



Demo Game Manual

(C)Julia Minamata 2019

www.thecrimsondiamond.com

feedback@thecrimsondiamond.com



[thecrimsondiamond](https://www.facebook.com/thecrimsondiamond)

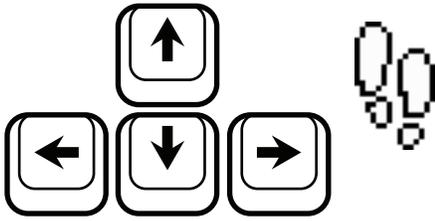


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Controls



Player controls on-screen character with directional keys or clicking the Footprint cursor at the desired destination.

Parser shortcuts:

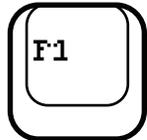
I = inventory

N = notebook

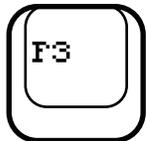
L = look around



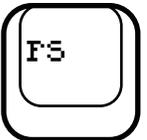
Player can activate the parser input by pressing ENTER or any alphabet key.



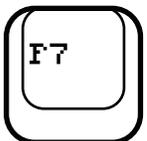
Toggles Main Menu. ESCAPE key also toggles Main Menu. Typing "MENU" or "MAIN MENU" into parser also works.



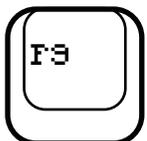
Toggles repeat last parser entry. Spacebar also repeats the last parser entry.



Toggles Save Menu. Ctrl+S and typing "SAVE" into parser also works.



Toggles Restore Menu. Ctrl+R and typing "RESTORE" into parser also works.



Toggles Restart Menu. Typing "RESTART" into parser also works.



Toggles Quit Menu. Ctrl+Q and typing "QUIT" into parser also works.

Design Considerations

Ease of use and playability

- Player can toggle between text-based and graphical inventories on the fly.
- Player can toggle between “Click-to-Walk” movement using the mouse, or keyboard-based movement using the arrow keys. Arrow key movement has two options: Pressing and holding the arrow keys to move, or tapping an arrow key in a direction to move, then tapping the same arrow key to stop moving.
- Notebook function to provide guidance for game progression.
- Tutorial Room: Features a directed series of parser commands to familiarize the player with typical game interactions.
- “Demo” section introduces player to game features such as eavesdropping, minor inventory puzzles, asking/telling NPCs about subjects, NPCs moving according to game schedule within a restricted play area (interior of the lodge only).
- Sometimes different options are available for eavesdropping on the same conversation: For casual conversations, the player can sometimes open a door and listen. For “closed door” conversations, a drinking class can be used on the door. There are some special hiding spots in rooms that will have better vantage points. While the conversations are identical regardless of eavesdropping method, sometimes there are visual cues that can be witnessed that might provide additional information.

Player feedback

- Stored by default in C:/Users/YourName/SavedGames/TheCrimsonDiamond
- Parser log (records words entered by player that aren't recognized by the parser).
- Activity log (records all parser entries, movements between rooms, game functions such as Save and Restore).

How to succeed in this game

- Easy puzzles. Easy to finish the game with minimal involvement BUT...
- ...The QUALITY of the game conclusion will be based on how well the player understands the characters and their motivations.
- If the player experiences certain “optional” sequences (such as eavesdropping segments), the game will record this and count this towards the quality of the game conclusion.

GEOLOGY!

- There will be simple geology puzzles that will teach players some basic field techniques (not present in game demo).
- The first geology puzzles will be the player improvising field tools after her luggage was lost in the intro (not present in the game demo).

Autosave

There is an Autosave function that will save the game before major game progression points. Autosaves are marked with a “!” prefix, and are followed by a number indicating the order in which the Autosave was created. The demo contains two Autosave points: 1) After the player has spoken to all the characters, BEFORE the Dining Room cutscene, and 2) After the player helps Jack with the dishes in the Kitchen.

Setting

The game is set in 1913, at a lodge near the fictional ghost town of Crimson, Ontario. Located in the vague Lake Superior area, Crimson was once a booming garnet mining town in the mid-1800s. The federal government provided incentives for settlers to work in the mines and various other needed jobs. The government bought the land from the First Nations people in the area, in exchange for promises of cash payments, and hunting, fishing, and trapping rights, among other things (for historical reference, see Robinson Treaty).

The garnets weren't gem quality and instead were used as industrial abrasives. When the market dried up and the government reached a surplus, the mines were closed down. By then, the region had been deforested and the water table lowered sufficiently so the mills wouldn't run. As the land wasn't very fertile that far north, the settlers deserted their lands for better lives elsewhere (for reference, see “Ontario's Ghost Town Heritage” by Ron Brown).

Evan Richards lives at Crimson Lodge. His family was one of the settler families, and he is the only one remaining after his parents died. Crimson Lodge used to be an inn run by Evan's father. Evan continued this tradition even after Crimson started deteriorating, but eventually closed the business. He now lives in Crimson Lodge with his assistant Jack Precord and his lady friend Margot.

A railroad had been constructed to ship crushed garnets out of Crimson, and this railroad continues westward and eventually connects with the Canadian Pacific Railway. Eastward, the railroad connects other Northern Ontario towns until it reaches its terminus in Toronto. The train station and Crimson Lodge are all that remain of Crimson when the game begins.

The game's two major areas are the lodge interior and the lodge exterior (with outbuildings). Both will have areas that will open up (or will be open-able) as the game progresses. The lodge interior consists of about 32 rooms (including hallways) and the lodge exterior consists of about 20 rooms

(including interiors of outbuildings). Only the lodge interior is accessible in the game demo.

Plot Synopsis

Introduction

You are Nancy Maple, a clerk at the Royal Canadian Museum in Toronto, Ontario. The museum is opening to the public next year, and the rivalry between departments to have the best exhibit is fierce. When your boss reads in the newspaper that a huge diamond has been found near Crimson, Ontario, you are the least valuable and most expendable employee that he can send on this potentially time-wasting wild goose chase!

While you aren't the adventurous type, you see this as an opportunity to prove your worth. You want to attend the University of Toronto to study Mineralogy, but the department isn't keen on accepting students of the female persuasion, unless there are exceptional circumstances. Northward, ho! You pack your trusty field kit and hop on the train. You meet up with another passenger headed to Crimson, fall asleep, lose your trusty field kit, and end up at Crimson train station late at night. Coincidentally, Jack Precord is there to pick up yet ANOTHER Crimson-bound passenger; Arnold Respa is an expert geologist hired by the Canadian government to investigate the diamond claim. Jack piles everyone into his Reo Touring Car and drives out to Crimson Lodge. On the way, Jack explains that you and your newfound friends will be spending the night at the lodge, but will be heading back east on the train the next morning. Evan Richards is a recluse and doesn't take kindly to uninvited guests.

All of the above is a skippable cutscene. The player starts the game with a newspaper that covers the important story points, as well as demonstrating the difference between "look" and "examine".

Characters



Nancy Maple

The protagonist. A daughter of Irish immigrants. Born and raised in The Ward, a rough part of Toronto that is dense and multicultural. You wouldn't know she had a tough upbringing to look at her. She's a petite girl in her early twenties. Nancy appears naïve and a bit prudish, but she's a real go-getter which can be at odds with her generally shy disposition. She's very observant (nosy) and inquisitive (which is also tough because she's naturally shy).

Her dream is to attend the University of Toronto as a Mineralogy student, but is having trouble getting accepted into the institution because of her gender. She believes if she can distinguish herself in the field, she can make her dream come true!

The other characters tend to dismiss her because of her size, disposition, and gender. But due to her rough upbringing, Nancy has a steely resolve and a strong moral compass that will not allow injustices to go unchallenged. Her life experiences have shown her that people tend not to believe her unless she has rock-solid, indisputable proof; her diminutive size has taught her that she needs to use her smarts to get results! She's a natural detective.



Kimi Kishiro

Nancy meets Kimi on the train to Crimson. Kimi's parents immigrated to Canada from Japan as labourers. They built a successful business and Kimi is able to travel the country indulging her passion of birdwatching. She is headed to Crimson to see double-breast cormorants and didn't realize that Crimson Lodge was closed for business.



Jack Precord

Nancy meets Jack at Crimson train station. He's there to pick up Albert Respa, the geologist from Antwerp, Belgium sent by the Canadian government. He's surprised to find so many people at the station! His good nature won't allow him to leave two ladies overnight in the pitch dark, so he takes them along to the lodge for the night – Under the condition that he takes them right back to the station in the morning, of course!

Jack is tall and slim and looks to be in his late thirties or early forties. He works hard to keep up the lodge and grounds but it's too much work for one man. There used to be a full staff when the lodge was being run as an inn, but ever since Evan Richards laid everyone off he's been worked off his feet. As a result, Jack is often tired and a bit frazzled and too busy to talk.



Albert Respa

Nancy and Kimi meet Albert on the Crimson station platform, not realizing he was on their train the entire time! He says he was in first class, naturally. Albert is a geologist from Antwerp, Belgium, the diamond capital of the world. The Canadian government sent him to Crimson to investigate the diamond claim on their behalf. He's sent ahead many heavy pieces of luggage, filled with the necessary equipment. As he's on official government business, Evan Richards is unable to send him away.



Evan Richards

Nancy either meets Evan in the Conservatory or during the Dining Room cutscene. He is the owner of Crimson Lodge, although his sister Nessa Crabbe will dispute this. The Richards family was part of the wave of settlers that came to Crimson thanks to government incentives. Nessa was born in England and remembers life there, while Evan was born in Crimson. After their parents died, Evan took over the lodge and continued to run it as an inn. The town of Crimson declined. Eventually he closed the inn down and laid off the staff. He became a recluse and only had Jack for company, until he met Margot.



Nessa Crabbe

Nessa is Evan Richards' older sister. She was born in England and immigrated with her parents to Crimson, Ontario when she was a little girl. Her fondness for England caused her to look upon Crimson unfavourably and she left the town as soon as she was grown up. She settled in Toronto and got married, although she's been widowed for a number of years now. When she heard about the diamond claim in Crimson she hired a lawyer (Corvus Shaw) and returned to Crimson for the first time in decades. She wants her share of any possible riches.



Margot

Margot first met Evan Richards at Crimson train station, a couple years before the game begins. Much like Nancy and Kimi, she ended up at the train station and Evan took her in. Evan has grown very fond of her. She is one of the few people that he can tolerate. Margot enjoys hosting a lodge full of guests, though she claims her lively "city days" are behind her. Sometimes she helps Jack with chores and cooking, but often her various maladies prevent her from doing so. She claims allergies or exhaustion, but Nancy wonders if it could have something to do with the efforts she puts into her appearance, or maybe just laziness. Or maybe Nancy is a little jealous of the advantages a certain level of attractiveness may confer?



Nathan Cardinal

The Cardinal family and the Richards family are friends, especially after the other settlers had left. Nathan still visits to check on Evan and Jack (and more recently, Margot). He lives on nearby land that wasn't bought by the government. Evan's father promised the Cardinal family that Crimson Lodge and the land surrounding it would go back to them, but only after Evan died. Nathan's father agreed to this condition. Evan figured this would happen naturally as there was nobody else around, but the diamond claim complicates these matters.



Corvus Shaw

Corvus is Nessa's hired lawyer and trusted friend. She brought him up from Toronto to help her dispute Evan's claim to Crimson Lodge, or at the very least get her share of any diamonds found on the property.

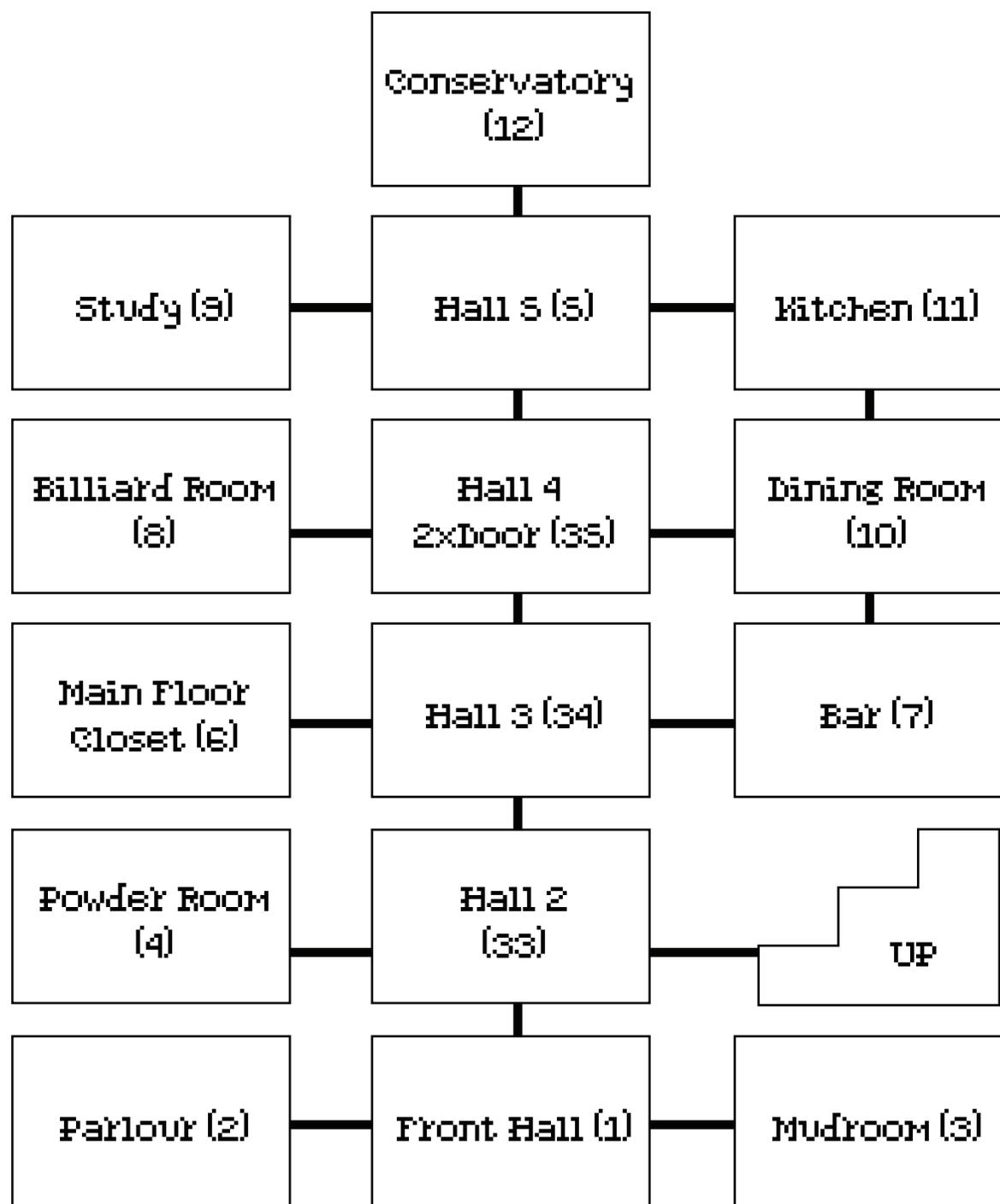
General Conversation Topics to Try

These are general topics that should apply to most NPCs. Some topics are specific to certain NPCs. Some NPC responses depend on stage of game progression. Player can also ASK ABOUT inventory items.

Ask _____ about...

Kimi	Albert	Nathan	Evan	Nessa
Corvus	Jack	Margot	Inn	Guests
Crimson	Room	Garnet	Jordan almonds	Town
Cormorants	Nests	Bush	Black flies	Lodge
Windfall	Diamond	Diamond mine	Mine	Continent
Europe	Dinner	Land	Land claim	Situation
Parents	Jam	Bridge	Assignment	

Lodge Main Floor



Lodge Second Floor

