight on through the next night.

Many things influence the outcome of a battle but you must learn by hard-won experience which are crucial.

THE KINGDOMS OF ICEMARK



The land of Icemark is ruled by five major races and the map that Luxor carries with him, though lamentably lacking in detail, shows their Kingdoms. To the North-east, the Men of the Frozen Empire are governed by Shareth the Heartstealer. To the North-west lies the Kingdom of the Giants, to the East the Kingdom of the Dwarves whilst to the South are the Outlands of the Barbarians and the Realm of the Fey. All these are intermittently at war with each other, involved in petty feuds and border raids but of them all, the Frozen Empire is the strongest and the most feared. To defeat Shareth, Luxor must find allies in these foreign domains. The Lords of the Fey should be counted most friendly, the Lords of the Iceguard least so, but a cunning Moonprince will exploit their differences to his own purpose. There is only one in the whole of the Icemark who will never rally to his banner — Shareth Heartstealer, his mortal enemy.

The Landscape

During your travels through the Icemark, you will see many different scenes. This is a traveller's guide to some of the things you will see.

MOUNTAIN



Moving across a mountain range will take many hours of travel and leave you exhausted at the end of your journey.

CITY



A strongly fortified township which may harbour enemy forces or offer shelter to a friendly army. Storming a city will be a hard task.

FOREST



Movement through a forest will not be swift, save for the Fey whose homes lie there.

TOWER



The Watchtowers of the Icemark may hold dark secrets; approach with care!

PIT



Through the dark mouth of the abyss, you may find access to subterranean passages, but foul creatures may issue forth from the bowels of the earth.

HALL



A war-chief's hall can offer warmth and shelter to the lonely traveller, if its people prove friendly.

HUT



Brief respite can be found here from the cold mists and winds of the Icemark.

HILLS



Hills slow a traveller, but not severely. Unseen dangers may lie beyond.

FORTRESS



The stronghold of minor Lords of the Icemark, a fortress will offer some protection.

PALACE



Though not designed to withstand armed assault, a palace is still a centre of power.

TEMPLE



A temple is apt to harbour dark and mysterious forces. Some give access to benighted ways beneath the earth.

GATE



Set at the entrances of subterranean roads, the Gates of the Icemark stand at the threshold of the dark world below.

STONES



Stones mark the route of ancient, forgotten roads beneath the icy carpet that covers the land. Strange powers oft gather about them.

FOUNTAIN



Little in the bleak landscape of the Icemark offers succour to the traveller but from a sparkling fountain, he may drink his fill and be refreshed.

ICY WASTES



The barrier ice of the Northern glaciers allows no traveller to pass through. The Icy Wastes are impenetrable to all.

MIST



Cold mists block the landscape from view as they roll across the Icemark. All save Shareth's Iceguard find their courage and strength sapped if caught in their grip.

ARMY



A friendly army offers no hindrance to the traveller but an attempt to go through the midst of an enemy army offers the gravest of peril.

As you look around during your travels, large figures may appear in the foreground of each panorama you see. These are the warriors, characters and creatures that lie immediately ahead of you. You do not, however, see all that lies ahead. If, perchance, you find yourself in an underground tunnel, tall pillars crowned with fire mark the way forward. If there is no way ahead, you will see naught but darkness. Tunnels only lead north, south, east or west.

The Competition

In the Lords of Midnight we challenged you to beat the computer by either a quest victory or a military campaign. Most of our entrants achieved victory by the simpler quest and many sent in reams of silver Sinclair printer paper, as we asked, outlining each step on the road to victory.

Many found it hard to recruit and keep alive enough lords for the assault on Ushgarak, others complained that they solved it too easily.

Doomdark's Revenge offers several grades of victory from the simple to the all-but-impossible. Achieve the final victory and you will secure that Luxor's name will live on in the annals of Midnight.

We want you to send in a screen printout of the final screen of the ultimate victory and trigger the revelation of the Watchwords of Midnight. But if you do want to send in a printout booklet of your adventures we'll love to see those too and will feature the highlights in some future issue of the Beyond newsletter.

The Prize

We have commissioned a special set of Metal miniatures to represent the characters depicted in Doomdark's Revenge. The four main characters: Morkin, Luxor, Rorthron and Tarithel the Dreamer will all be lovingly designed and created and professionally painted. They will also be placed in an Icemark setting and the whole scene mounted and presented to our winner. May the gods go with you.

The Lords of Midnight

The predecessor to the Doomdark's Revenge and the first in the eventual Midnight trilogy, was the Lords of Midnight. If you've not already attempted this Epic struggle for supremacy between the many Lords of the Free and the evil witchking Doomdark, then you are not in a true position to appreciate Doomdark's Revenge.

"Game of the Month" in more magazines than we can mention here, Midnight rated the best reviews ever seen in the UK computer industry.

"At the risk of sounding like someone who is on Beyond's payroll, I cannot recommend this game enough . . ." **Computing Today**

"You'll love playing Lords of Midnight." **Daily Mirror**

"As authentic a taste of Tolkien or Donaldson as any game yet produced." **Sinclair User**

"The best I have ever played on a computer." **Popular Computing Weekly**

"Just get one thing into your head — The Lords of Midnight is THE game for the Spectrum. There is absolutely no doubt about it." **Personal Computer Games**

We're probably preaching to the converted but if not it retails at £9.95 — an all-time classic. Available from Beyond, Competition House, Farndon Road, Market Harborough, Leicestershire LE16 9NR.

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Go **Beyond** the games ideas offered by the rest of the games market. Enter a world peopled by truly marvellous games ideas — some available now, others ready soon, some still at the planning stage.

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We will then keep you informed of new releases for your computer, **Beyond** competitions and special offers and send you regular issues of the Beyond newsletter.

Please add your comments on this game and let us know your best achievement so far.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Please keep me informed about new releases for the _____ microcomputers.

Comments: _____

Plot your course during Doomdark's Revenge with the Icemark Chart

The saga of Doomdark's Revenge has long been sung in the smoky mead-hall at Luxor's Palace. Here, too, hangs a giant tapestry map showing the frozen wastes of Icemark — the adventure's setting.

We have reproduced this tapestry in the form of the Icemark Chart. This is a giant (42cm × 59cm) poster map with a special wipe-clean surface.

You simply plot the course and position of Luxor, his allies and their enemies with a water-soluble pen. And, it only costs **£1.95!** Post and Packaging **FREE!**

The Icemark Chart is available **direct** from Beyond:

Lector Court,
151 Farringdon Road,
London,
EC1R 3AD.

Make Cheques/Postal Orders payable to Beyond. Send NO CASH.
Telephone callers can order the Chart using ACCESS or
BARCLAYCARD only by calling direct on: 01-837 2899



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