

The Secrets of the Ripper

It was December 1888. The saloon bar of The Coach. We were talking about the Ripper. Everyone in London was talking about the Ripper.

"I'd give something to know who he is," I said as I left.

As I came out into the cold night air, a heavy hand fell on my shoulder. I turned to face a white-haired man with a face that looked as if it had seen all the sorrows of the world.

"What do you want, old man?" I asked.

"I am not old. Three months ago I looked as young as you." He spoke the truth. His was not an old man's voice, though everything else about him proclaimed him no younger than eighty. "You expressed an interest in the Ripper. I have not long to live. I want to tell someone before I go."

"You know about this madman?"

"I know that he is no madman."

"Come, man. There can be no sane motive for . . . for . . ."

"There can be and there is. I assure you that he – or rather they – are as sane as you or I".

I was attacked by a sudden wave of nausea. The thought of a bloodthirsty madman terrorising the streets was horrible, but somehow the thought that there could be a sane motive for the ripping open and dismembering of women upon the public streets struck a note deeper and more chilling than anything I could imagine. Somehow I already began to see darkly what this must mean.

"They are not driven by perverse lusts. Their reasons are as plain and as practical as those of the Prime Minister and they have friends in high places."

"But what ordinary, everyday reasons could there be for such monstrous public atrocities?"

"I did not say that they were ordinary or everyday. I said only that they are sane and practical. These are deep waters, my friend. Deep and very dark. We are dealing with forces which corrupt a man's heart even to speak of them. And I warn you, by the time I have unfolded what I know, you will look a few years older."

The events in this game have been dramatised and in places it has been necessary to take some liberties with the facts. Nevertheless, the game presents what we believe to be the uncanny truth behind the Ripper murders of 1888.

Jack the Ripper

The game accepts full-sentence inputs such as "pick the bloody knife up and examine it, then throw it out of the window"; or "take everything except the pillow, put the small piece of paper on the table and eat the crumpled piece of paper".

You can use adverbs – so you can do something slowly, quickly, quietly, etc. As well as simply examining something you can examine it closely which will sometimes produce further information (as in real life, most ordinary things are pretty much what they seem and will produce nothing extra, but it is worth making a careful examination of important pieces of evidence etc. – and sometimes essential).

The game is played in real time – that is, time will pass even when you do not make a move (this is displayed on screen) and things will be happening in other parts of the game which may affect you later.

Obviously it is not necessary to use "adventurese" – get hat/wear hat etc. The programme is quite able to accept "pick up the hat and put it on". Use "adventurese" for brevity if you wish – but beware, if you say "drop vase", the game will take you literally!

To speak to a character in the game type "SAY TO (character)" and then enclose what you wish to say in inverted commas, eg; SAY TO BARMAN "GIVE ME A BEER".

SPECIAL COMMANDS

The command STORE will take an instant "snapshot" of your present position in the game. The command RESTORE will restore you to your last STORED position.

SAVE will save your position onto tape to keep for another session. LOAD will restore a position from tape. INVENTORY (or I) will list everything you are carrying. TEXT will turn off the graphics. GRAPHICS will turn them back on. LOOK (or L) will describe your current location (but you can also LOOK AT, LOOK IN, LOOK UNDER things etc). QUIT (or Q) will end the game.

HINT SHEETS

If you are stuck, send a stamped, self-addressed envelope to Ripper Dept., St. Bride's School, Burtonport, County Donegal.

Jack the Ripper was written with Gilsoft's Professional Adventure Writing System and several bottles of Mountain Dew.

PROGRAMMERS:

Is your software good enough for CRL. If it is contact Michael Hodges on 01-985 2391 or write to the ZEN ROOM, UNIT 7D, KINGS YARD, CARPENTERS ROAD, LONDON E15 2HD.

