

InsideADRIFT

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Opening Statements.

Short works are an integral part of IF production these days-- one need only look at the preponderance of Speed-IF competitions offered and games written to get an idea of how popular they are. Likewise, short work is no stranger to the world of literature, where flash fiction (stories of just 1000 words or less) is frequently published, often desirable by publishers. Yet flash is not always written in an hour or three. Flash is brief, but lovingly crafted. Doesn't it seem natural, then, that such short works should have their own place in interactive fiction, as well, outside of Speed-IF?

As you'll see from the works submitted or their transcripts, we think IF is well-suited to making a case for such *prompt literature*.

Included in the issue are also a pair of older interviews meant for previous issues of *InsideADRIFT* for which content never materialized. I have included them for their relevance despite their age, and because we are always looking for glimpses inside the lives of those that make up our community. If you know someone you would like to interview for a future issue, please make your suggestion on the ADRIFT Forum.

For the future, *InsideADRIFT* intends to continue building stronger links to the IF Community outside of our platform by showing what goes on inside, but we also intend to start reaching out to explicitly literary, non-IF communities. However, before we can take this step, we need to know that we can keep producing content. Your support in this endeavor is greatly appreciated.

I would like to offer a special thanks to all of our contributors and to newcomer Bahri Gordebak, who ported several of his works for the issue and wrote a new piece just for it. A big thanks goes out to the ADRIFT community for supporting the issue, and to those who support the ADRIFT community.

We hope you enjoy issue #41 of *InsideADRIFT*!

--Duncan Bowsman, editor.

**Interview with Jacqueline A. Lott,
conducted by Duncan Bowsman**

DB: What can you tell me about how you got involved in IF? When did you start writing?

Jacq: I began my near-lifelong relationship with interactive fiction when I was eight years old. My parents purchased a Commodore 64 and a copy of *Zork I*. Many titles followed... the rest of the *Zork* trilogy, *Wishbringer*, *Suspended*, *HHGttG*... those are the releases that stand out most in my mind from those days. It was always the writing that drew me in; immersive games always won me over far more than games that focused so much on puzzles that they neglected the prose.

I wanted to write my own games, but I was a writer, not a programmer. My forays into basic had been pretty limited, stuff like:

```
10 print "Jacqueline is awesome!!!"  
20 goto 10
```

That, and typing somebody else's full length program into the computer from the pages of a magazine (only to have it not work). It just wasn't the same as writing for myself. Eventually I learned of the modern interactive fiction programming languages, which have made writing IF more accessible to people such as myself who are closer to the writer end of the writer-coder spectrum.

Though I've written or co-authored eleven games, and am very fond of some of them, only one of those is really of any substantial quality (*The Fire Tower*). I have a few grand works in progress on various burners of the proverbial stove, but my primary contribution to the community these days is in organizing ClubFloyd (a weekly interactive fiction gaming group) and IntroComp (an IF competition which principally targets new authors).

DB: But it sounds like you started early with *Zork*, then. You must have a strong history in the form. Did you have a favourite of the Infocom games?

Jacq: The *Zork* trilogy and *Wishbringer* were probably my favorites. I loved imagining those settings, walking through them in my head. For some reason I never had the sense to completely give up on *Suspended*, though I don't know that I ever finished it. Science fiction has never really been my favorite genre, I've always preferred fantasy over sci-fi and never could understand why the two genres are so often conflated, and now that I think

back on my favorite Infocom games, I see that those preferences go back a long way.

DB: So, when did you create ClubFloyd, and how did you come up with the idea?

Jacq: Wow, I guess we've been doing ClubFloyd since 2007. Hard to believe. I've slept a few hundred times since then, so it's hard to say for sure, but I believe it arose out of me thinking about how the IF Book Club had kind of run out of steam and had turned more into a "here is a review for other ifMUDDers of the last book I read even though it has nothing to do with IF and none of you are reading this same book along with me." I got to thinking about how it would be fun to do an interactive fiction club and then that idea morphed into us getting together regularly to play IF.

I ran the idea past people on ifMUD, and people liked the idea. Sam Kabo Ashwell came up with the ClubFloyd name and Andrew Plotkin suggested that I keep logs for the benefit of authors and people who study IF (though others find them interesting as well, of course).

And so we've been meeting weekly, except during the IFComp voting period, since September of that year.

DB: I think that group play is something that we don't see enough of in the modern IF Community, especially ADRIFT-- unless one counts pressuring friends and relatives to try out our "weird" toys. We know that there are people out there who play in groups outside of ClubFloyd (Harry & Mary Kaplan are a great example) and that many can relate stories of playing early IF with friends and family members, but modern IF as a social activity doesn't seem as popular when compared to other forms of games. Why do you think that is? What is different about playing solo versus playing in a group?

Jacq: You know, it's funny. Before I started ClubFloyd I played interactive fiction with my husband or even sometimes with other friends. I don't do that so much anymore, and it seems very few people do, with the perhaps notable exception of the Memento Mori games, rather silly retro-feeling text adventures for group play... I had fun experiencing *Action Castle* and *Jungle Adventure* last year at PAX East, even if I did have some issues with how the form does a bit of a disservice to modern IF. This year's PAX East was better for group play IF, I thought – rather than attending the *Parsley* event (also by Memento Mori) I just stuck to the group play IF gathering where we played Jim Munroe's *Everybody Dies*. I got a chance to emcee that event, and Jim Munroe was there to answer questions from the audience afterward.

Great fun.

But on the whole I think you're right. IF these days is mostly a solo experience. I suppose there's a parallel here between interactive fiction and general fiction here: a lot of us read out loud as kids, but not so much as grown ups. I think for me it's because I mostly gravitate toward releases that do a good job of crafting a fictional world, and it's easier to really get lost in a good game when I'm stuck in my own head. Playing alone makes that easier.

DB: Have any recent games stood out to you as your favourites?

Jacq: *Death off the Cuff* had a great premise that worked really well and kept me highly amused throughout. *Works of Fiction*, while it does need a rerelease, is extraordinarily clever in its execution and really should have been nominated for a XZZZY for Best Use of Innovation. *Gris et Jaune*, though I feel like it should have perhaps been released in two parts (the first half is significantly stronger than the latter half), has this great mood to it that's very well done with a plot we haven't seen before in IF. Similarly, *One Eye Open* evoked a great sense of anticipation and suspense that reminded me of playing one of my old favorites, *Anchorhead*.

DB: Any advice for new authors?

Jacq: Go ahead, write that game set in your house or apartment, because it's a great way to learn to code, but get it beta tested by people who don't feel like they have to spare your feelings (such as your mother, your spouse, your best friend, or that person who owes you money). If all of them say it's super awesome fun and polished after you've fixed all the bugs they've found, go ahead and release it anyway, but more likely it's not going to get a huge reception (unless, of course, there's some dimensional portal in the bathroom medicine cabinet or you're doing something very interesting with conversations in the game... there are some great games out there that *start* in a boring apartment, but actually end up being interesting, ala *Shade*).

Perhaps a lower-stress way to get your feet wet without the highly-polished bar would be through a Speed IF. Or, better yet, why not consider entering IntroComp (<http://www.allthingsjacq.com/introcomp>)? IntroComp entries do need to be tested and polished, but they can be so much smaller in scope that that's a lot easier to do, and it's a great way to float that big idea you're having and receive guaranteed feedback on it.

DB: Thanks for your time, Jacq. We really appreciate it. I'll see you at

ClubFloyd.

Jacq: You're welcome! It's been fun. See you at ClubFloyd!

**Interview with Mystery,
conducted by Finn Rosenloev**

Finn: Who is Mystery? And why the nick?

Mystery: I chose this nickname because when I would play the old Infocom games or any game that required a name to be entered, I could not think of anything, so I would use the name Mystery. It stuck from there, and I primarily go by Myst outside of business purposes.

Finn: How did you get started with IF, and why did you choose ADRIFT?

Mystery: I used to play the old Infocom games and when I was able to get internet access that is one of the first things I looked up. I stumbled across ADRIFT and downloaded it immediately and began playing around with it.

Finn: What is this with you and pirates? Any chance of a pirate adventure?

Mystery: I love pirates, what can I say. When I was 4-5, I used to stay up late with my mom and watch scary movies and pirate movies. I had a lot of ambition to create a pirate adventure and even completed the first island section of a game that had a complete weather system, stubble growth, hunger- *etc.* I wanted it to be realistic to how pirates really were rather than the stereotypical kind you see on TV. It was intended to be on the brutal side with rape, murder, treasure hunting, sea battles. It's depressing thinking about it now, because I lost everything I had done on it.

Finn: I happen to know that you are currently working on a game. Would you care to tell us a little about it?

Mystery: Due to medical problems, I haven't been able to get far beyond the basic mapping. I don't want to give away any details regarding the game, since I haven't settled on any specific direction or goals as of yet. The location is what was the most important to me.

Finn: How long has this game been under way, and how far do you still have to go?

Mystery: I had been planning on writing a game using this specific location for well over 20 years. I fell in love with this 'house' when I lived there for a short time when I was a kid. I was unable to find out any information regarding the house until recently when it was established as 'Historic.' Due to the classification of the house, I was able to obtain through federal

records details regarding the house that go back to when it was built in 1875.

Finn: The job as moderator is easier now than in the “old” days. Do you miss the hectic days?

Mystery: I miss a lot of the people that used to frequent the forum- Mut, TheMadMonk, Ds490, Mile, JJ (I am able to keep in touch with the last two through facebook). I don't miss the drama and chaos that became of the forum at all. It made it a miserable place to be, and now I would say screw having moderators at all for anything other than deleting porn and spam.

Finn: You've made quite a few games over the years. What has been your best game, and why?

Mystery: *Selma's Will* was the best one I made and it was on accident. I was making a game for the annual IFComp. I didn't have internet at the time, so had finished the game and had 3 weeks before I would have internet access at my mom's house-to upload the game for the IF Comp. I decided I would make another game real quick and upload that to the main site at the same time. So I thought I would expand on my Monster in the Mirror short games. It just so happened that I suddenly came more organized and fell together nicely.

Finn: Do you have a favorite game?

Mystery: I don't want to say I have a favorite game, but I do have a couple of favorite writers and really love their style in writing. They don't frequent the forum much or at all anymore.

Finn: Any other hobbies apart from writing IF?

Mystery: I have had a lot of down time due to medical issues, so I learned how to make scarves and stocking hats. And I am currently obsessed with SACKBOY from *Little Big Planet*. I have tried to crochet a doll, but it looks---just odd. I'm going to try to sew one next, but it's going to be a trial and error sort of thing because I cannot find a sewing pattern, the crochet ones look like crap, and I don't know how to knit- and didn't like how the knitted ones looked.

Finn: What would you like to see in ADRIFT? Any expectations towards the V 5?

Mystery: I have been out of the loop for such a long time that I really don't have any expectations or have any requests for features. I will learning how

to use V4 all over again eventually if things go well for me, but that might be a while. I guess the only thing I would like to see is for it to be completed and work as Campbell intends it to.

On Writing Music for A Text Adventure Game by Spiral Cheese Horizon

I think music can be a great addition to a text adventure. Having said that, there are some interesting challenges in how to go about implementing it. One of these challenges is a relic from ages past, one that we solved when we made video games more like movies by implementing voice-acted cut scenes; there is no way to accurately gauge how much time a player will spend reading. In other words, there's no way to know where they'll be in a given track at a given point of the narrative and even what percentage of the track they'll hear before moving on.

It may be that retro gaming (a term I use both broadly and specifically here to cover everything from Atari to SNES) solved this by having simple and looping tracks, suitably atmospheric - occasionally even deeply thematic - but without relying too much on development. Then again, perhaps retro game music - itself drastically limited not just by genre but by hardware - merely helped to make this problem less obtrusive. It's an interesting chicken-egg conundrum, and I doubt it's an either/or answer.

I could credit myself with the insight to respond to this challenge using the time-honored tools acquired in my cartridge days, but the simple fact is that one of my favorite kinds of music to make and listen to just happens to be the sort evocative of 16-bit JRPGs.

That it happens to be well-suited to the medium is certainly a happy coincidence.

* * *

When Spiral Cheese Horizon's work isn't actually part of a game, it's still easy to hear his video game roots in the tone, structure, and often in the instrumentation of his tracks. SCH is responsible for the OST for *Give Me Your Lunch Money*, for much of the radio play *Shafted!* and more at www.reverbnation.com/wryder.

Thoughts on Flash & IF: Bahri Gordebak

I should mention that I'm fairly new to authoring IF, so my stories are far from being perfect. Maybe even good. I didn't implement most of the usual things that can be found in other IF stories. So read these as my thoughts only. I don't want to seem to be the know-it-all guy.

I always loved flash fiction. Although I tried my hand at writing short stories, novels, or novellas; my dearest form of fiction was always flash fiction. It gained popularity with the internet and had a new name, but flash fiction is actually one of the oldest forms of fiction. And one of the strongest.

Writing flash fiction is a challenge for most people, and I can understand why. But for me it's a bit different. What I want to write always starts with a flash fiction piece. Flash fiction is my natural storytelling genre. When I write, I finish the story in less than 1000 words. That's me though. Not everybody is the same.

And I love playing IF. So when I decided to write some IF stories, they appeared as flash IF pieces almost automatically. I love to tell a story about a moment in a character's life. You can see that in the stories themselves.

I think the biggest challenge for me was making the stories interactive. My stories are pretty linear in their nature. These flash IF pieces can be called puzzleless, linear stories. But what they try to achieve is a bit different other IF "games."

I wanted the reader to be able to involve themselves in the story, but I didn't want them to be able to change the course of the story. Some may think that they aren't really interactive, but that's not true. They're interactive alright. They're just linear.

If you've read static flash fiction stories and played my stories, you should have felt the slight difference. In flash IF, the reader doesn't just read the story, she experiences it. It becomes more than just flash fiction. Be it linear or not, it's more than a flash fiction story. It's not a game also, but an interactive story. There aren't any puzzles to solve. And the obstacles are very tiny for the player. It's an interactive story more than a game.

I like interactive stories. As a kid, I read CYOA books and played text adventure games, but I think IF is something different than a text adventure game. It has the potential to be literary. I don't want to sound arrogant, so read the below sentences as my humble opinions. You can just ignore them if

you want.

I think we, as IF community, don't take advantage of what IF has to offer very well. Once upon a time, IF stories were games. They still are most of the time. But you know, games have evolved to be much more powerful and have sophisticated graphics and sounds. We've had 3D for a long time. 2D and 3D adventure games used storytelling techniques for years, especially cinematic techniques.

If we try to rival these games, we're bound to be a small community. We have a very strong tool that those other games don't: the text. We should try to make IF more than games. We should try to make them literature.

Literature is an extremely mature medium and offers a lot that other media don't. I know, some very worthy authors offer IF that are literary, but that isn't enough to help IF get rid of the "text adventure" label. IF shouldn't be text adventure. Text adventures are something of the past. We can't wait for the masses try to solve a puzzle-fest game anymore. They simply won't.

I think we should offer literature. That's the only thing we have against cinematic nature of video games. They still try to tell stories-- and some do it very well. But we have the oldest and most mature storytelling medium in our hands. We should do what others don't. We have to offer what literature offers against cinema, be it in the form of flash fiction, novels, or something else. I'll try to do what I can. In the process I hope I'll become a better IF author and a better author generally.

See? This article is shorter than 1000 words. That's me.

* * * *

Bahri Gordebak is a 36-year-old guy from Turkey. His major was on Communications (Radio, TV and Cinema) and he's making a postgraduate degree on Communication Sciences. But what he wants to become is a writer.

Thoughts on Flash & IF: BlueMaxima

I don't see anything wrong with having short works in IF in general; as they can be a great way to flex someone's mind and give them practice in the engines they work with, not to mention that short works may be a way to show off untapped potential in some people. Not to mention short IF is a good way for a player to get a ten-minute fix. It was a bit refreshing to start on ADRIFT again, not sure when I'll get around to making another project since they tend to come along once in a blue moon for me (this one came out of nowhere) but it felt good to know that at least I still have SOME skill in IF, even if I really need to learn more than just the very basics.

* * * *

BlueMaxima is a fantastic writer. Also blatantly lies. Enjoys reading and writing post-apocalyptic fiction, whenever he's not playing a completely random game or too tired to do anything. Loves rubber ducks. Should really hang around the ADRIFT community more often.

Test Your IFQ!

Test your brain with IF trivia. Answers at end of issue.

1) IFComp 2011 had three ADRIFT entries. What were their names, and how did they place?

2) Victor Gijbers, author of *Kerkerkruip* and organizer for the IF Top 50 project of 2011, earned a doctorate the same year in what subject?

3) From how many lamps can one take a bulb in “Back Home,” by James Webb?

4) David Whyld's “How Suzy Got Her Powers” is the Xth game he has written? Answer for X.

Bonus: Which of his games placed highest at IFComp?

5) In *Cursed*, by Nick Rogers, what is the name of the wizard who changes the player into animal form?

Bonus: What forms can the player turn into?

6) What is the name of the third planned game in Po. Prune's Camelot series?

7) How many days did it take Andrew Plotkin to meet his Kickstarter goal of \$8,000 for his *Hadean Lands* project?

Bonus: How much did he raise in total?

8) How many games were submitted to Ectocomp 2011?

9) How many authors are listed on the IFDB recommended list entitled “ADRIFT Authors' Iconic Works”?

Bonus: Excluding Campbell Wild, what two authors mentioned on the Iconic Works list released the oldest ADRIFT games?

10) Name the number of months that have elapsed since the last publication (issue #40) of *InsideADRIFT*.

**Flash Transcripts: “Cut the Red Wire! No, the Blue Wire!”
by David Whyld**

The Old Warehouse on Throgmorton Row

The warehouse itself is nothing special. The large bomb clamped to a wall in the centre of the main area is. A cordon has been erected around it, keeping back a crowd of sightseers eager to see a bomb disposal expert blown to pieces.

A red wire and a blue wire dangle from the side of the bomb.

> undo

You undo the last command, which was the one that moved you here in the first place.

From outside the warehouse, you quickly sound an alert, evacuating the place and securing the perimeter. Then you stand back and

B-O-O-M!!!

Yep. There it goes. One exploding bomb taken care of without a single casualty.

Except your career, that is, which is now well and truly down the toilet. Ah well, at least Stacy is looking at you with hero-worship in her eyes so might still come out of this on top.

Flash Transcripts: "Can You Stand Up?"
by BlueMaxima

"Sir? Sir? Can you stand up?"

The glow in your eyes is bright making you nearly blind, but you can still make out two figures standing at the foot of your bed. The smell of antiseptic fills your nose and you can't hear anything but sirens and people shouting. It's all distorted and blurry as your sight stresses to recover under the light.

"Sir? Can you get up?"

> up
I move up.

You slowly shift your legs to the left and place them on the ground, sitting up straight. You feel tired from the small amount of movement already, but the shapes in front of you seem to have their own agenda to getting you out of bed.

"Sir, stand up please."

> up
I move up.

You bend your knees and slowly allow them to take the weight of your frail, old body. They shake as you attempt to pull yourself up, but they seem to hold your weight. Someone outside the room yells something you barely catch.

"We're ... of time! Get them..."

The other figure finally spoke up. It's a female voice that you barely recognize. It sounds familiar but you just don't recognize it.

"Come on, Dad, we have to go! Walk towards me!"

> north
I move north.

You move your left leg forward and place it down on the ground, taking the first step you have in years that you can remember...not much comes back clearly. You can't see anything beyond the two of them, you can't even see the

bed out of the corner of your eye anymore.

“Dad, come on, come here!”

> north

I move north.

You raise your right leg and take yet another step, and fall to the right, simply resting on the bed. Your vision clears up a bit and you can see a small door on the wall has swung right open and has several black shapes going back and forward past it. The sound of people yelling flood in through the door:

“We need to go!”

“It’s close!”

“They’re coming through...”

The girl pipes up again, with a somewhat high and scared voice.

“Come on, we need to go, Dad!”

She runs up next to you and tries to heave you to your feet. You don’t even remember having a daughter, who is this crazy lady? She eventually succeeds at it though, and she’s got your arm around her shoulder.

“Come on! Walk with me!”

> north

I move north.

You and her balance steps to propel yourselves towards the open door, but she stops unexpectedly, sending you falling back onto the bed, hands out in front of you. You have perfect view of the door as three black blobs you can barely make out walk into the room.

“No! Sto-“

A loud sound resonates through the room. Then another one. You simply can’t figure out what it is. One of the black shapes walks over and leans down behind you, his breath making the hairs on the back of your neck stand up.

“What do we have here?”

The light suddenly starts getting brighter and brighter. You cover your eyes with your hands, it's too bright for your eyes to stand.

...

You open your eyes again.

It's dark, very dark, but you can at least open your eyes without them stinging. You're still face-down on the bed, and lifting your head reveals a door. You're still in the hospital room, but a gentle breeze blows from the left.

You look to the left and see...sky. You try to stand up but your legs simply refuse to respond. Your only option is to pull yourself along on your hands.

> crawl

You slowly work your way towards the wall which seems to be missing. You pass over what appears to be a young girl's body. She seems to be bleeding from her stomach, making a small puddle under her body. All the color is gone from her face and she isn't breathing.

You reach the ledge and let your hands hang off the edge. The entire side of the building is missing. You look down and notice the edge of a round crater in the ground, then you look out.

A giant hole is surrounded by several half-destroyed buildings. You don't recognize the city the crater is in. You watch buildings slowly fall into the middle of the crater, and then feel a weird vibration below you.

You slowly slide forward and tumble off the edge, gently falling towards the ground which you can barely make out in the darkness. You roll in the air and land on your back, getting one last breath before you notice the building falling down on top of you.

...

...

"Sir? Sir? Can you stand up?"

Flash Transcripts: "Ambassador to Dupal"
by DCBSupafly

Here you are, with Bartley and Kenners, on your way to Hannerby's, officer Bartley's favorite bar. Who knows why the Glorious Leader sent you to this planet, but they seem to want you to have a good time. Sit back and enjoy yourself; it's your first time in a car, and it's a hell of a lot nicer than a landing can!

Bartley leans over the central console to tap something in and smiles at you. "I hope you're over the entry fatigue, I'm ready for a drink."

> look

The car

You've heard about cars before, but there's no need for them Station-side. Apparently this is one of the nicer models; Bartley's a Level 4 Soldier. The car ride is smooth. Actually, it beats walking all over the place to get to porters.

> ask bartley about car

"Pretty nice right? Usually they have a sunroof too. Oh well." Kenners smiles and says, "We should be there pretty soon. Anyway, have a look at the capital city on your way!"

> look city

Through the windows you can see Liconaz, Dupal's captial city. You've never seen a city before, but it's not too different from the P.E.U. games. Tall buildings, huge roadways, lots of lights. "Here we are," says Bartley as the car stops moving and the door opens.

> outside

You step out of the car and a doorman greets you as the car closes up and drives itself away.

Inside the restaurant, Hannerby's, there is an assortment of citizens, mostly level 3 through 5.

The host seems to recognize Bartley and ushers you to a lift. "Tower 3 has the best view of Liconaz you can get out here," Bartley assures you as you ride the lift up.

Tower 3 is a small circular room with a private bar at the center and 360

degrees of windows and couches. An attendant stands inside the bar, hands folded and waiting. "Have a seat," she says. "How are you tonight, Frednick?"

Bartley nods at her and says to you, "Welcome to the best restaurant in Liconaz, the best city on Dupal! It's on me tonight."

The attendant nods and says "If you're a newcomer to Dupal, might I suggest a Wormwood Shooter or perhaps... a jugger to get the night started?" She waits for your order.

> order wormwood

"Very good sir," says the attendant and reaches under the bar. She pulls up three small plastic guns with tubular barrels and lays one in front of each of you. "May I suggest a bowl of our traditional Fargi Stew to accompany the shooters?"

Bartley nods and the attendant serves up the soup.

You take your shooter, and grasp it in your hand like a pistol, finger on the trigger. To your right, Kenners has the barrel of hers in her mouth, pointed straight at the back of her throat. On your left, Bartley is raising his to his mouth. The barrel is full of a cloudy liquid, something floating in it.

> drink wormwood

You all fire your shooters and yours hits your palate with a SPLAT! First a thick liquid with the familiar bite of Farthus and the consistency of cough syrup. Less than a second later, however, there is another SPLAT! as the worm in the wormwood shooter meets your palate, exploding in a soft gush of ... do people planet-side eat trees? Whatever it is, you're already drunk.

Even fargi stew sounds great right now.

> eat fargi

Fargi never tasted so good. The fungus is blended into the broth, and brings an earthy flavor to your palate along with a dry mouthfeel that helps you deal with whatever just exploded back there. It's delicious so you finish the bowl. The attendant says "well, I hope you're enjoying your first night on Dupal. Might I make another suggestion? The Steamcar and Happy Apple Fuzziness are our two most popular items recently."

Steam car is a mystery but of course you've had Happy Apple Fuzziness a million times; it's the favorite drink of the famed Emperor Heroes, and perfect for Green Celebration Day. A Happy Apple Fuzziness would do

nicely right now.

> order fuzziness

The attendant smiles and says "It's my favorite," as she pours you a double shot of Happy Apple Fuzziness. The sweet familiar smell relaxes you and you think you might be able to cope with the culture shock after all. The attendant places a few fargi crackers on the bar as well, but you know they're barely worth eating.

You watch as Bartley sniffs his Steamcar and Kenners smiles at her Fuzziness. Sip it or shoot it, you know either way is acceptable, one's just faster.

> shoot fuzziness

It's a simple drink, smooth and sweet, coating your throat. Compared to the intensity of that wormwood shooter, it's a refreshing break. Still, it does the trick, and once the shot's down, all that's left is fargi crackers. You smile at a good first night on Dupal.

> eat crackers

Nah. Why bother?

> look kenners

Kenners is Lvl 3 and carries herself like she's always ready to pull that pistol out. Reminds you of the folks back home a little more than Bartley does. "Fargi crackers not your style, huh?" says Kenners. She isn't eating hers either.

The attendant clears the table and begins "May I suggest a ..." but Bartley cuts her off.

"We're headed out to the country I think! Thanks for your help tonight, Hannah."

Bartley slaps you on the back. "I hope you had a good time tonight ambassador. You tell the Glorious Leader we are all ready for Green Celebration Day down here on Dupal! Now lets go hunting. You ever shot down a flapping hofferbyp?"

Congratulations, you've successfully gotten drunk in the company of superior officers on a brand new planet. The Glorious Leader would be proud of you.

Your score: drunk.

*** You have won ***

Flash Transcripts: "Color of Milk Coffee"
by Bahri Gordebak

The Balcony

You are sitting. Sitting on your usual chair at the balcony. You are drinking milk coffee. You are waiting, but nothing ever changes. You don't know what you expect to change. But you are waiting. Something has to change, you know it. If you wait enough, something will change, you know it. You feel it.

> north

If you wait enough, something will change, you know it. You feel it.

> wait

Two cats flirt. Even cats are in couples. You get bored of sitting, but you have to wait. Something will happen. Something will change. What is going to happen? What is going to change? You don't know. But you don't want to stand up from that chair before some magic happens.

> wait

It's almost dark. It's one of those dim afternoons of March. You are so sure that something will happen, you are in labor pain. Will somebody climb the balcony? Will somebody call you from below? Will your phone ring? Maybe a long lost friend will call. But something will happen. You know it. You should wait.

> wait

Then suddenly something happens. A girl daydreams about you. You feel it. Somewhere, far away, a girl daydreams about you. She's drinking milk coffee. Her hair is color of milk coffee. Her sweater is color of milk coffee. Her love is color of milk coffee.

She was waiting for a long time too. She knew something would happen. You were both waiting for centuries. Now it happened. Something happened.

You stand up. There's no point in waiting anymore. You are going to make another milk coffee for yourself and write this down. It was worth the wait.

Flash Transcripts: "What the Murderer Left Behind"
by Bahri Gordebak

The Coffee House

It's almost evening. You are sitting near the window in a small coffee house, two blocks away from your house. It's a bit dim inside.

There's an albino boy sitting at one of the tables. And at the table opposite his, a teenage girl is sitting.

>x me

You are a fairly ordinary guy. You don't think there's a lot about you for others to wonder. You're wearing a plain sweater and jeans.

> x boy

He is obviously bothered from the teenage girl staring at himself, although he never turns his head from the sandwich he's eating. He is trying to ignore the examining looks on himself.

> x girl

You don't want to stare at her, but you can't help it. Because since the albino boy came into the coffee house and sat down at the table opposite of hers, this teenage girl is staring at him. Apparently, it is the first time she ever sees an albino.

She is trying hard not to look at the albino, but she can't manage and go on staring at his white hair. Who knows what she is thinking?

You throw them to the winds and look out from the window, thinking about the man you saw in a railway station several years ago.

There were half an hour to the departure of the train and you were going to wait. You found a spare seat and sat down.

There was a man sitting against you. He caught your attention.

> x man

One of his eyes was grippingly prominent. This eye gave the man a somewhat scary appearance, although he had an amiable face.

You were thinking a hundred things, 'Surely it is inborn. It must be hard for him. Maybe he is used to it. I wonder what would it be being like him. I

wonder what kind of a childhood he spent.' and so on. The questions you had absolutely would go unanswered. But as you thought these, you must have been staring at him.

Suddenly he smiled, 'Are you going somewhere or welcoming someone?' he asked.

You sobered and answered, 'Returning home.'

'Me too.' he said, 'I am evicted from prison.'

'Really? I'm sorry.'

'Yeah. I murdered a man.'

You could not find anything to say more.

He triumphantly went on, 'He was staring at me.'

Since then, when you see someone staring at another, you recall him. Maybe he lied but that's all the same. You are looking out through the window to the reddening sky, smiling pitifully. 'If only,' you think, 'the albino boy has killed someone too.'

Flash Transcripts: "Don't Go"
by Bahri Gordebak

Don't Go

A bedroom. On the right is a bed, and a bookcase behind it. From the window across, beams of light are gliding inside. You can see a part of a building through the window.

Walls are white. A picture of a flower is on the wall. A red rose with a black background. The bed with white sheets is undone.

A man with straggly hair in pajamas with dark blue stripes, is walking to left. He has fuzzy slippers. He's scratching his butt.

The reaching big white hand of the bed is about to hold the man from behind.

> x me

You lost yourself.

> x bed

It's white. And it's about to hold the man.

> x bookcase

It's an ordinary bookcase. Books seem tidy.

> x window

From the window, beams of light are gliding inside. You can see a part of a building through the window.

> x light

Obviously it's a bright morning. Maybe a spring morning. May?

> x walls

The walls are lily white.

> x picture

A red rose with a black background.

> x rose

A red rose with a black background.

> x sheets

White. Clean. Untidy.

> x man

He has straggly hair. He's in pajamas with dark blue stripes, is walking to left. He has fuzzy slippers. He's scratching his butt.

> x hair

It's... apparently a bad hair day. He just woke up, give him a break, will you?

> x pajamas

White pajamas with dark blue stripes. Do people still wear these?

> x stripes

White pajamas with dark blue stripes. Do people still wear these?

> x slippers

Furry white bunnies. Cute. Too cute for a man.

> x butt

You really don't want to do that.

> x hand

Apparently the bed doesn't want him to go.

> take sheets

You can't reach anything from where you are. But it'd be great.

> talk to man

You can't talk. It would be weird.

> north

You leave the painting alone and decide to go on to the next painting. Man, you love to lose yourself in a well done picture!

Flash Transcripts: "Bariscebik"
by Bahri Gordebak

Barry's Room

Barry always loved this mess that he called his room. A table with a computer on it, another table with a lot of really useless stuff. Like a little model of a red Volkswagen '74. Or a plastic model of a white tiger.

The acoustic guitar sits on the office chair in front of the tables. And a t-shirt is hanging from behind the guitar. There are clothes everywhere. On the bed, on the floor...

Posters on the wall seem a little different than of most teenagers though. There are some musician posters too, but mostly reproductions of surrealist paintings. Anybody can tell the owner of the room is not an ordinary teen. You can tell it from the bookshelves especially.

> x computer

It's a pretty old machine. Barry was using his laptop. This computer was just there, because he had a lot of memories with it.

He valued his memories.

> x volkswagen

He once said to you, "You hear the sound?"

You didn't understand. Where you were was a street in front of Barry's school. You heard nothing but the usual street noise. "What?" you said.

"Didn't you hear the beetle? It was roaring like a beast. Man, I love those cars."

He loved those cars.

> x tiger

It's a white Benghali tiger with black stripes. He used to love tigers. It has a noble posture.

You look at the colored and cold eyes of the tiger. It looks relaxed, but you wouldn't want to be near this beast, especially when it's hungry.

> x guitar

He used to play this thing like crazy. He was pretty good at it. He had a band with his closest friends. Chicks dug it. Being good-looking as him was helping a lot too.

> x shirt

His t-shirt. It must be smelling like him.

> x clothes

Mom will hopefully put them in somewhere. When she feels like she can.

> x posters

He used to be a Pink Floyd fan. So The Wall poster was a bit unavoidable on this wall. There's another one with a long-haired guy you don't know.

Among the surrealist painting posters, you only know one, the one from Dominique Appia.

Barry used to talk about art and music to you always. But you realize, you never really listened to him.

> x bookshelves

He used to read a lot. There are lots of novels on the shelves. You don't see any school books though. He wasn't very into school. That drove you and everybody crazy.

You see Catcher In The Rye among the books.

> x catcher in the rye

It was his favorite novel of all times. Teen angst. Why shouldn't it be his favorite?

While you're looking at the book, you find a paper among the pages.

> x paper

It looks like a letter.

> read letter

You start reading. It says:

"Darling,

What I think in the dim room I'm sitting in, don't fill my head. It's so big inside my head that nothing can fill it now. Today was gonna be Tuesday. It should have. But it's not.

The past is present. It's always present. It never stays there, where it should. If it can't do anything, it dangles its feet with stinky socks from the

mezzanine above my head. And doesn't it swing them blissfully?

The woman on TV raises the receiver of the phone. She says "Connect me to the police." I look at her from behind empty eyes. The smoke of my cigarette is wiggling in front of her. The woman is a fakir and the smoke is a snake.

Something echoes in the empty darkness of my head.

"It's not enough to play in the minors' league anymore. Old boys should grow up."

I make up my mind. I'm heading to the majors' league. Even the child part of my soul doesn't object to this. And then I realize I don't know how to do this. I would know maybe, if it was Tuesday, like it was supposed to be.

So, darling. I don't know many things. But I know one thing. Every unsent letter sends a letter, darling. Like the loves that never lived. I love them. Maybe more than you. They stay in my heaven, like a dead child.

There are so many things that are nothing, let there be one more. I am nothing for instance. You're gonna say that I'm not.

Then let me tell you this: Bariscebik is nothing. It doesn't have a meaning. Something with no meaning is nothing. Bariscebik exists. It started existing when I made it up. But existing doesn't mean to be something. Nobody in the world will use this word. The purpose of a word is bearing a meaning and transmitting it, isn't it? So this word doesn't even exist.

These don't mean anything to you. You belong to the world of existence, my darling. I'm not there. I now understand when they say, we are people of separate worlds.

Yours forever,

Barry."

You sit down on the bed. You start to cry. He was lucky with girls, you think, you didn't know... If only you knew more about him.

Why, Barry, why did you do this to yourself? To us? To me?

Tears just don't seem to stop.

Flash Transcripts: "A Reading in May"
by Bahri Gordebak

Coffee House

The book on the round, maroon table is looking at you. In this sunny May afternoon, you wanted to read the book and be outside also. So you took it and came to this coffee house. You are wondering what the protagonist will do next.

You glance at the people who are in light colored clothes and look somewhat dizzy from the lightly blowing wind. The umbrella over you provides an ideal dimness. From the speaker near the entrance of the inner café, a woman is singing an ultimately boring French song.

Thus, everything is so suitable to read.

> x people

You glance at the people who are in light colored clothes and look somewhat dizzy from the lightly blowing wind. The umbrella over you provides an ideal dimness. From the speaker near the entrance of the inner café, a woman is singing an ultimately boring French song.

> read

You open where you left the book and start reading.

The French woman suddenly starts to yell. She loves him, and never will love somebody else. You say, well, to yourself. You reread the last sentences.

> read

After a while, You catch yourself trying to remember the lyrics of an old French song. You shake your head, you have to read. You can go on reading until the waiter comes.

'Good afternoon, sir. Would you like anything?' he says.

You quickly make up your mind and ask, 'Have you got croissants?'

'Yes, sir.'

'Then, I would like a croissant and lemon ice tea, please.'

'Sure.'

Oh, God. You want to finish this book.

> read

You return to reading. The novel is developing slowly. Suddenly, the girl sitting under the speaker grabs your attention. She is throwing looks at you time to time. You see that with the feeling side of your eye. You wonder what she thought of you. That you are an intellectual? That you are pretentious? She looks nice. She must be waiting for her boyfriend. Everybody except you has darlings already.

> read

But wait! Where were you? You return to the book. It seems that you read a whole paragraph without understanding it. You read it anew.

Then your order comes. You light a cigarette. You recall the strawberry pie and ice tea that you ordered in Florence, in a day like this. When you ordered, the waiter made a comment in Italian: perfetto! What a strange culture, you think, if a waiter in my country did this, I would think he is arrogant or stupid.

> read

You remember the book then. You go on reading again. Until the French woman starts to sing the song that you were thinking a while before. Johnny, tu ne pas un ange. / No crois pas que ça m'dérange. Your cigarette finishes while you are listening to the song.

Hmm, you think, I want to read this book. Really.

> read

You return to reading.

After a while, you give up, close the book, finish the croissant and the ice tea. As you pay the waiter, you know this is your very last trial to read in a café.

IFQ Answers:

- 1) Cursed (13th), How Suzy Got Her Powers (29th), Return to Camelot (30th)
- 2) Philosophy of Science.
- 3) 3.
- 4) How Suzy Got Her Powers is David Whyld's 59th game. The highest placed game he has written for an IFComp was 2008's *A Date with Death*, which placed 9th.
- 5) Rixomas changes the player into either a rat, snake, or fox.
- 6) Son of Camelot.
- 7) Plotkin reached his Kickstarter goal on the first day. In total, he raised \$31,337-- well over his initial goal of \$8,000!
- 8) 10 games were submitted to Ectocomp 2011.
- 9) 33 authors are listed. The 'DRIFTers from the list to release the oldest games were Mystery (Orient Express, 2000) and Mel S (Bounty Hunter, 2000).
- 10) 25 months. Our judges would also accept "too many."