

THE DUNGEON OF BHALGORA

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<https://itch.io/jam/zx-spectrum-basic-jam>

THE STORY:

The land of Aaluthia is home to the Fraex, a race of evolved creatures enslaved by the colossal whale shark goddess known as Bhalgora. With the help of her allies, the spider-wolf hybrids known as the nightures, she keeps a watchful eye over the Fraex, making sure that they stay in line and meet her demands. Every breath they make, every move they make, and every single thing they think of, is being monitored VERY closely.

Bhalgora also writes the laws of the land, and anyone who doesn't comply with these laws is either subjected to extreme torture, or even worse, death. One of these laws is that only she and she alone can choose a mate for a Fraex, and you, Aldor, broke this very rule. You fell in love with Arda, who lived over on the far side of the village of Faed, where you also came from. She also loved you just as much as you loved her, meaning that she was also breaking this law. Before you were able to pop the question, you were both captured by the nightures and sent to the island of execution, where Bhalgora decides the fate of those who break her laws. It is here that she orders Arda to be executed, but Bhalgora decided that you committed the greater offence. She wanted you to suffer a fate worse than death. It was therefore decided that your punishment would be to not only see your mate being executed right in front of your very eyes, but to curse you with immortality and imprison you inside Bhalgora's dungeon, located within Bhalgora's own heart, for all eternity.

After seeing Arda's execution, you were sucked into Bhalgora's ginormous mouth (itself big enough to consume the entire land of Aaluthia). From here, the nightures escorted you to the dungeon, and locked you up inside a cold, dark cell.

Thousands of years passed, but still you remember. Even after all these years, you still love Arda, and will do anything to see her again. Except you cannot. She's dead, and you cannot die, meaning that you won't even be with her in the afterlife, because you will never see the afterlife. Bhalgora has cursed you with immortality, and you hate her for it. There have been a number of occasions where you have tried to commit suicide, but the wounds heal, and you cannot die. There was only one thing for it, and that was to just simply give up. You needed to accept that you were never going to see her again.

That is, until 10,000 years later.

You wake up in your cell one morning (if it is morning that is. After all, you have to rely on Bhalgora herself to tell you that!) after hearing Bhalgora's voice in your own mind. She was probably going to tell you that it's time for you to be eaten by the nightures again (your immortality curse CERTAINLY solved their food supply issues!), but instead she gives you an offer that you simply cannot refuse.

"Escape my dungeon within 150 moves or less, and freedom will be your reward. Escape in less than 75 moves however, and I might just think about resurrecting Arda so you can both be together again. This time, she will be allowed to be your mate."

That last bit she said made it a no-brainer. You want to be with Arda again, don't you? With a smile on your face, you gladly say "Challenge accepted!"

"Very well" says Bhalgora. "Your immortality curse has been removed, and your adventure starts NOW!"

LOADING THE GAME:

48k users: Type LOAD""", then press ENTER

128k users: Select Loader option from the boot menu.

Once the game has loaded, further waiting will be required as the game sets up the dungeon. This only takes a few seconds.

HOW TO PLAY:

In this game, you play as Aldor, and your objective is to escape the dungeon in 150 moves or less. On screen text will provide you with all the information you need (room descriptions, nearby objects etc). Use any of the various objects available to help you with your journey, but keep an eye out for nightures! They roam around the dungeon freely, and will do anything to stop you at all costs! Then there's the giant nighture guard to deal with.

CONTROL:

Control of Aldor is done via typing in the correct commands and pressing ENTER. The commands available are as follows:

NORTH	(Go north)
SOUTH	(Go south)
EAST	(Go east)
WEST	(Go west)
EXITS	(List all available exits. Locked exits will be listed under LOCKED)
LOOK	(Describe the room again)
TAKE <object>	(Take an object)
USE <object>	(Use an object)
INVENTORY	(List items you have taken. Also displays health and number of moves taken)
QUIT	(Quit the game. You will be asked to confirm this)

Note that only the first two letters of each command needs to be typed in, so instead of typing in "TAKE", you can just type "TA". Only one command can be entered at any one time.

Separate commands and objects by putting a SPACE in-between them (i.e. TAKE SWORD). Only the first three letters of an object need to be typed in. For example, instead of typing in SWORD, you can just type in SWO.

Make sure your commands are valid! If you type in an invalid command, then the appropriate message will be displayed.

GAMEPLAY NOTES:

- At the start of each game, everything will be in the same place except for the keys and nightures which are placed in random locations every time.
- When confronting a nighture, you can choose to either fight him by using the sword (if you have it in your inventory) or by moving away from it. However, if you choose the latter, the nightmare may attack you and take 10 points off your health. The same goes for the giant nightmare guard, except this time round 50 points will be taken.
- Unlike all the other objects in the game, the lantern does not have to be USEd in order for it to take effect. It just needs to be in your inventory.
- Every command you type in counts as a move except for the following commands: EXITS, LOOK, INVENTORY and QUIT. These commands do not count as a move, and therefore do not add to your move count.
- If you manage to escape the dungeon, Bhalgora will reward you with your freedom. However, if you escape in less than 75 moves, Bhalgora will ressurect Arda!

AND FINALLY...

Rumour has it that this dungeon has a deep, dark secret. No one knows what it is, probably because no one who found out about this secret has lived to tell the tale. However, those who do find it and make it out alive will be GREATLY rewarded.

THE DUNGEON OF BHALGORA – HELP GUIDE

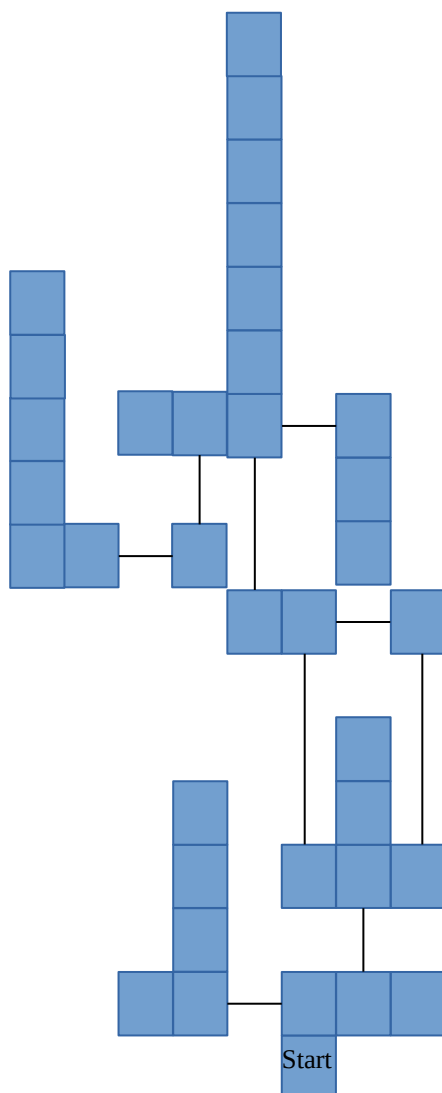
This guide is here to help struggling adventurers who are having difficulty progressing through the game. DO NOT use this guide unless you are hopelessly stuck, as using this guide will no doubt give away some spoilers!

This guide does not provide a complete solution to solving the entire game. It merely gives players some hints in solving the game's puzzles. A map of the dungeon is also included, but it does not show where locked doors, objects or nightures are located... that is for the player to discover!

HINTS:

- Nightures giving you a hard time? The first thing you should do is find the sword.
- Can't find the key you're looking for? Keep searching! Unlike other objects, keys are located in a random location each game.
- The nightures in the nighture pit are always hungry! What you're looking for can easily be missed!
- Can't get past the giant nighture guard? Try levelling up your gear!
- Running low on health? Use the statue outside the church to heal!

MAP OF THE DUNGEON:



TOP SECRET!!!

If you don't want to know about the dungeon's dark secret, DO NOT read the text below!

Oh, so you want to know about it, eh? In that case, I will tell you about the dungeon's dark secret! First, you will need the lantern, which is inside the church. Go to the library, where you will find a blue book. You can try to take it, but you'll find that it is in fact a switch! Go north twice, then west. Go through the locked door to the west (you will need the white key to unlock it). Go south, then west. If you've been down here before you tried taking the book, you will notice that another stairway has been revealed! Go down it, but beware my friend! There is something down there so horrific, so terrifying... that I dare not even mention it here! Better grab the gold sword or the invisibility cloak, just in case!