

# Adventure Lantern

## REVIEWS:

- Proteus
- Stanisław Lem Doodle
- Dead Cyborg.  
Episode 2: In the Death

ISSUE #41  
APRIL 2013



# EDITORIAL

Friends,

This is the rare month I had a few days off in a row and the opportunity to make a contribution to the April 2013 issue of Adventure Lantern. I had a small editorial piece in the works, tied to some aspect of the gaming world as always. I also started my internal medicine rotation several days ago. One of the activities we had on our first day was a lecture about humanism in medicine. The instructor shared with us a story about a man observing his grandmother as her health deteriorated. We were then asked to write about a memory of our own, with the prompt "now that I have 'blank' only in memory". We were given about five to ten minutes to write. Rather than submitting my original article about gaming, I wanted to share the little piece I wrote during that lecture. Here's hoping you will find it enjoyable.

Now that I have Izmir only in memory, I often think of what it would be like to go back there thirteen years later. I was only 12 years old when we moved out of that city along the western shore of Turkey. I remember walking down its streets, the seashore with the murky waters that still managed to be inviting, the palm trees, and the ferry. But most of all, I remember the gentle spring breeze coming from the sea and my neighbor who lived downstairs that was like a sister to me.

We both had difficult families, which is perhaps why it was so easy for us to be friends. Her with a distant mother and abusive older brother; me with separated parents and an overly strict mother. She was nine years old when I left her. I remember wanting to stay behind and protect her, but I couldn't.

My parents were back together and it was time to move to a different city. It was years later that I could go back to Izmir for a visit; no idea where my friend might be. Now it has been 13 years since I set foot in Izmir. My friend's face, her laughter, the ferry ride we took together, and the gentle spring breeze from that night are all a fading memory. All that is left is the hope that somewhere, she is happy.

– Until next time,  
Ugur Sener



Cover Image:  
**DEAD CYBORG**

**ADVENTURE LANTERN**  
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## LUCASARTS

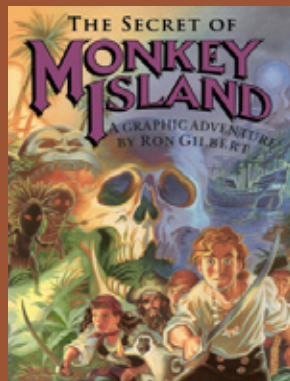
### Disney Closing LucasArts

Disney has decided to shutdown all development at LucasArts and has fired most of their employees (around 150), claiming minimization of risk as a key factor. They are keeping the name to hold the licenses, and are planning on licensing them to other studios wishing to produce Star Wars games. This does mean that their entire in-house lineup including Star Wars: 1313 and First Assault, as well as three untitled games are currently no longer in production, and will likely remain on hold indefinitely.

LucasArts is most well known among adventure fans, or any student of gaming history, for their absolutely classic early graphical adventures. Starting in 1986 they released a series of adventures that would become instant classics; Including, Maniac Mansion,



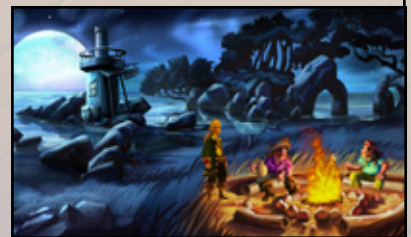
and its sequel Day of the Tentacle; Numerous games based on their Indiana Jones franchise; The original Sam and Max; The Dig, as well as



Full Throttle; And let us not forget their most famous work: The Secret of Monkey Island series and Grim Fandango. All in all, they were there at the start of the graphical adventure age, and made it what most of us fell in love with; And they stuck to and dominated this industry until Grim Fandango saw it crumble in 1998. Lately, they have not done much in the adventure genre, but they did release remakes of the first two Secret of Monkey Island games and worked with Telltale Games in Tales of Monkey Island. On the technical side, they developed the legendary adventure scripting language SCUMM that inspired the

creation of ScummVM, and was the engine that many of the best graphical adventures used.

It has been over a decade since LucasArts has been The LucasArts that developed: Day of the Tentacle, The Dig, and Full Throttle; Recently, they have been mostly sticking to licensing Star Wars to mediocre develop-



ment studios to produce games such as Angry Birds: Star Wars and Lego Star Wars, or internally developing equally mediocre titles such as Star Wars: The Force Unleashed. They have produced some decent Star Wars games over the years, but for the most part they have only licensed their franchises or became publishers to companies who created these games. So in my mind, this is not a particularly vexing turn of events, and will not change very much in and of itself.



**Ron Gilbert on another Monkey Island game**

Ron Gilbert is claiming that he is not currently working on a The Secret of Money Island sequel, but had written a blog post on what he would do if he ever were to create one. The fol-



lowing are some snippets from this post:

- “It would be a retro game that harkened back to Monkey Island 1 and 2. I would want the game to be how we all remember Monkey Island”
- “It would be an adventure game for the hardcore”
- “I would lose the verbs”
- “It would be made with a very small team. 10 or less”
- “The game would be the game I wanted to make”

For even more details, and insights from Ron Gilbert, check out his blog post yourself.



**ScummVM 1.6.0**

ScummVM version 1.6.0 has stated its testing phase.

This release plans to add support for eight new games on various platforms:

- 3 Skulls of the Toltecs
- Eye of the Beholder

- Eye of the Beholder II: The Legend of Darkmoon
- Hopkins FBI
- Tony Tough and the Night of Roasted Moths
- The Journeyman Project: Pegasus Prime
- Discworld

### Touché: The Adventures of the Fifth Musketeer Enhanced Soundtrack

As part of ScummVM Music Enhancement Project James Woodcock has released an enhanced soundtrack for this classic graphical adventure. The ScummVM Music Enhancement Project aims to remaster the original MIDI

soundtracks of classical adventure games, making them available in the absolute best quality, no matter what MIDI hardware the end user is running.

In addition to this latest release, James Woodcock has also remastered the sound files for The 7th

Guest, Beneath a Steel Sky, Discworld, Inherit the Earth, and Simon the Sorcerer.



## Announcements



### The Realm Game

"An emotive visually stunning game set in a familiar but strange future - an imaginative reinvention of the point&click adventure genre"

Asking for almost \$300,000 USD by May 22nd, this Kickstarter is asking for \$15 for a pre-order of Realm for PC or MAC. Based on numerous parts of the KS description I believe they are planing on it being a moderately casual game built for a touchscreen interface.



### Journal

Coming later this year to all major desktop and mobile OSes is Journal, a narrative driven adventure by Richard Perrin, the creator of Kairo, and Melissa Royall. Journal is supposedly about the journey of a young and troubled girl through life.

### Nelly Cootalot II: The Fowl Fleet

Ali has launched a new website for Nelly Cootalot and announced a whole load of stuff for the upcoming sequel. Most importantly, it will

be a commercial release that he is planning on financing through some croudfunding; Look for a campaign to launch in the next month or two. Other than that it is simply looking like an exciting and wonderful sequel to what was probably the best game of 2007.



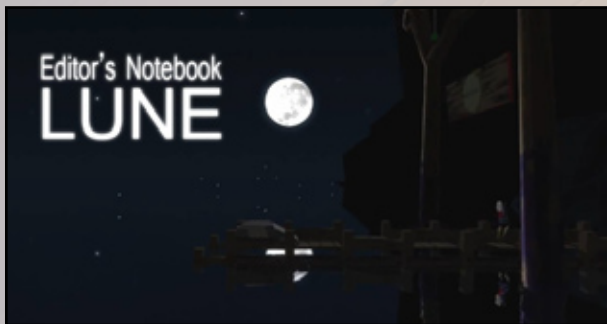
### A Small Favor

From the developers behind The Ballads of Reemus comes A Small Favor Kickstarter. is is described as "A 2D, side-scrolling sci-fi adventure game for PC and MAC with focus on story, exploration and puzzle solving." and lists Full Throttle and Beneath a Steel Sky as inspirations. It is based on their previous series of browser based adventures by the same name, and is a remake of the original title in that series. For the low price of \$6, you can pre-order a DRM-free copy of this game until the 15th of May; and help they make their goal of \$30,000.



### Lune

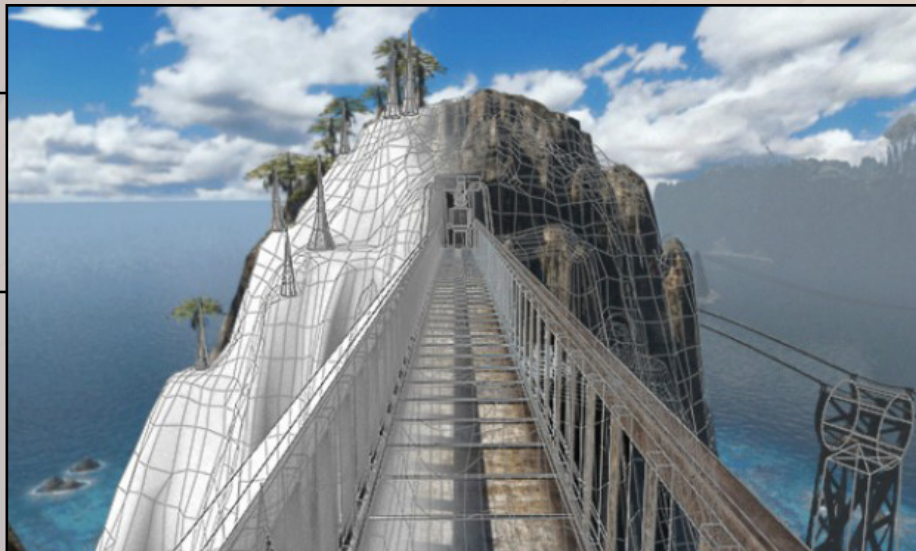
A game where the player controls the moon to help the protagonist through the levels; Manipulating gravity, the tides, and shadows. Here is what the developer has to say about the game: "Lune is a game about reflection and solitude which lets you control the Moon."



## Upcoming Releases

### Starry Expanse

The Riven 3D remake team has conducted a small interview with Screen Invasion. Along with the questions and answers we also get a few exclusive screenshots.





# BROKEN AGE



## The Double Fine Adventure AKA Broken Age

The Double Fine Adventure has gotten itself a name, a website, and some of the very first specific details announced.

"Broken Age is a point-and-click adventure telling the stories of a young boy and girl leading parallel lives. The girl has been chosen by her village to be sacrificed to a terrible monster--but she decides to fight back. Meanwhile, a boy on a spaceship is living a solitary life under the care of a motherly computer, but he wants to break free to lead adventures and do good in the world."

## Droidscape: Basilica

"A stop-motion animated, sci-fi, action puzzle game that puts you in control of Bishop 7", that has just gotten a lot more fleshed out with the release of a 30 page PDF sneak-peek booklet, called Into The Basilica. In it you will find details on the game's setting, plot, characters, music, and much more, as well as tons of concept art, the very first screenshot, and pictures documenting the development.



### Hate Plus: Mute's Golden Days

The sequel to Analogue: A Hate Story, *Hate Plus*, reveals the backstory of \*Mute from the

original game. The actual game continues directly from the ending of the last game, and uses your old end-game save files to continue from.



### J.U.L.I.A. Enhanced Edition

The JULIA EE Kickstarter crowdfunding campaign has ended with almost three times the initial goals reached. Of the \$5,000 initial goal, over \$14,000 was raised; funding development of the game as well as two stretch goals: A story expansion and fullscreen exploration.



### Moebius

The latest game by Jane Jensen, and the last one since GK 3 that she has designed and directed, *Moebius* has just gotten a website and its first trailer. It is "coming soon" to Windows, Mac, Linux, and the iPad; With a demo planned for June 2013.



## New Releases



### Anna: Extended Edition

An updated, extended edition of the flawed adventure gem Anna has been released and is free for all previous Anna owners. This update "features more environments, more hours of game play, more puzzles, additional gameplay features, enhanced graphics and an improved interface".

## Updated Releases

### Gemini Rue

The 2011 cyberpunk adventure game by Wadjet Eye Games has gotten a release on the iOS devices. It is only \$3.99 for anyone wishing to play this great modern adventure on their iPad, iPhone, or iPod touch.





## News From the Big Blue Cup



**Barn Runner: The Rich Dame Who Cut The Cheese (Ponch)** - The freeware release of the Bake Sale game from the Barn Runner universe, The Rich Dame Who Cut The Cheese. An antique wheel of priceless, pre-apocalypse, real moo cow cheese has gone missing and it's up to Detective Prick Peckard to find it!

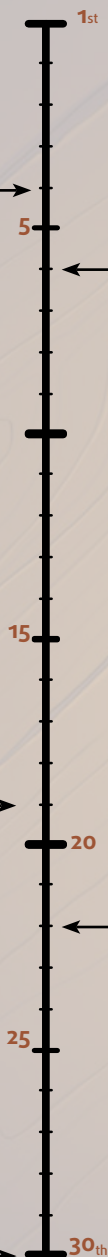
**Paramnesia (Sunny Penguin) [DEMO]** - You find yourself prisoner at an unknown location. Having been subjected to a battery of tests, you now face the final challenge. Do you have what it takes to complete the task and learn the truth about your circumstances?

**The Block (monkey424)** - Welcome to The Block where nothing is as it seems. Feel free to beat around the bush, discover the secrets of mysterious kitsch, explore a dilapidated old caravan, revel in the vague plotline and collect treasures along the way to win the game.

For those bamboozled by Chalkman, play this one instead. Originally developed with AGS 2.72 sometime at the turn of the millennium, this is the remake using AGS 3.2.1. Enjoy!

**Reality on the Norm: Reality Check 2 (Oldschool\_Wolf)** - Paul returns for more retail adventures! When a future version Paul explodes into his home, his future self warns him about the danger of the Yahtzeebrand Megastore! Meanwhile Greyson and Davy Jones must figure out how to hide the Inad-merto Infectus. Also.....more HOFF!

**Reality on the Norm: Reality Check 3 (Oldschool\_Wolf)** - Paul returns for the final part of the Reality Check Trilogy. It is up to Paul to help 10 RoN characters to manipulate the future!



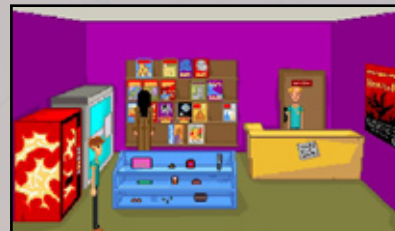
**Pick of the Month:  
April - Femspray**

While probably not the sort of game you'd want your kid to play, Femspray is peppered with quirky, raunchy and laugh-out-loud-hilarious dialogue, story and art that makes it a joy to play even now, 4 years after its release, which is why you are being reminded to try out and enjoy this gem!

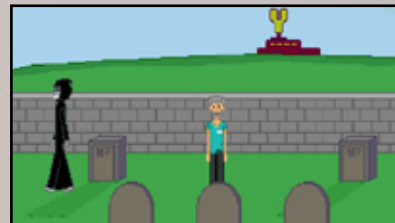
(Chosen by Babar)



**Barn Runner: The Rich Dame Who  
Cut The Cheese**  
(Ponch)



**Reality on the Norm:  
Reality Check 2**  
(Oldschool\_Wolf)



**Reality on the Norm: Reality  
Check 3**  
(Oldschool\_Wolf)



**The Block**  
(monkey424)



**Paramnesia**  
(Sunny Penguin)

# Proteus



Genre: casual adventure Developer/publisher: Ed Key & David Kanaga

Release date: January 30, 2013 Platforms: Windows, Mac OS X

Website: <http://www.visitproteus.com/>



An almost pure exploration game made in a collaboration between *Ed Key* and *David Kanaga*. It was released on the 30th of January, earlier this year, on both Steam and the Humble Store for \$10, or for \$7.50 to those who pre-ordered it.

## Review by Jonathon Wisnoski

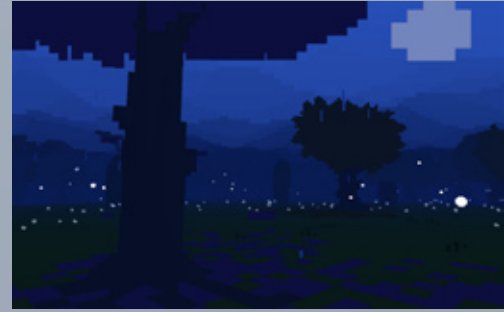
**T**he game is about exploring a procedurally generated island. Interactions, other than animals/fairies running away when you approach, are non-existent. You move around the 3D island using a first-person view with directional controls, and are even



able to sit down if you so desire, but that is the entirety of the gameplay. After a certain amount of time has passed and you visit a certain place you progress through the seasons: Spring, Summer, Fall, and Winter; And eventually the game ends.

The game seems to promise a narrow *Minecraft* experience, focusing completely on casual exploration. Unfortunately, it does not live up to this analogy. Yes, the island world is procedurally generated, but in this case all that means is that the exact location of static objects is not fixed. Every world has one giant tree that is exactly the same as the giant tree in every other world except for its





value here. You can expect about 40 minutes of gameplay for a single playthrough, and I really would not expect anyone to want to play more. For a 10\$ game this is just unacceptably low, and I would say that if money is an issue the game is not worth more than two to three dollars. ●

location; And the same is true for dark statues on top of a hill, an abandoned cabin, a ring of stones, etc. So really there is absolutely no replayability here.

Similarly, this lack of depth in the procedural generation results in a lack of depth to the beauty of the world. Yes, everything is nice looking, and I loved the pink trees with falling pink leaves/petals; A sight that can only be compared to falling cherry blossoms. Everything looks nice, but 95% of the island is just copy pasted, and the uniqueness of scenes is very minimal.

*Proteus* is casual thorough and thorough. The gameplay is incredibly simple; The graphics, while great in their own way, are very repetitive; And there just is not very much to do, or very much



### BRIGHT MOMENTS:

Uninterrupted world exploration.

### FUMBLES IN THE DARK:

The \$10 price, and lack of replayability.

### VERDICT:

A very short, minimalistic, exploration game.

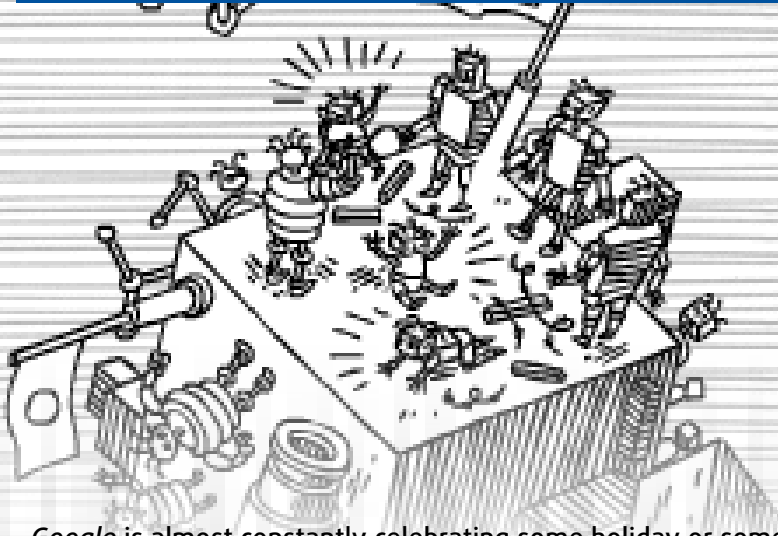


# Stanisław Lem Doodle



Genre: casual adventure Developer: Google, Marcin Wichar Publisher: Google Release date: November 23, 2011 Platforms: Browser (HTML)

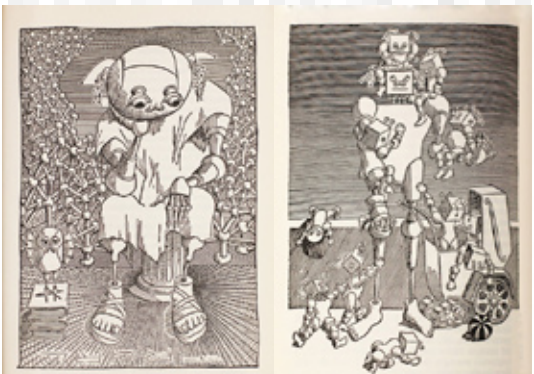
Website: <http://www.google.com/doodles/60th-anniversary-of-stanislaw-lems-first-publication>



Google is almost constantly celebrating some holiday or some anniversary of a scientist, artist, pioneer, or invention by updating their homepage with what they call a *Doodle*; Replacing the classic "Google" logo for a day. They have created over 1000 of these doodles to date, but very few of these are interactive, and most of those only have a very simply interaction animation. But in two cases they have gone a lot further. In 2010 they created a completely interactive single level of the game *Pac-Man* for the anniversary of its original release. But this article is about their second full game, commemorating the 60th anniversary of *Stanisław Lem's* first publication, *The Astronauts*.

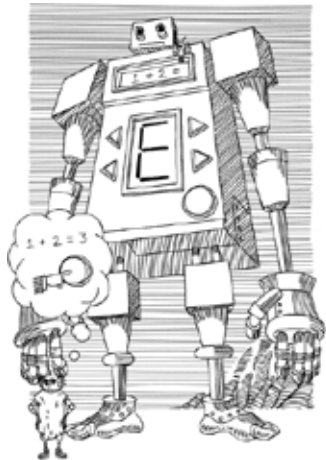
## Review by Jonathon Wisnoski

**S**tanisław Lem was a Polish writer who began his career in the late 1940s. He is best known for his satirical science fiction, beginning with *The Cyberiad*; A series of humorous short stories which were first published in 1965. He also published the classic 1961 novel *Solaris*, which has been adapted to film no less than three times, under that same name. He died in 2006 at the age of 84.



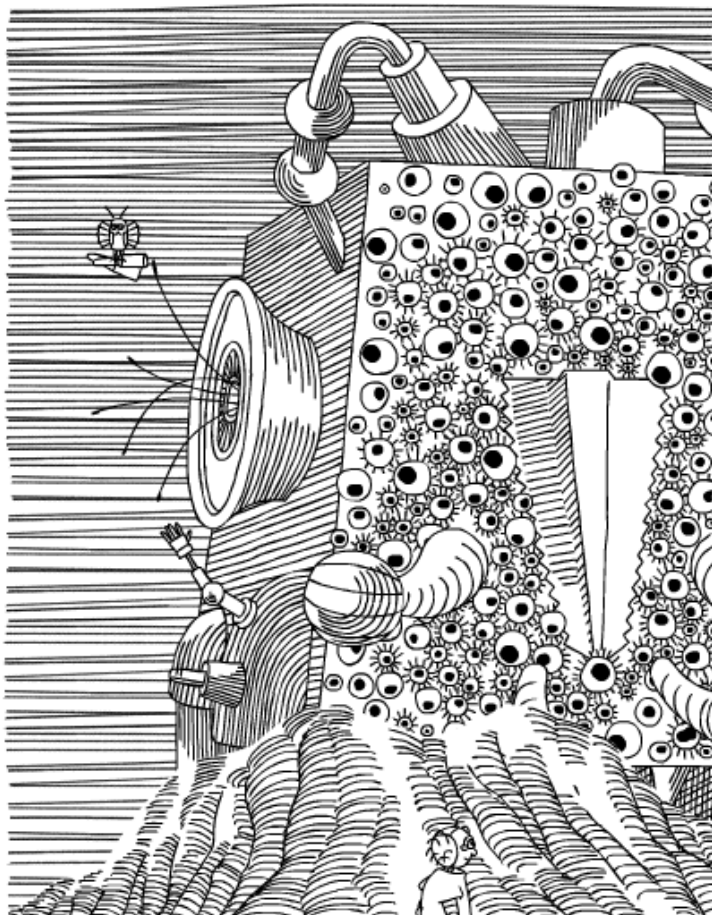
Original Cyberiad illustrations



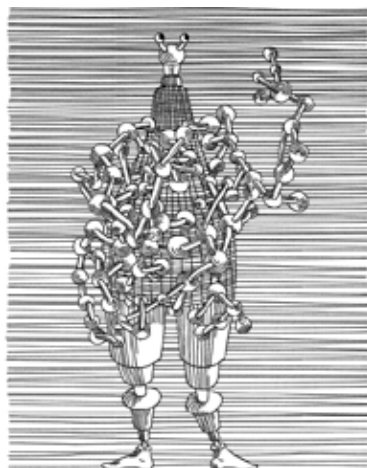


The *Stanisław Lem* doodle is based on the *The Cyberiad* series that I mentioned earlier and is in the form of a short adventure game. In it you travel through a bizarre robot filled land, with your hovering robotic companion, on a quest to collect three robotic parts to complete a robot of his own. It is an extremely short game with only three puzzles spread across four scenes.

These puzzles, which are the sum total of the gameplay, are rather easy and simple, but they are definitely not without substance. All in all, they are pretty enjoyable for a little 5 minute adventure. The graphics are black and white line drawings,



and actually quite detailed. So, I think, they really went all out on this tribute, and there is really not a lot more you could ask for. ●



**BRIGHT MOMENTS:**

I love how it is an adaptation of a sci-fi classic, and a tribute to one of the genres greatest authors.

**FUMBLES IN THE DARK:**

Far too short to include much depth.

**VERDICT:**

For a very short, throwaway, tribute it is incredibly well made and fun.



# Dead Cyborg

## Episode 2: In the Death



Genre: adventure Developer/publisher: Endre Barath

Release date: March 5, 2013 Platforms: Windows, Linux, Mac OS X

Website: <http://deadcyborg.com/>



Made by the one-man team and graphical artist *Endre Barath*; *Dead Cyborg* is a science fiction, comedy point and click adventure series, with a unique and progressive pricing model. Specifically, all currently released games are completely free to download and play, but continued development is funded through donations and you are asked to donate some money if you like the game. The first two episodes have already been released, and the series only calls for one more according to the developer. Currently, he is asking for the meager sum of \$5,000 to fund this next episode; which along with the other episodes is supposed to contain about 2-3 hours of content.

### Review by Jonathon Wisnoski

**T**he second episode of *Dead Cyborg*, *In the Death*, is a very personal and quirky experience.

It does lack most of what makes most adventure games good and worth playing, but it also has a style all its own. The gameplay is this game's least compelling aspect and the story is equally minimalistic and underdeveloped. In fact, this episode in particular contains basically zero overarching story. What *Endre Barath* did masterfully create is a unique, wonderful world.

The world of *Dead Cyborg*, like I previously mentioned, is a comedic, sci-fi affair; Additionally, it is a post apocalyptic world, filled with broken down robots and computers, set in a blasted, ruined, and irradiated battlezone. This post-apocalyptic theme is explored a lot more in episode 2, as you travel across the surface of the planet for the first time, after being





woken up from cryosleep in the beginning of episode 1. In addition to the trash, oil drums, and ruins you find ubiquitously across the world, you will also find graffiti, newspaper articles, and broken down and often deranged robots to tell more of what led the world to this point of utter destruction. One of the interesting aspects of this gameworld is how interactive it is. Every surface is plastered with graffiti, garbage, or robot parts that you can click on; Ninety percent of the responses are just copy-pasted many times over, but there are still quite a few unique ones.

The graphics are similarly very unique and personal, and set the tone of the game. They are very cartoony and simple, with a distinct comedic flair. They are 3D graphics, which you interact with using a first-person perspective.

The gameplay of this last episode is particularly minimalistic. While the game features an inventory, items, and allows you to use these items on interactive areas in the gameworld; There are just so few of each of these that everything challenging about the game comes from searching for these objects and areas. It is pixel hunting, if too high resolution to be called this. And you will likely get stuck on a few of these challenges, there is one big button hunt near the beginning of

this episode that left me somewhat stumped for quite awhile. But also some of the searching comes about from having so many choices. While there are very few places you ever need to interact with, there are loads and loads that you can interact with, though most of them are unimportant piles of trash; Sometimes you might think something is not worth trying, but in fact it is and it is even logical after you think of it.

*In the Death* has a lot of potential issues, and is missing pretty much every aspect that normally makes a game worth playing. But, I think, there is still something here; Something special and worth at least trying. The series as a whole was inspired by exploring FPS levels, old text adventures, and classic science fiction; So I would say "check it out", if nothing else, for that reason alone. ●



**BRIGHT MOMENTS:**

The personal quirkiness of the game.

**FUMBLES IN THE DARK:**

The frustrating object-hunting gameplay.

**VERDICT:**

There are loads of reasons to dismiss this game, but for me at least, none of them distract from its uniqueness.



# Adventure Lantern

