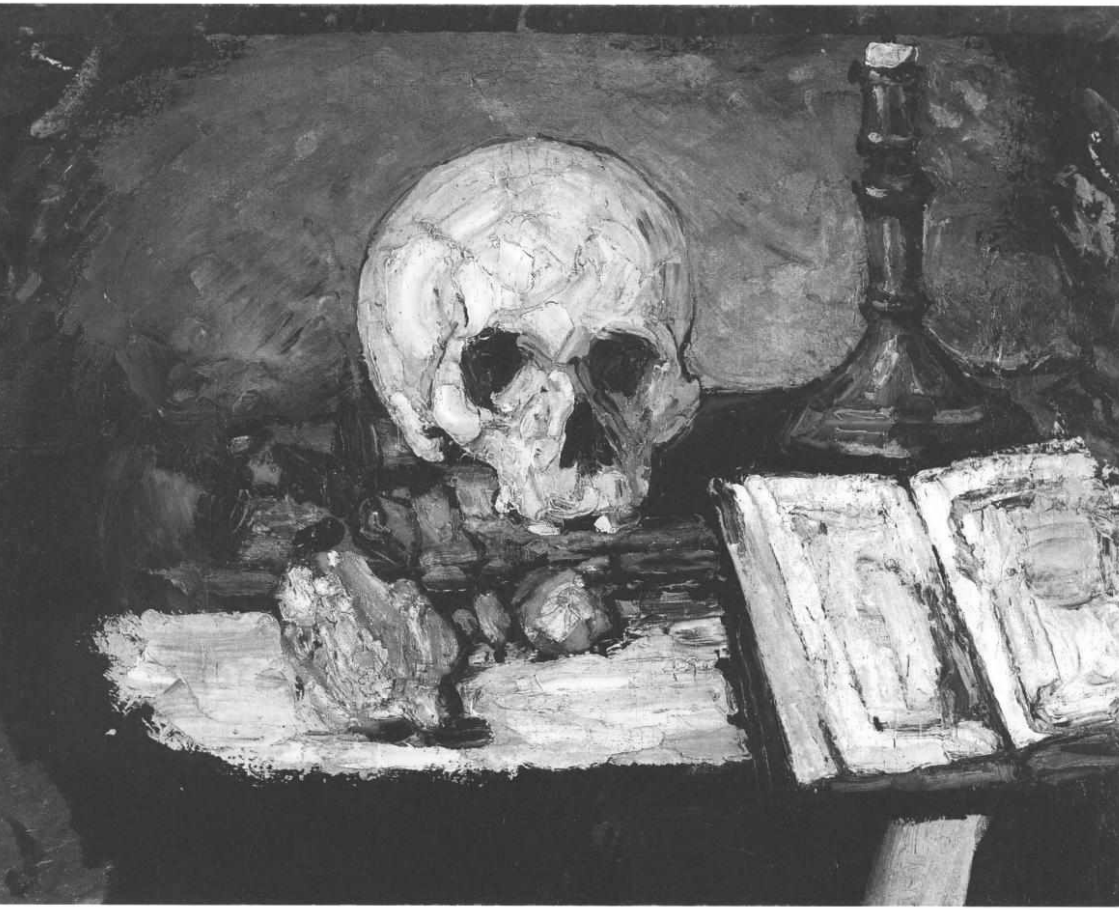
BLOODWYCH

~ BOOK OF SKULLS ~



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Manual Version 1.0

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AN INTRODUCTION

BOOK OF SKULLS is a new level set for the Commodore Amiga version of the classic RPG Dungeon Crawler BLOODWYCH, based on the original 68000 game code by TAG, developed on and off over 12 years.

It includes a host of new features;

- ◊ 6 completely new dungeon towers for exploration
- ◊ New puzzles and traps, and in greater numbers
- ◊ Multiple new monster variants
- ◊ New NPC characters
- ◊ Almost 100 new pieces of communication dialogue

LOADING

BOOK OF SKULLS is provided in the following formats;

- ◊ A self-contained ZIP file
- ◊ ADF Disk Image
- ◊ The single game binary

FOR ORIGINAL AMIGA MACHINES

To play from hard drive, unpack the ZIP file and launch the game binary via WHDLoad (Kickstart 2.0+ required). Set the tooltype or command line option CUSTOM=BookOfSkulls

To play from disk, flash the ADF image to a real floppy disk using ADF imager or similar software.

FOR AMIGA EMULATION

The ZIP file version can be mounted as a hard drive and booted directly.

The ADF version can be inserted into the first disk drive (DF0:) to boot.

The tale of the Book of Skulls...

It was but one month ago, here where once stood the town of Delmortis, deep in the heartland of Trazere, that it all began. A messenger called with news which would soon change the balance of our very world. It was told that the Great Army of Knights that protected Trazere had retreated from battle, for their once great leader, the Grand Lord of Balenhelm, had fallen.

Word had spread that unnatural powers had taken the mighty warrior in a manner unseen for many years. Delmortis was struck with a sickness of grief, although one which would transform quickly to tepid hysteria, as it was learnt that the fallen hero was to be brought here, where he would be blessed by the holiest of clerics, and treated as all mighty warriors should be prior to his burial in grand ceremony. And on the day of his arrival, the Knight Lord was placed within the Holy Temple and held within for the traditional time of mourning.

It was my own learned master, a wise, albeit peculiar cleric by the name of Morbidus, for whom over many year I had transcribed a great many of his findings, who had been tasked with treating and blessing the Knight Lord prior to his body's return to his homeland. Time had not treated the master well of late, and he had recently befallen many instabilities of the mind, but such an honour as this had brought him renewed vigour, enthusiasm and clarity of purpose.

The Master took great care to treat the body with a number of incantations from a text he had labelled simply as "The Book of Skulls" that he had procured some months back from one of his travels. It seemed this book has calls on powers I can barely comprehend, as within but three rises of the Moon, during the hours from shadow fall and morning lark song, the Knight Lord did walk once more amongst us. He was, however, certainly no longer the man known through every village, town and keep, and for whom many songs were sung and stories regaled in his honour.

One would scarcely even stretch to call him man at all, with dark forces having now twisted his physical form beyond recognition. The Knight Lord stands, but in such an aspect that no mortal soul would wish to hold his gaze. The very sight of him brings chills within my body, and panic upon my mind.

And it was on this night that a change fell upon the master Morbidus also. His transition was at first one of the mind alone, but quickly it became clear that a sinister presence now owned him. He soon took to referring to himself under other names; Master of Treihadwyl, Grand Mage, and finally, and most simply, Zendick.

He told of how he had been waiting on an ethereal plane, seeking out a way back into this realm. His was a will driven purely by a lust for revenge against the Bloodwych and their Champions who had banished him to play out his mental existence in purgatory.

Using what psychic energies he could muster, he summoned four more powerful and frightful beings within the temple, to act as Guardians to what lands he would soon sculpt from out of his accursed magic. And as the world around was shaped anew, a fortress was founded upon this very space. With haste he charged the unholy Lord of Balenhelm to rally his armies again, to fight under the banner of Zendick, and they in turn would guard the fortress until such times as plans completed.

But even-these forces alone would not suffice, such was the scale of his malevolence, and soon he called upon others to do his bidding further; creatures of untold lands and ghouls of the night, with wills that could be bent with ease. These minions were sent to round up the tired and weary Champions of old, who had grown lacklustre and weak, such was their many years without adventure to keep their skills in tune, and so they were placed under lock and key in readiness of their life forces making the ultimate sacrifice to Zendick's Plan.

With one final act of defiance, the oldest powers of the land are abused again; what else but the crystals of Trazere would shatter the fabric of the landscape in such a way, bringing with them Demon Gods and Chaos Lords. Having suffered a fate of their making before, Zendick had lain in preparation mighty chambers, that would hold the Lords of Chaos in place, bound as they would be, to the Crystals which they accompanied.

And with this move and with the crystals gathering the power he would need, one final incantation of the dreaded Book was cast, and with it Zendick ejected himself from his temporary host and was projected into the crystals themselves, to await his imminent rebirth in a body he could call his own.

The effect of this upon my master was profound and I watched as his body fell into swift decay, wasting away, the very flesh peeling from him. The stench of death fixing tight upon the air. His bones alone were all that stood and upon his face no recognition of the man I knew, a fixed Satanic grin remained in place, though still I knew his posture spoke to me that work was still to be done...

These are the words of Morgull Penwell
Last scribe under the ruins of Delmortis.

It was the noise that woke Astroth Slaemwort that morning, or rather the lack thereof, of the forest sounds to which he-and his compatriots had become accustomed on their ritual hunt. No bird did call and no brook did babble this morn.

The camp at which he had settled but one night since with his fellow warriors was nowhere to be seen. No sign was there of previous fires, or of their reckless bickering, settled as they always were through tests of strength; first by prowess and later by consumption of mead, neither of which showed much consideration for the world around. The signs of such merriment as these warriors knew would be as plain to see, and as frequent, as the rising of day itself.

And through that thought it struck Astroth that it was the day that was now missing. A dark familiarity was all that remained in this hut which stood around him, into which no sunlight fell or sounds did travel.

A moment's pause for contemplation came and went, leaving behind only one stark realisation of what was to come, as the great presence of the Bloodwych spirit sunk into his mind as it had before.

PRODUCTION & CREDITS

BOOK OF SKULLS has been produced through considerable research and reverse-engineering of the original Bloodwych program code.

Information has been shared largely via 'The Crypt of Bloodwych' Forum, and resulted in a complete Bloodwych Map editor being produced, a full reverse engineered source for the game (available on GitHub), and a number of special game patches being applied.

All game mechanics have remained intact from the original source.

This level set has

BLOODWYCH ORIGINAL CREDITS

Coding: *TAG (Anthony Taglione)*
8-bit Version: *Phil Taglione*
Graphics: *Pete James*
Project Managed: *Richard Hewison*

BOOK OF SKULLS CREDITS

Editor, Maps & Game Patches: *Dom Cresswell*
Incorporating ideas from: *Gideon Cresswell*

BLOODWYCH REVERSE ENGINEERING

Forum Members: *BruceUncle , bit, adrazar*

MOD AND RESEARCH TESTING

Forum Members: *Torico, MadMunky, Wishbone, Mr Flay*

HINTS & TIPS

BOOK OF SKULLS uses the exact same mechanics as the original Bloodwych, and therefore players should use every trick they have learnt in their experience to navigate these tricky new dungeons!

To really experience the new levels, be sure to communicate regularly with the various creatures throughout the whole game - some clues may be hidden in their replies.

There are all-new puzzles throughout the game, but the principles remain the same – some puzzles may rely on spells not previously used in the original game, and holding some spells will be essential to completion.

As with the original, mapping can save you from considerable headache – particularly in complex puzzle areas where hidden switches and floor triggers may change the solution. Trial and error will have its merits but will be useless if you have no idea what is expected to change!

If playing alone, take advantage of the 'wait' function to observe areas which may change at a greater distance than is possible with normal viewing.

Champion selection can considerably affect the difficulty of the game. Decide if you need the strength of warriors, the spell abilities of wizards or consider the extra viewing power of the cutpurse.

For extra help, be sure to contact the author on the official Bloodwych social network pages, and a more detailed Hints & Tips booklet for specific puzzles may be produced.