

Warning: Although "The Scorpion's Tale" is a warm and comfortable tavern of the mind with a nice cozy fire of vibrant images, our resident storyteller conjures up illuminating hints about games. If the gentle reader eschews hints, let him beware!

It's midwinter again, that time of year when all the good holidays are over (sigh), and those long, dark nights stretch out in front of us. The sort of time when some people (not me, tho!) yearn for warmer places and fairer climes. So, have a seat by the fire while Fred makes you a strong one and we'll see about getting you off on a trip to sunshine and summer fun.

Leisure Larry II, "Looking For Love (In All The Wrong Places)", is the sequel to "Land Of The Lounge Lizards." However, unlike the previous game, the emphasis here is more on low comedy than sex. This time around, Larry is really looking for true love rather than a quickie or two.

Larry II is a very linear game. You go from one area (with a small set of locations) to another and each such passage is *permanent*. Once you leave an area, there is no way back. So, it's wise to have a few save games for each area, just in case you miss something.

The disks are not copy-protected and can be loaded easily to the hard disk. However, don't lose the manual. Inside, on various pages, are pictures of women and their phone numbers. Each time the game is booted, one of these pictures is displayed on the screen and you must enter the correct phone number.

Those who have played Lounge Lizards will remember Eve. Well, Larry and Eve didn't quite hit it off after all. In fact, the game begins with Larry broke and on the street in front of Eve's house in Los Angeles. Right off, you get the feeling this isn't one of Larry's better days. That's the right feeling.

If you want to get off to a quick start, read the mini-walkthru in the back of the manual. This way, you (or Larry) will, at least, have a dollar.

Not much, but enough to buy a Luck-O Buck-O lottery ticket. This could be Larry's big chance to gain fame and fortune, or, at least, some ready cash. Then again, maybe not. You can just bet that none of Larry's numbers will be the right ones (but what can you expect from someone ranked as a dweeb, jerk, lame-o, and other wonderful things?).

Then again, people who are desperate (like Larry), are sometimes tempted to, shall we say, stretch things a bit. Maybe more than a bit. Maybe even a lot. All it takes is poor vision and less brains.

In no time at all, Larry finds himself on that well-known TV program, The Dating Connection (if you want to know how this happens, you'll just have to play the

after you've finished with the Dating Connection, you're hustled onto the set of the place you're supposed to be, the Luck-O Buck-O lottery program. Again, this is automatic. You get to watch as Larry spins the big wheel. Will his luck hold up?

Zowee! Larry's just won the big one. I mean really *big*. I mean like the hostess sashays in and hands Larry a million-dollar bill. For starters. That's right, starters. He's just won a million dollars a month (or was that a week?) for life.

Hey Larry, snap out of it. You've got some shopping to do before the cruise ship leaves, and there isn't all that much time. There are plenty of stores around where you can start spending your money (and see how fast it

goes), so get on with it. Except maybe the music store (when it finally opens). Nothing to buy here, but you get something anyway. Just talk to the pretty clerk (so what if your Spanish is rusty...subtitles have been provided).

Gee, too bad Larry didn't see those subtitles. He has no idea what he's lugging around. Then again, maybe it's better for his peace of mind that he doesn't know the KGB and the agents of a mad scientist are both out to get him. However, *you* know, so it's up to you to see that poor dweeby Larry doesn't get into too much trouble (hah!).

Well, it's about time for Larry to board ship (he *does* have his passport, I hope). After the (somewhat overlong) pullout from the pier, the view changes to show the ship from the side, with (guess what) stairs. Yep, you just can't get away from climbing around.

Fortunately, getting up and down the stairs is simple and straightforward, just a little tedious. Take some time out to move around and see what's where. Your wonderful cabin, for instance. It would make a terrific walk-in closet; amazing how they managed to fit a bed in there. Of course you'll want to see where that other door leads . . . right into the next cabin, which is much nicer than yours. Also occupied by . . . Mrs. Bimbo. Arrgh! It's Barbara's mother! Nooooooooo!!!

Yes! But wait . . . there's more! Mrs. Bimbo has her own little ways of (ahem) having a good time, which include the wearing of skimpy leather garments and high heel boots (we won't even mention the chains and other items tucked away in the closet). Better be real careful around this one, Larry.

After making a fast exit (escape?) from

Scorpion's Tale

Sierra's "Leisure Suit Larry II"



game..grin), as the "token intellectual."

This part of the game is very much automatic. You just sit through all of what happens, except for a couple of parts where Larry answers the questions of Barbara Bimbo, the lovely bachelorette. I advise saving the game after the Dating Connection part is done, because few (if any) in their right minds would want to go through it a second time (or even a first, but there's no way around that).

What do you know . . . the lovely Barbara has chosen bachelor number two. Two? Hey, that's you, Larry Laffer! Wow! You've just won a month-long, all-expenses paid cruise with the lovely Barbara as your companion! Gosh, could things finally be taking a turn for the better? (Naaaahhh!)

Still, it seems that way, because shortly

the Bimbo cabin, you can go on to better places. The barber, for example. Maybe he can do something for your receding hairline. Then again, maybe not. At least, you have a terrific mop-wig for later on.

There's an onboard pool, too. Just the place to get a little tan or take a quick dip. Say Larry, that beautiful girl seems real interested in you. Perhaps, a little too interested. Isn't that just a trifle suspicious? Of course, Larry doesn't know what we do, so a word to the wise, etc.

Overall, the ship is a small place, and there is an item to be obtained from each location, except the bridge and the lifeboat. Of course, not everything is immediately evident.

Y'know, this cruise is turning out to be less of a dream and more of a nightmare, what with Mrs. Bimbo on the one hand and nasty secret agents on the other. This might be a good time to cut out for parts unknown. Just pray that you didn't overlook anything on the ship or back in Los Angeles, because this next part is totally automatic.

In other words, if you have what you need to survive, you'll survive automatically, although you do have to sit through a long animated sequence. There is one exception to this. One item must be used before you get too far away from the ship. Having it in your possession isn't good enough.

Anyway, in spite of everything, Larry manages to live through days alone at sea, finally washing up on a resort island. From the beach, there are three directions to move. I do *not* recommend going east at this time, although if you're curious, you can always save the game first and then, take a look. To the west is a nude beach. Interesting place, although there really isn't much to be seen (really).

Well, there is that girl on the rock, who seems (suspiciously) interested in Larry. Personally, I wouldn't go anywhere with her if I were you (and thank heaven I'm not!).

Now comes the nasty part. South of the entry beach is the jungle. Once in there, Larry goes on auto-pilot, wandering around looking for a way out. Eventually, he'll find one that leads to a restaurant. When he's done with that, he goes back to the jungle to wander again until he finds the guest room, the barbershop, and finally, once more to the beach.

The problem with this is that Larry has to go through the jungle a total of *eight* times (about seven too many). There is no way to avoid this ridiculous tedium.

The first time is cute. After that, it becomes pointless.

However, there *is* something you need from the jungle, so pay attention on the first go-through. Movement keys won't work, but you can type in commands from the keyboard. Watch the screen carefully, but if you should miss the item, you have another seven chances to get it . . . lucky you).

The restaurant is a semi-automatic sequence, where patience will pay off eventually. The guest room has a couple of items you can pick up. You can, if you wish, try to sample the charms of the maid, but I'd save the game first. Larry might have some qualms about the resort barber. It's hard to trust someone who puts detergent on your hair, but this guy *seems* to know what he's doing. Zap! Larry's hair suddenly grows down to his shoulders and also turns blonde! We all know blondes have more fun (suuuuure).

Once out of the jungle (for the first time), Larry might want to check out the nude beach again. Hmm . . . someone left a bikini bottom here. Does Larry also have a top? Yes? Good! No? Guess who's gonna have to restore back to the ship?

And now, it's back into the bush for the second tour of the island establishments. Just back out of the restaurant; there's nothing to do here the second time around.

The guest room is another matter. What does Larry do here? Do I really need to tell you? C'mon, I know you took a peek at the right hand beach. You have to get past those agents, and sneaking just won't cut it.

Of course, Larry may not exactly be thrilled to make it past the KGB; not when he sees the narrow, winding trail across the cliffs. Careful, Larry, one slip and it's a long way down.

Whew! You made it across and there, by gosh, is the airport (I hope you're suitably attired). Also there, by gosh, are two KGBishna agents by the door. Peace and love, guys. Hare hare and all that jazz. The sixties live again (You remember the sixties, don't you? That's a hint, folks).

Once inside the airport, Larry can buy a ticket. Well, he could buy a ticket if the line he gets on decides to move. Of course, it only moves when he changes lines (what else?). Since this is getting you nowhere, a little exploration might be helpful.

Naturally, there's a barber shop. Maybe you can get a little trim here. By the way, that barber looks a trifle familiar. Haven't we seen her somewhere before? (Does KQ4 ring any bells?).

However, none of this has helped so far in getting a ticket (and I wouldn't try boarding the plane without one). At least, you can pass the time by snooping in other people's luggage. It's amazing what some folks take with them on a trip, isn't it?

After Larry finally gets his ticket, he may want to splurge a bit and purchase some flight insurance (the insurance turns out to be a parachute) and it would be wise not to ignore the "blue pate" (that's pate, not plate) special.

Finally, the boarding gate! After talking to the clerk at the counter, Larry can get on the plane. Naturally, he has no idea where it's bound, but what does that matter, as long as it's far away.

At least, he has a seat (A tiny one, but a seat nonetheless. Take a moment to look at it). Unfortunately, Larry's seat is right next to that of the plane bore. This guy is more than just boring, he's simply itching to try hair transplanting on a real live vic . . . ahem, customer.

Guess who he has in mind? Right! So you'll have to do something about this fairly soon. Changing seats won't work (there aren't any empty ones), and the second you stand up, the stewardesses block the aisle with drink carts. If you find yourself dying of brain damage a lot, you probably missed something back at the airport.

Once the bore is taken care of, it is a good idea to depart. The emergency exit is in the smoking section. You can't see it, but some trial and error should locate it for you. Of course, the door is locked, but that should be no problem for Larry unless he missed something else back at the airport.

Once Larry reaches the ground, he's in the jungle again. Fortunately, it's not the same jungle. Unfortunately, he will have to run an obstacle course before he can get out. The first thing to do is look around, and look at everything. I'm sure you don't want to see poor Larry carried off by killer bees. This is an easy one to get past, actually. The next is a little nastier. Hard to see, but definitely present, is a large and hungry snake waiting to drop down on Larry. Position and timing will rescue him, here.

Larry's not out of the jungle, yet, by any means. Now, he has to get across the quicksand patch. Since success calls for exact maneuvering, you may want to put the game speed down real low before trying to cross. If you look carefully at the screen, the path to follow should be apparent.

Only one more obstacle to go! Larry

could try wading through the water, but that's not a terrific idea. Save the game and try it once. Now that you know what to avoid, the question is how. I'm sure you already have at least a glimmering. You have seen a lot of jungle movies on the late show (right, Jane?).

Finally, on the beach past the jungle . . . true love at last! The real thing! Larry's found it at last!

Of course, there is this one little problem. Larry won't be able to marry his beloved until he performs a small, trivial task. Nothing much, just penetrating an impenetrable volcano and taking out that evil mastermind, the infamous Dr. Nonookie. Hey, after all Larry's been through, this should be a piece of cake (by the way, a lot of what happens from the beach onward is automatic again).

So here's Larry at the chasm. Of course, it might be a good idea to slip back to the village and poke around. You never know what might be needed up ahead (the woodcutter is not important).

After crossing the chasm (no turning back now, except via restore), there's a lit-

tle matter of a glacier. Now, it's just a tad strange that this glacier is here, at pretty much ground level, under the hot tropical sun. But, whether it defies the laws of nature or not, you'll have to come up with a way past it.

Finally, Larry is at the top of the volcano. How odd to find an elevator here. Not surprisingly, there's no way to open it. On the other hand, a deep crevice is not too far away.

This is where things get a little silly. Larry should have three items with him. All are needed. This is also where the parser goes a little wacko and you have to use two items at once. That sounds cryptic, but when you're up there, it should become fairly obvious. However, the parser will not understand what you want to do when you try doing the obvious action. That's why I say you have to use two items at once (although, in fact, only one—the right one—is used). The other problem is to find the one spot where the command will, in fact, work.

After that, the rest is automatic. Larry ends up in Dr. Nonookie's place,

removes him from the scene, calls in help, etc. etc. etc. This is rather a let-down. You'd expect, at the very least, a puzzle or two before Nonookie is defeated, but the whole thing chugs along with you as a mere spectator. True, the sequences are funny and well-done, but some of the pleasure of the game is lost for the sake of cute animations.

Well, it seems to be that time again. Remember, if you need help with an adventure game, you can reach me in the following ways:

On Delphi: stop by the GameSIG (under the Groups and Clubs menu). On GEnie: Visit the Games RoundTable (type Scorpia to reach the Games RT). On The Source: send SMail to ST1030. By US Mail: (If you live in the United States, you *must* include a self-addressed *stamped* envelope to receive a reply!): Scorpia, PO Box 338, Gracie Station, New York, NY 10028.

Until next time, happy adventuring!

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THE NEXT EMPIRE

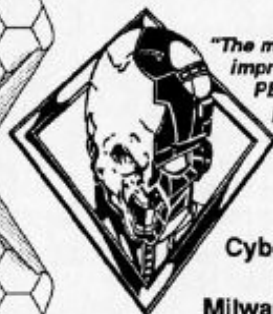
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