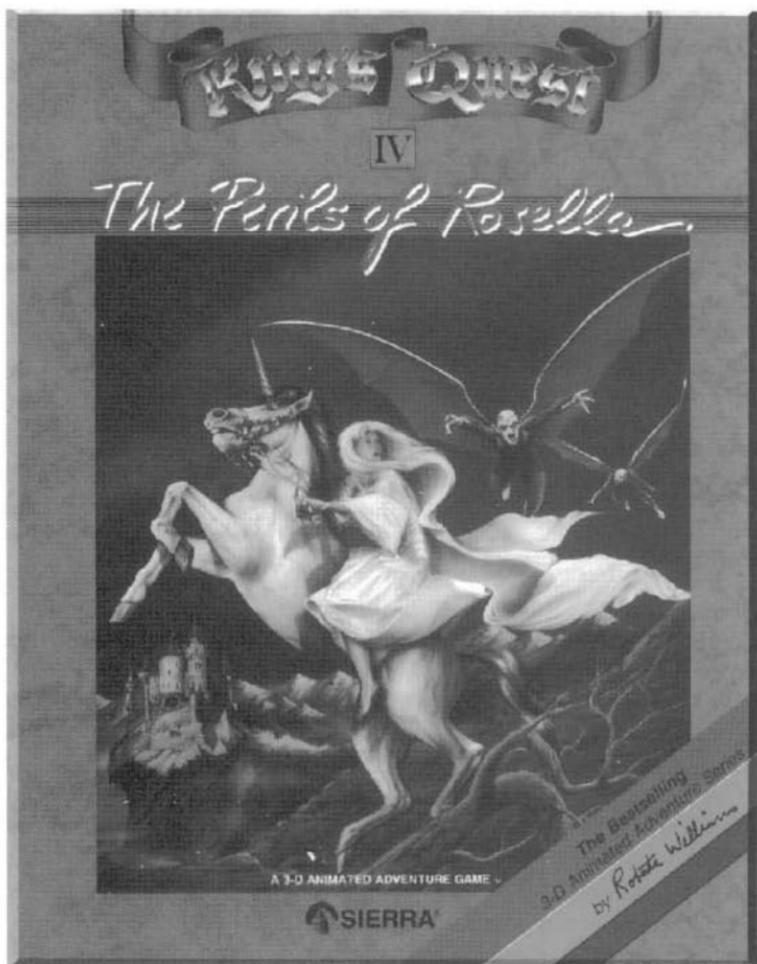




KING'S QUEST



Before King's Quest IV was released, word leaked out that Graham would have a heart attack and might die. Fans were upset enough to write in, asking to save Graham. I wanted King's Quest IV to have some pressure applied to you: a timed game, taking place over a 24-hour period, so you roam around during the day and eventually it turns to night. I don't remember other games using the same scenes at night; it looked creepy.

The story always comes first, but the technology plays a big part in what you can't do. When Wizard and the Princess shipped for the IBM PC, you could play it in B&W or in 4 hideous CGA colors. When we created EGA support for King's Quest IV, we got higher resolution (to get facial expressions and body language). For music support, Ken met someone at a trade show, made a few calls to Roland, and suddenly we could add an orchestra to the games. That did a lot in establishing the mood. I loved King's Quest IV's terrifying "Zombies' Night" and joyful "Cupid's Theme" songs. King's Quest IV won the Software Publishers' Association's "Best Adventure Game" award in 1989.

I knew the female lead is just fine for women and girls who play the game, but wasn't sure how it would go over with some of the men. And you know what? It wasn't as controversial as I expected. However, it was real strange at first designing the game; quite a different point of view. Having the woman die bothered me more than I expected."

—Roberta

King's Quest IV

THE PERILS OF ROSELLA

[Editor's Note: At this section's end you will find an Answer Key. This Key will enable you to enter the enchanted land of *King's Quest IV*. When you are asked for a word to bypass the copy protection, refer to this table. The first column represents page number, section, or tip number; the second, paragraph; and the third signifies where the word falls in the paragraph. Happy Adventuring!]



long time ago, in a kingdom called Daventry, there lived a King named Edward. Daventry was a very old kingdom, and it had its share of kings, both good and bad, over the thousands of years. King Edward was a very good King, but he was also very old, and without children. Disorder ruled the land since the loss of the Three Great Treasures. King Edward feared that disorder might degenerate further once he died. Besides, he knew (as well did his people) that, without an heir to the throne, the kingdom would be in dire straits indeed. Thus, King Edward sent for his favorite knight, Sir Graham.

"You are the bravest and most trustworthy of my knights, quick of wit and stout of heart. I have chosen you to succeed me as king, but first you must prove yourself worthy of my crown. Far beyond the walls of this castle lie shrouded the Three Great Treasures of Daventry, stolen years ago by stealth and sorcery. This kingdom will not be restored to its former glory and prosperity until these Great Treasures are returned to their rightful hearth. Succeed in this, my request, and the crown shall become yours upon my death. Fail, and our once beautiful kingdom will fall into the hands of evil forces who will use the powerful magic of the Three Great Treasures against us."

"May you return victorious, Sir Graham!"

Thus Sir Graham ventured where most humankind dared not tread, and returned home victorious with the cherished Treasures of Daventry, as is chronicled in the tale *Quest for the Crown*.

Now Graham ruled over the land, with the aid of the Magic Mirror and the other Great Treasures of Daventry. The people of Daventry prospered greatly under the reign of the kindly monarch. But peace and prosperity can become quite dull for valiant kings. Not more than a week after the third anniversary of his appointment to the throne (on the eve of King Edward's death) did King Graham begin to feel the pangs of loneliness.

Fate would have it that Graham was standing next to the Magic Mirror as he pondered his plight. As he glanced toward the Mirror, he noticed that the glass had grown inexplicably cloudy.

...As the mist cleared, Graham beheld the image of the most beautiful maid-

en he had ever seen. She stood gazing from a window, motionless except for a stray breeze that stirred her hair. A tear fell from one eye, and sparkled on her cheek like a diamond on velvet.

See! How the tears run down her face. "Oh, that I were the glove upon the hand that could brush away such sorrow!" exclaimed Graham.

The King's heart was suddenly intoxicated with longing for this maiden — indeed, this was the woman who must be his queen.

"Oh Mirror wise," said Graham, "I have vowed to make this maiden my bride. Where may I find her?"

The Mirror clouded once more, and a voice spoke forth. "This is the maiden Valanice. She is from the kingdom of Kolyma, and is known for her goodness no less than her beauty. The jealous crone Hagatha whisked Valanice away to an enchanted land, and imprisoned her in a quartz tower guarded by a ferocious beast. To rescue Valanice, you must travel to the kingdom of Kolyma, where you may search for the keys which unlock the three doors to the enchanted land ..."

As the tale is told, King Graham did indeed find the three magic keys, and faced the battles that led to the safe rescue of the beautiful maiden Valanice. The full account of King Graham's search for his bride is chronicled in the tale *Romancing the Throne*.

King Graham married the beautiful girl he had rescued, and two years later the young Queen Valanice gave birth to twins, a boy and a girl. Alexander bore a striking resemblance to his father, and likewise Rosella to her mother. The family lived a very happy and peaceful life ... at least for a while.

But from deep within the forests came rumblings of a terrible beast who was ravaging a bloody trail toward the land of Daventry. Sightings of dragons had been rare in these tranquil times, and never before in the kingdom of Daventry had anyone witnessed such a beast as the terrible three-headed dragon. As the years crept by, the notoriety of the beast grew as great as the destruction it wrought. Soon the whole population of Daventry tremored with the news of the dragon's approach, and each homestead dwelt in terror.

Meanwhile, in a land far away, lived the malevolent wizard Manannan. Manannan kept a watchful eye upon the kingdoms of the world. With a sardonic grin, he watched as the three-headed dragon rampaged its way towards Daventry. Manannan's hatred of mankind had intensified with his great age, and his coal-black eyes burned a strange reflection upon the glass of the crystal as he mirthfully watched another human swallowed whole by the vicious beast.

Preferring his solitude, the powerful Manannan only allowed himself to be observed by one servant-boy, who maintained his house and performed all of his menial chores. Of course, Manannan could have conjured up spirits to do his dirty work, but he much preferred to see the toil and strain of a young mortal suffering under his thrall.

Most would call it depravity, but it was fear that fueled the flames of Manannan's hatred of humanity, a fear instilled by a vision from his prophetic crystal ball. For within its walls of quartz had Manannan seen his own hideous destruction at the hands of a conquering hero.

Time has wrought many changes, and with them much sorrow. The

kingdom of Daventry was ravaged by the deplorable dragon, and the young Princess Rosella was abducted. The entire kingdom was overcome by the brutal onslaught of the beast, and though forewarned, found themselves helpless to defend against its supernatural strength. Much weeping and wailing was heard throughout the land. Even with its power of prophecy, the Magic Mirror could provide no answers, not even a clue, for some bearer of black magic had cast a cloud of darkness upon its face ...

And the wizard watched with eyes of venom ... !

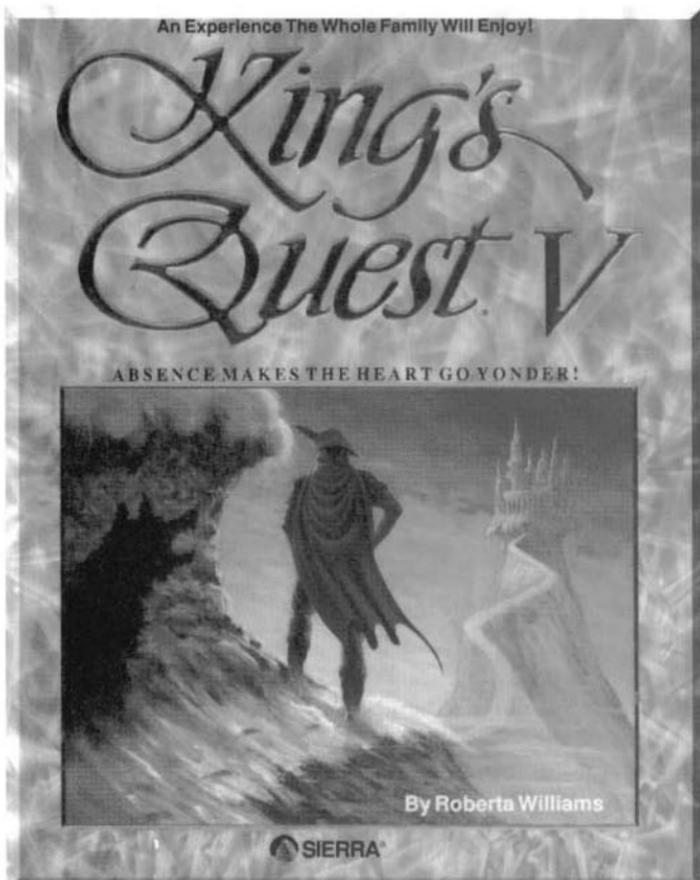
The entire tale of Rosella's rescue, the wizard's downfall, and the restoration of the royal family is chronicled in the saga *To Heir is Human*.

According to legend, shortly after Rosella's rescue, King Graham decided it was time to pass on his adventurer's cap. Gathering in his wife and two children into his arms, the King offered a grateful smile upwards, for each member of his family had given him great pride. Gazing down at his children, he could not help but see the glint of spirited valor in their eyes. Knowing the future of his kingdom would rest soundly in the hands of its future heir, he slowly lifted his hands to display the famous adventurer's cap.

And now the commencement of the noblest adventure of all ...

When you are asked for a word to pass the copy protection, refer to this table. The first column represents page number, section, or tip number; the second, paragraph; and the third signifies where the word falls in the paragraph.

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|-------------|-----|-------------|-----------|-----------------|-----------|----------------|
| PAGE | | WORD | 8 | 1pp | 1w | TIME |
| 2 | 2pp | 8w | LIVED | 8 | 1pp | 5w |
| 2 | 2pp | 4w | KINGDOM | 8 | 3pp | 6w |
| 2 | 1pp | 4w | LEGEND | 8 | 3pp | 2w |
| 2 | 2pp | 6w | DAVENTRY | 8 | 3pp | 9w |
| 3 | 1pp | 4w | BRAVEST | 9 | 1pp | 3w |
| 3 | 3pp | 4w | VENTURED | 9 | 1pp | 4w |
| 3 | 3pp | lastw | CROWN | 9 | 1pp | 7w |
| 3 | 1pp | 6w | MOST | 9 | 2pp | 7w |
| 3 | 2pp | 3w | RETURN | | | NOBLEST |
| 3 | 1pp | 10w | KNIGHTS | OVERVIEW | | WORD |
| 3 | 3pp | 8w | DARED | 1pp | 2w | SIERRA |
| 4 | 1pp | 3w | RULED | 1pp | 6w | GAME |
| 4 | 2pp | 2w | WOULD | 2pp | 1w | EACH |
| 4 | 1pp | 6w | LAND | 2pp | 3w | ANIMATED |
| 4 | 3pp | lastw | VELVET | | | WORD |
| 4 | 1pp | 7w | WITH | TIPS | | WORD |
| 4 | 3pp | 3w | MIST | 1 | 1w | BASIC |
| 4 | 3pp | 4w | CLEARED | 1 | 6w | INTERACT |
| 4 | 3pp | 8w | IMAGE | 2 | 1pp | 5w |
| 5 | 2pp | 5w | SUDDENLY | 2 | 2pp | 4w |
| 5 | 3pp | 8w | VOWED | 2 | 1pp | 8w |
| 5 | 5pp | 7w | GRAHAM | 2 | 2pp | 8w |
| 5 | 2pp | 3w | HEART | 3 | last | |
| 5 | 3pp | 2w | MIRROR | 3 | | 4w |
| 5 | 1pp | 4w | TEARS | 3 | | 1w |
| 5 | 4pp | 8w | VOICE | 4 | | 7w |
| 5 | 5pp | 9w | INDEED | 4 | | 5w |
| 6 | 1pp | 9w | RESCUED | 4 | | 1w |
| 6 | 2pp | 4w | WITHIN | 4 | | 9w |
| 6 | 2pp | lastw | TERROR | 5 | | 9w |
| 6 | 2pp | 8w | RUMBLINGS | 5 | | 4w |
| 6 | 2pp | 6w | FORESTS | 5 | | 7w |
| 6 | 1pp | 3w | MARRIED | 5 | | lastw |
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| 7 | 3pp | 9w | FEAR | 8 | 1pp | 6w |
| 7 | 1pp | 1w | MEANWHILE | 8 | 2pp | 3w |
| 7 | 2pp | 5w | POWERFUL | 8 | 1pp | 4w |
| 7 | 2pp | 3w | SOLITUDE | 8 | 1pp | lastw |
| 8 | 3pp | 2w | ENTIRE | | | EVERY |
| 8 | 1pp | 1w sen | SORROW | | | SPELL |



"After King's Quest IV and The Colonel's Bequest, I needed to rethink the basics for King's Quest V. The market was changing to where most people didn't want to take the time to learn to type, spell, or figure out just how you talk to a computer via an adventure game. I had to design an icon interface with that future in mind; something that's about as easy to use as it's going to get. On a design note, I preferred working with the no-typing interface because I had more time to think about the plot and puzzles instead of writing all those error messages for people typing things that alternated from the story. Unfortunately it took some time to realize all the possibilities the new format offered; some players felt icon-based games were less challenging. I kept thinking about this as I wrote King's Quest VI.

By the way, there's an "Easter Egg" hidden in King's Quest V. After Graham slides down the snowy slope and breaks the sled; save your game. Now toss Graham's cloak on the sled to see the fun."

—Roberta

King's Quest V

ABSENCE MAKES THE HEART GO YONDER!



long time ago, there was a peaceful and prosperous kingdom called Daventry. King Graham and Queen Valanice ruled wisely, and the people of Daventry were content.

One beautiful spring day, King Graham set out for a walk in the woods. Birds were singing in the trees. It seemed an auspicious sign. As Graham was contemplating his good fortune, a sharp wind blew into the woods from the east, whirling up sticks and leaves into his path, and startling the birds into silence.

The air grew suddenly colder. It seemed an unexpected storm was approaching. Graham began to walk back toward the castle, his joyful mood broken by a dark foreboding. When he reached the top of the gentle rise overlooking his home, he was horrified to see empty space where the royal castle of Daventry had stood just minutes before. Cold fear gripped his heart.

Where was his family? What had happened to them?

"Whoo-hoo...whoo-hoo." An owl hooted behind him, but Graham scarcely heard it over the pounding of his heart. "I can tell you what happened," came a voice behind him, and Graham spun around to confront a large owl in a blue vest and spectacles. "I know what happened to your castle. I saw it all," said the owl.

Journey into the magical world of King's Quest once again on a quest for the missing castle and the royal family of Daventry.

THE ICON BAR

At the top of the screen is an icon bar containing several icons that can be selected to execute the command choices available to you. Some icons will have a menu of choices. Use the [Tab] key to move between choices within an icon menu.



The Walk Icon



Choose Walk when you want to move the character from place to place onscreen. A walking character will move until it encounters an obstacle in its path, then stop.

The Look Icon



Choose Look when you want to have the character look at something onscreen.

The Action Icon



Choose Action when you want the character to perform an action on an object. (Example: getting a drink from a pond, jumping onto a rock, etc.)

The Talk Icon



Choose Talk when you want to initiate a conversation between game characters.

The Item Icon



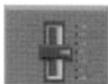
The Item icon shows the last inventory item you selected. Choose Item when you want to see or use this item.

The Inventory Icon



Choose Inventory when you want to see and select from the items you are currently carrying.

The Controls Icon



This icon allows three game variables to be adjusted.

Speed— Adjusts the speed of the game animation.

Volume— Adjusts the sound volume.

Game Detail—Adjusts the amount of non-essential animation in the game. If your game is running too slowly, you may want to adjust the Game Detail to lessen the amount of non-essential animation. Save and Restore functions are also accessed via the Controls icon.

The Information Icon



Choose Information when you need to be reminded what the various icons do in the game.

The Crown Cursor

From time to time, the cursor will change to a crown. The Crown Cursor indicates that you have a small amount of time to complete a puzzle or task. So when you see the crown, work quickly.

The Hourglass Cursor



This cursor simply indicates that the computer is thinking. You cannot perform any actions while this cursor is displayed on your screen.

OBJECT CURSORS

Each item in your inventory has a special **object** cursor associated with it. These can be used to perform game actions with your inventory items. Follow these steps:

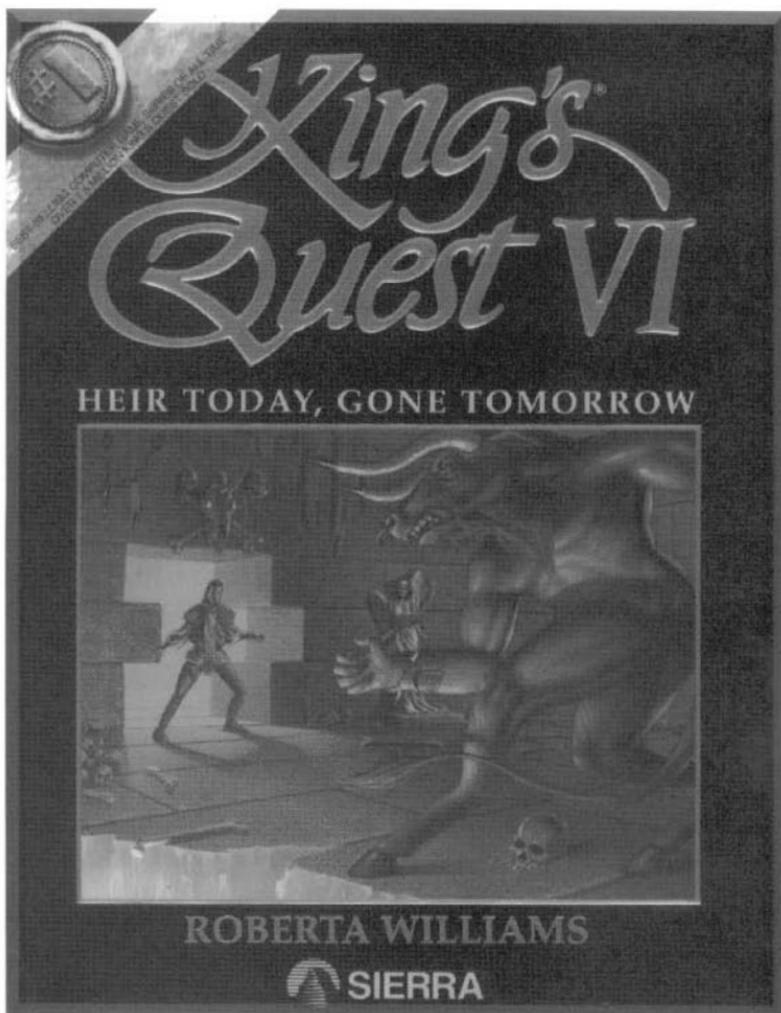
1. You can choose the Inventory icon from the icon bar, or press the Tab key.
2. Move the arrow cursor to the inventory item you want to use, and press [ENTER]. The cursor will change to look like the item you have selected.
3. Choose the OK icon. You will exit the inventory screen to the game.
4. Move the Object cursor to the place onscreen where you want to use the inventory item and press [ENTER].

USING CURSORS IN THE INVENTORY SCREEN

- To use cursors in the inventory screen, choose an icon from the icon bar, then position the cursor on the inventory item, and press [ENTER].
- Choose the Action icon and use the Look cursor to see a description of the item on the inventory screen.
- Choose the Action icon and use the Action cursor to use an inventory item to take action on another inventory item (Example: putting jewels into a pouch).

KING'S QUEST V SYMBOLS

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| A |  | J |  | S |  |
| B |  | K |  | T |  |
| C |  | L |  | U |  |
| D |  | M |  | V |  |
| E |  | N |  | W |  |
| F |  | O |  | X |  |
| G |  | P |  | Y |  |
| H |  | Q |  | Z |  |
| I |  | R |  | | |



"King's Quest V broke a lot of ground: VGA, icon interface, and lots of acting. I'm pleased to say it also won the Software Publishers' Association's "Best Adventure Game" award in 1991. But I had to look at things from other angles for King's Quest VI: we needed professional voice actors, and the plot had to be less linear. Co-designer Jane Jensen and I bounced a lot of ideas around. We needed more optional puzzles, multiple solutions to puzzles, multiple uses for the same object; a few "red herrings" and lots of timers so things would need to be done within a certain amount of time. King's Quest VI had to be harder AND easier than King's Quest V in that you can get through it on a minimal level. You'll miss half the story, but you'll finish.

Valanice finally got some time on the screen; I knew she had to play a major part in a sequel. I wanted to get away from just putting together a jumble of puzzles in some sort of meaningless quest; you should have a clear sense of what you're doing and why, with some emotion behind it."

—Roberta

King's Quest VI

HEIR TODAY, GONE TOMORROW

The Land of the Green Isles is an ancient kingdom ruled by a royal family designated simply as the "Crown." Its location so far from the rest of the known world, combined with the dangers of the surrounding sea, have effectively isolated it from the influence of other lands. This small kingdom might as well exist on a distant star as on the other side of an inhospitable sea.

Because of this isolation, the citizens of the kingdom have a unique culture and a quaint naivete. If one asks about the history of the Land, they are eager to speak. Yet of true answers, little can be found. They can recite the names of the holders of the Crown spanning back hundreds of years, can speak of each dwelling's origin, of practically every citizen's lineage, yet when I asked how the kingdom began, bewilderment is the response. "The kingdom has always been," they say, "There has always been a royal family." It is as if this place has existed, unaltered, since the dawn of time.

But there is some basis for a different picture: that these islands have actually held a succession of kingdoms, each bleeding into the next, new civilizations building on ruins scarcely cold. I base this opinion on the traces and legends of an ancient civilization to be found on one of the islands—but more of that later.

The kingdom as it stands today, has remained relatively unchanged for hundreds of years. Four islands make up the bulk of the Land. The Isle of the Crown is the center of the kingdom. There on a magnificent rise stands the Castle of the Crown, the seat of the royal family of the kingdom and the heart of the Land. A village and docks comprise the rest of the island and run most of the kingdom's daily commerce, such as it is.

Across a short distance of sea is the Isle of Wonder, an aptly-named place of sheer delight ruled by a pair of rival queens who are, despite their own internal strife, unalterably loyal to the Crown.

The Isle of the Beast is the least hospitable of the islands. Seemingly deserted, I did not see much of the place since obstacles made it impossible to travel far inland. Nevertheless, the place has its own history and is listed among the kingdom's holdings.

The fourth island is the Isle of the Sacred Mountain, so called for the soaring peak that rises from the base of the island into the clouds, and around which that community—both literally and philosophically—is built. The Isle of the Sacred Mountain has its own rulers who are also subservient to the Crown.

A more dissimilar set of cultures can scarce be imagined than those on

these four islands, yet they seem to exist in harmony and function as a whole. The uniting factor is the Crown, which maintains loyalty both by means of its undisputed heritage as the seat of all government, and by the grace of its goodly royal family.

Peace has reigned for centuries in this idyllic kingdom and seems likely to continue. That is, as long as the Land remains hidden from the evil that we know exists in the world. Though I am a stranger here, I hope not to influence this place overly much. Who would wish to change such a paradise?

THE ISLE OF THE CROWN

Of the four islands, the Isle of the Crown is the one which will seem the most conventional to travelers from distant lands. It is largely inhabited by members of the human race, men and women of pleasant disposition and generous hospitality. As stated earlier, the Isle of the Crown is comprised of the Castle of the Crown, a quaint village, and the docks from which travel among the islands is commenced.

The village on the Isle of the Crown is a small one. Its stucco walls gleam in the hot sun, its dirt paths are clean and well-maintained, its vegetation is lush. The shop merchants are friendly and seem to delight in unusual trades. Though little of mine survived the shipwreck, the few trinkets that I'd had on my person or managed to salvage from the shore were deemed unusual enough in that distant realm to obtain a few necessities. I also found the villagers eager to share what they had in return for honest work, so I have survived quite comfortably here.

Village life is one of cheerful routine. The villagers rise at first light to do their chores before the tropical sun reaches its peak. Then, a light midday meal is served. The bulk of the afternoon is reserved for indoor activities: reading and scholastics for the younger population and naps for their elders. Everyone seems to prize this quiet time. When the sun goes down, communal activities are frequent. If there are no weddings or other festivities (I must admit that I am quite fond of these local celebrations), the families often gather informally for a plain but plentiful supper, music, and conversation.

Though most families are modest, none are in want. Servants are used in the more affluent households, but most of the citizens cheerfully rely on their own strong hands for the work of daily life. What serving class exists is generally well-treated, though even in this gentle civilization, I did note a few exceptions.

Beyond the village lie the docks, a place of bustle and excitement. Even the humblest citizen of the Isle of the Crown frequently enjoys visiting the other islands in the kingdom. In return, it is not uncommon to see all manner of strange creatures frequenting the village shops from the kingdom's other islands.

All travel between the islands is focused at the docks and, indeed, at a single vessel. That vessel is simply called "the ferry," and it is a pleasant enough little ship, well-maintained as befits its value to the kingdom. The ferryman is a jolly fellow, patient even with the youngest of his passengers. His young son helps manage the vessel and keep her shipshape.



The story of the ferry is an interesting one, particularly if you recall the fate of my own ship. The islands, it seems, have always been surrounded by terrible eddies and currents that make seagoing nearly impossible. The family that runs the

ferry has done so for generations, each father passing on to his son the secret of the tricky navigation. Many believe that the ferryman's family line has an uncanny instinct for the sea around the isles. It is said that they sail "by the blood in their veins." One thing is certain: I would not venture to sail a ship in these waters, so whatever the secrets of the ferryman's family—thank the stars for it!

THE CASTLE OF THE CROWN

The Castle of the Crown is a stunning palace, giving testimony to the skill of the kingdom's architects and the richness of its treasury. The castle is a monument of marble, gold, and precious gems, with tall arched ceilings and artistic fittings. I am told that it was built one hundred years ago by King Aliphid as a present to his bride, Queen Astar. The previous castle, also called the Castle of the Crown, was large and drafty and had served as the seat of the royal family for over three hundred years. It is said that King Aliphid was cautious over his new bride's fragile health and built the new palace with thick walls for protection from the high winds and cool

hallways for respite from the blazing tropical sun.

The castle is made even more exotic by the race of guard dogs that serve and protect the palace. These wondrous creatures seem to combine the best qualities of canine and human. Speaking in gruff voices and armed with swords or pikes, the guard dogs are strong and intelligent, and have loyally served the Crown through the centuries.

Despite my status as a stranger, I was granted a visit with the reigning king and queen. Their openness and accessibility, added to the lack of drawbridges, moats, or battlements of any kind, made clear to me the innocence of this kingdom that had never known war or treachery. Had I been a viper in disguise, I would have been granted an intimate audience just as readily! As a citizen of the larger, more dangerous world, it made me feel a little nervous and honor-bound not to betray such trust in me.

I met the king and queen in the castle's throne room. The throne room is a vast hall more ornate than anything these poor eyes have ever seen. Standing before the two thrones in that cavern of gold, I felt as though I stood before fabled Olympus itself. Yet, raising my eyes up slowly to those noble faces, I saw nothing of judgment in their eyes, nothing of disdain. Indeed, their faces were full of guileless welcome and kindness.

As for the rulers of this kingdom themselves: King Caliphim, though not a large man, has an air of strength and self-assurance about him. He has the face of a scholar and the eyes of a gentle benefactor. Of Queen Allaria, his beautiful wife, my first impression was of hair the color of night and skin as pale as dawn. She smiled at me gra-

ciously and I could see the sadness there. For despite the glory of the palace around them, the halls seemed to weigh on the couple with their emptiness. They are the last of the royal family and, growing into middle age, have yet to produce an heir.

The king and queen listened with interest to my tale of shipwreck. King Caliphim asked astute questions of my homeland and the lands of my travel. He seemed to know something of other lands—perhaps from the same source that had brought the name of the Land of the Green Isles to Daventry. He was most curious and, as a thinker, seemed intrigued by any new idea I might offer. Unfortunately for him, my ideas on such things as kingdoms and civilizations were rather simple ones. I sensed that, despite his interest, he would be content to have those other kingdoms remain remote from his own. Neither hungry for conquest nor anxious for change, his kingdom would remain isolated. Indeed, except for the lack of an heir, it seemed the good king and queen did provide the kingdom with all it could ever desire.

Having met the royal couple and recovered sufficiently from my ordeal at sea, I began to feel quite curious about the other islands in the kingdom, and so I put my itching feet in the care of the jolly ferryman.

THE ISLE OF WONDER

Imagine a place where the very path beneath your feet might complain of your weight and the trees purposely drop twigs on your head for the sheer merriment of it all, and you'll have an idea of what it's like to be on the Isle of Wonder.

The Isle of Wonder is a comma-shaped body of land that might as well resemble a question mark, for confusion and astonishment are sure to be the lot of the unsuspecting visitor.

The island is teeming with life. Vegetation is abundant as are the island's inhabitants. In fact, the two are frequently one and the same. One can scarcely pick up a grain of sand on that shore without it demanding to be put right back...and this instant, if you please!

The history of this unusual island is an issue of fervent speculation. Many believe that it was an uninteresting deserted island until a wizard enchanted the whole place, bringing everything in it to life, and presented it to his daughter as a birthday present. Others say that the island was once the prison of a beautiful princess, held captive there by a powerful and jealous queen. The maiden was so fair that the very trees and stones themselves could not bear to hear her crying and came to life to provide her companionship. Still another group ardently claims that the Creator of the Universe simply got tired of the serious business of life-giving and decided to indulge His or Her sense of humor.

Whatever the origin, a more delightful spot could scarcely be imagined. But be warned! Those travelers who like to know exactly what to expect from life would be well-advised to go elsewhere. While most of the island's inhabitants are friendly, some of the "thornier" natives are capable of being downright rude, and all are quirkesome. Visitors are frequent on the Isle of Wonder, for it offers a refreshing respite from the ho-hum of everyday life. Even the king and queen enjoy a picnic on Exclamation

Point or a stroll in the gardens, and they are on occasion to be found there relaxing and passing the time of day with the island's natives.

The rulers of the Isle of Wonder are a pair of queens, rivals in every way, and most frequently to be found arguing over everything from the color of the sky to the consistency of potato hash. Despite their eccentricities, the Isle of Wonder seems to run smoothly and be a flourishing part of the kingdom, providing many valuable exports and lending the kingdom a light-heartedness to counter its more serious countrymen on the Isle of the Sacred Mountain.

THE ISLE OF THE SACRED MOUNTAIN

The Isle of the Sacred Mountain, on first impression, appears to be nothing but a great wall of cliffs rising to the sky with no apparent means of scaling it. The visitor is soon met, however, by a pair of "greeters" of the Winged Ones race.

The Winged Ones are the inhabitants of the Isle of the Sacred Mountain. Towering to a height of six to seven feet, the Winged Ones are by far the most impressive creatures I have ever seen. Each one of them, male and female alike, is surpassingly beautiful. Their bodies are muscled and athletic and gleaming with health. From their broad backs mighty wings emerge like secondary limbs, strong and webbed, and covered with large white feathers. And when they spread those massive wings...oh!...it is as if the sun itself is eclipsed.

Two of these creatures, the greeters, meet visitors at the base of

the cliffs and so was I met. Gently, they took my arms and flew me upwards. Has there been a man who has not dreamed of flying? Are we all not Icarus in our heart of hearts? Imagine then, the thrill of that flight and the glory of the beings who rule the very air around us!

But, as the old saw warns, "Beauty is only skin deep." I was flown to the Winged Ones' city, a strange and haunting place whose architecture combines the two overriding elements of this culture: aviation and the classical. The city seems built to exclude those poor creatures whose lot it is to crawl like insects upon the ground, for each edifice towers into the sky with no connection to the next or to the ground itself save by flight.

Thus completely dependent on the greeters to travel about the city or even leave, the visitor is humbled and loath to do much exploration. This appeared to me to be rather the intention, for the culture of the Winged Ones is a private one. On the Isle of Wonder I always felt welcome, despite the sometimes gruff nature of the inhabitants. They had a certain simplicity, an honesty about them. By contrast, although my reception with the Winged Ones was on the surface extremely polite, the formal words of welcome did not ring true. I sensed, in the eyes of that beautiful race, a disdain of common humanity, a haughtiness that made them suddenly lose some of their golden perfection in the eyes of this humble observer.

Despite this innate sense of superiority, the Winged Ones are valuable members of the kingdom and provide many important skills. Incredibly intelligent, the Winged Ones are master logicians and mathematicians, precise architects and planners. They dis-

dain magic and the daintier arts, being far too logical for such goings on. Even the palace of the Winged Ones' city has a sparseness, a sense of functionality that denotes their contempt for artistic ornamentation.

The Winged Ones' culture is an old one, and they make frequent references to the "Ancient Ones," their forefathers, whose ruins and great works still abound on the island. The Isle of the Sacred Mountain is ruled by a lord and lady, who exist as monarchs on their own island but owe allegiance to the common Crown.

The name of the island derives from a lone peak which soars into the clouds beyond the city. There, in a cave, dwells the sacred Oracle, the philosophical head of the community. It is said that the Oracle is centuries old, ultimately wise, and can read the future. She is consulted by the lord and lady on every facet of the city's life, and even advises the king and queen. I, of course, did not meet the Oracle, and even most Winged Ones citizens regard her as an almost mythical being. The greatest honor any Winged Ones citizen might hope for in his or her long life is to be granted a meeting with the Oracle, for her cave is a place reserved for only the most worthy souls. Like many lofty ambitions, most of the Winged Ones never achieve this end.

I found myself fascinated by the Ancient Ones, for it was the only deep history apparent in the kingdom. From what I managed to learn from the close-mouthed Winged Ones themselves, and from the more readily available information to be found in the writings and from scholars on

the Isle of the Crown, I put together the following picture of this bygone race. I include it among these records of the kingdom, for they are as much a presence in the Land as the current inhabitants.

THE ANCIENT ONES

The Ancient Ones inhabited the Isle of the Sacred Mountain perhaps as many as a thousand years ago. At that time, it is likely that there was no "kingdom" and that the Ancient Ones existed alone in the sea, since no similarly aged records exist on any other island.

The Ancient Ones had an advanced, mysterious culture. Their writings have been discovered on ancient tablets and scrolls buried beneath the current Winged Ones' city, and in the ancient catacombs on the Isle of the Sacred Mountain. It is commonly believed that they possessed knowledge and mechanical acuity far surpassing anything that exists today. This belief is based on a few remaining artifacts such as their mysterious labyrinthine catacombs and the writings on the island's cliffs. The artifacts of the Ancient Ones are fiercely guarded by the Winged Ones and are studied by scholars of that race who spend their whole lives trying to unravel their mysteries. What is known about them is derived from these delicate and treasured written records.

The Ancient Ones were believers in the power of language. They were fond of saying, "A master of languages will soar." This, presumably, refers to intellectual heights rather than physical ones, but who can say? It is also known that they were great lovers of



symbols and had a complex theology which seemed to worship all things aerial, though only fragments of their belief system are understood today. The Ancient Ones gave meaning to every creature, every color, every element and mineral. In addition, they studied the emotional states of being. Every emotion, like every creature, color, and element, ranked high or low on their theological scale—the lowest being “base” or “primitive,” the highest being “pure.” At the top of this scale were the Sacred Four; the emotion “tranquility,” the color “azure,” the creature “caterpillar,” and the element “air.” The color azure and the element air are obvious allusions to the sky. Similarly, tranquility is reminiscent of the heavens above. The caterpillar is the one surprise. In their reasoning, however, it makes perfect sense. After all, there are birds aplenty in the skies, but what glory is it to fly when one is born with wings? Is it not more glorious still to be born to crawl upon the ground and build one’s own wings?

It is a matter of much debate whether or not the Ancient Ones themselves possessed the power of flight. Despite their theology, the remains of the Ancient Ones do not bear the wings that distinguish the Isle of the Sacred Mountain’s current inhabitants. The Winged Ones firmly believe that the Ancient Ones flew without wings, thus proving themselves superior even to the Winged Ones themselves. Some scholars on the Isle of the Crown, however, believe that the Ancient Ones could

not fly, and that their obsessive interest in flight and their secret knowledge enabled them to create a winged race, the descendants of whom are the Winged Ones. Ah, but such things we will never know for certain, for true understanding was buried along with the last of that long-dead race.

I spent some time studying the language and culture of the Ancient Ones, and, in the interest of antiquity, I set forth here as much as is understood of their works.

THE ANCIENT ONES’ ALPHABET

The alphabet of the Ancient Ones consists of graphic symbols. It is clear that their language and ours has the same root, for their writings are directly translatable by simply replacing the appropriate letter of our alphabet for its corresponding symbol in theirs. It is probable that the Ancient Ones spoke in our language and used these symbols in their writings as a code for secrecy or for their ceremonial beauty. Or, perhaps, our own “letters” for the spoken language evolved as short-hand notations for the complex symbols used by the Ancient Ones. In any case, there are twenty-six primary symbols in their alphabet. There are other minor symbols, but those were used only for accent and as representations of complex philosophical ideals and are not included here.

In addition to their alphabetical functions, each symbol also represents an emotion, a color, a creature, and a natural or metaphysical element.

-  **A** This symbol represents harmony, the cat, the color sienna, and earth.
-  **B** This symbol represents sorrow, the albatross, the color charcoal-gray, and onyx.
-  **C** This symbol represents hope, the dove, the color pearl-gray, and opals.
-  **D** This symbol represents tranquility, the mouse, the color sable, and granite.
-  **E** This symbol represents irony, the whale, the color ochre, and paper.
-  **F** This symbol represents humility, the grasshopper, the color olive, and plants.
-  **G** This symbol represents purity, the unicorn, the color white, and air.
-  **H** This symbol represents rage, the shark, the color red, and fire.
-  **I** This symbol represents cowardice, the sheep, the color orange, and coal.
-  **J** This symbol represents honesty, the parrot, the color green, and emeralds.
-  **K** This symbol represents wisdom, the owl, the color brown, and wood.
-  **L** This symbol represents loneliness, the cricket, the color beige, and clay.
-  **M** This symbol represents romantic love, the swan, the color gold and the element gold.
-  **N** This symbol represents hate, the crab, the color black, and ebony.
-  **O** This symbol represents joy, the dolphin, the color azure, and sapphires.
-  **P** This symbol represents fear, the rabbit, the color violet, and rubies.
-  **Q** This symbol represents faith, the caterpillar, the color turquoise, and the stone turquoise.
-  **R** This symbol represents grief, the jackal, the color silver, and the element silver.
-  **S** This symbol represents happiness, the dog, the color pink, and marble.
-  **T** This symbol represents perseverance, the tortoise, the color sea-green, and water.
-  **U** This symbol represents intuition, the serpent, the color royal-blue, and rain.
-  **V** This symbol represents foolishness, the monkey, the color yellow, and ivory.
-  **W** This symbol represents familial love, the horse, the color hazel, and leather.
-  **X** This symbol represents bravery, the lion, the color purple, and diamonds.
-  **Y** This symbol represents patience, the cow, the color amber, and pearls.
-  **Z** This symbol represents desire, the warthog, the color burgundy, and garnets.

THE LOGIC CLIFFS

One of the most intriguing artifacts left by the Ancient Ones are the logic cliffs. The cliffs are so named from a series of riddles written on the face of the cliffs leading from the beach of the Isle of the Sacred Mountain to the Winged Ones' city. Chiseled painstakingly into solid rock, the viewer must question what purpose the words serve. From the ancient scroll that references the cliffs, it can be determined that the riddles on the cliff were part of an elaborate mechanism designed to protect those who dwelt at the top of the cliffs from undesirables that might arrive from the sea below. The mechanism may have served as some sort of calling device designed to alert those at the top of the cliffs that a brother required admittance, or perhaps led to secret chambers within the rock itself. Whatever the cliffs' purpose was, it was obviously built to admit only those indoctrinated into the secrets of the Ancient Ones' culture and for that reason is, alas, as yet unsolved by those who live today.

The following translations from the cliffs of logic scroll may help the reader understand the mystique that surrounds this artifact.

The first challenge: "Only those pure of heart will be able to RISE the cliffs of logic."

The third challenge: "The Stones of Stealth," are associated with this riddle:

*Four men standing in a row,
Third from the left and down you go,
The rest, in order, move you on,
The Youngest, the Oldest, and the Second Son.*

The fifth challenge: "Only those of the highest order may ASCEND the cliffs of logic."

THE CATACOMBS

Another remnant of the Ancient Ones' culture, the catacombs, is tragically inaccessible to visitors today. The catacombs held the burial chambers of the Ancient Ones, and are said to be designed as a giant labyrinth. To protect their tombs from looters, the Ancient Ones built death traps into the catacombs and filled it with dead-end paths, maze-like corridors, and rooms where secret knowledge is needed to pass.

The Winged Ones were close to mastering the secrets of the catacombs some years ago, when a minotaur, taking an instant liking to the dark, funereal place, decided to take up residence. At first, the kingdom attempted to regain the hostaged artifact, but, between the dangers of the catacombs itself and the minotaur's stealth and treachery, the losses became too grave to continue the struggle and the minotaur was left to his prize. Since then, the catacombs have been bolted shut. It is one of the great sorrows of the kingdom that each year the minotaur demands, and must be given, the living sacrifice of his choice lest he emerge from the catacombs and attack the city.

The catacombs are illustrative of the Ancient Ones' obsessive interest in death. Indeed, it seems to be in the air in this part of the world, for the modern-day Green Islanders also have elaborate death traditions, as I will describe later.



The catacombs were obviously a place of high reverence for the Ancient Ones, as a message on an ancient tablet that once adorned the doors to the catacombs shows:

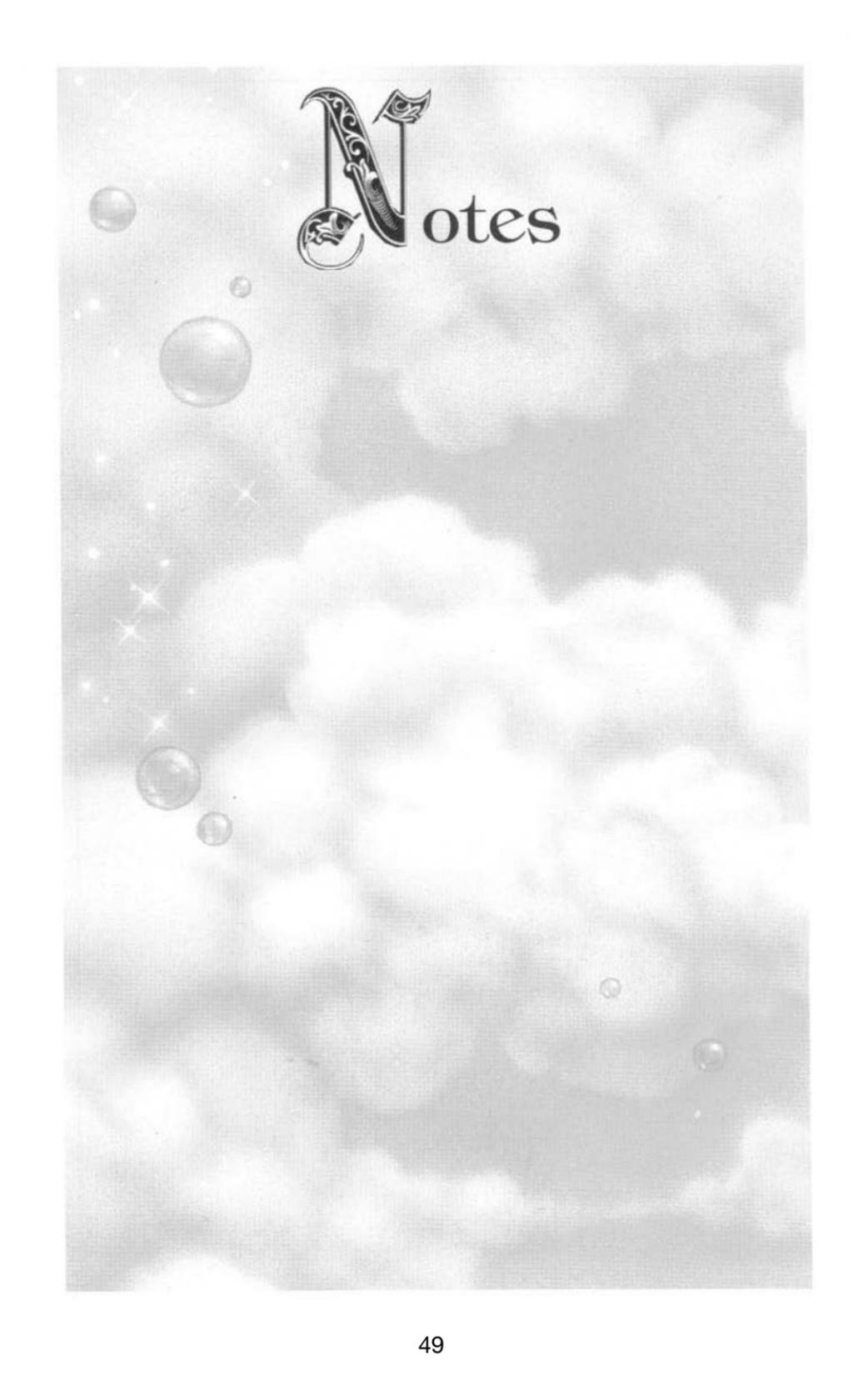
*Three roses laid upon the bower,
A scythe for he who cuts the flower,
A crown, a dove, most noble race!
Thy bones make sacred this dread place.*



So concludes my records on the Land of the Green Isles. I have been well-treated here and have become rich in friends, in knowledge, and in countless other blessings. Though I have found my spirit forlorn at times with my inability to travel on, I must admit that my feet have itched less here than anywhere else in this wide world. Still, on occasion, I find my mind roving back to the green hills of Daventry. Perhaps, if my spirit, at least, is allowed to roam free I've yet to see them soon.

To those who may someday follow in my footsteps, I say this:

Be kind to this gentle land, be open-hearted to her whimsy, and protect her, if you can, from the harsh winds which might wish to blow in from the sea to steal her soul. She is unlike any place I have ever seen, and she has stolen my heart.

The background of the page is a grayscale illustration of a sky filled with soft, billowing clouds. On the left side, there is a vertical column of bubbles of various sizes, some with highlights, and several small, four-pointed star-like sparkles. The overall texture is grainy, typical of a halftone or dithered print.

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