

Excerpts from the Game Design Document for *King's Quest VI*

By Roberta Williams & Jane Jensen

Game Bible - Easiest Path Outline

The Easiest Path is the linear path through the game to the marriage of Cassima and Alexander, doing absolutely none of the optional sub-plots and puzzles. There are five major 'milestones' the player must complete to finish the game. The Easiest Path has been organized as five acts, corresponding to those five milestones. These acts are internal and invisible to the player. They are:

- I) Finding a way to travel
- II) Getting past the Gnome Guards
- III) Finishing the labyrinth
- IV) Beauty & the Beast
- V) Castle of the Crown infiltration and subsequent victory over the Genie & the Vizier

The last portion of the game, from the castle infiltration through the end-game cartoon differs quite a bit depending on whether the player's only done the required puzzles (Easiest Path), has done optional puzzles, and which optional puzzles the player has done.

Global Views/Actions:

- 1) Magic Map. Alexander travels via the use of a magic map. The magic map will be an inventory item. When used on Alexander, a map inset will come up. Clicking on any one island teleports instantly to that island. The map can only be used on the beaches and transports the player to the other island's beach.
- 2) Death. Anytime Alexander dies, we'll do a regular death view in his current location based on the specific death. We'll then fade to the "Underworld Entrance" screen. Alexander is now a ghost and he floats onto the screen along with other random ghosts. There are Skeleton Guards at the huge entrance door and Alexander is handed a ghostly ticket to get into the Underworld, which he then hands to the Skeleton at the door to get inside. We now bring up the death restore box. This will be the same view for all deaths and serves as a hint about the Isle of the Dead and the ticket.

Documentation conventions:

Plot Summary: Is a summary of the action in a given section. Puzzles & Clues & Notes: Gives the details of the action, art descriptions, and logic behind a given section, including listing the specific player actions and the responses those actions trigger. Things that are underlined and bolded, are actual player actions. Underlining only, is used for emphasis and subheadings - usually 'Notes', 'Deaths', and 'Hints'.

Recommended reading aids:

- 1) Game maps - to visualize Alexander's movements.
- 2) Pawn Shop Trading Table - useful for understanding the inventory management with the pawn shop.

I. Opening Sequence:

The opening sequence introduces Alexander and Cassima and sets up the background and motivation for Alexander's quest in the Land of the Green Isles. Game credits can be displayed on the title screen before this cartoon, during this cartoon, or on a separate screen.

1. Alexander decides to leave Daventry.

Plot Summary: After the titles, we fade in to the "Daventry Throne Room" screen. Alexander is sitting in the throne room of the castle in Daventry. His head is in his hands and he looks melancholy. The Magic Mirror hangs silently on the wall. Valanice comes into the room.

Valanice: "Alexander! You've been fretting about that lovely girl you met in Mordack's castle for too long now! You've got to get on with your life."

Walk Valanice up to Alexander. Fade to the "Close-up of Alexander and Valanice" screen.

Alexander: "I can't get her out of my mind, Mother. One moment I'd found her and everything was different. The next she was being sent back home. Now it's like she's disappeared without a trace. I can't find anyone who's even heard of the Land of the Green Isles, much less knows where it is! Who would have thought that something like Geography could ruin my life?"

Valanice: "I understand how you feel, Alexander, but there are many beautiful girls right here in this kingdom. I only want you to be happy, Alex. I hate to see you so... purposeless. You've got to stand up and make a decision about your future."

Alexander: "I know you're right, Mother. It's just... nothing else seems like it could possibly be right without her."

Valanice: "<sigh> Oh, Alex. I wish there were something I could do."

Alexander: "I'll be alright, Mother. I promise."

Fade back out to the "Daventry Throne Room" screen. Valanice pats Alexander's hand and then walks out of the room. Alexander, heartbroken, continues to brood in his chair.

Alexander: "I can't forget your face, Cassima. A face that could haunt a man forever. Cassima, where are you?"

Suddenly, the magic mirror begins to dazzle. We hear a far-away woman's voice calling Alexander's name. Alexander says "What...?" He gets up and walks over to the mirror. Fade to the "Close-up of the Magic Mirror" screen.

The mirror dazzles for a moment, then clears. We see Cassima staring out a high stone window. It is nighttime and out the window we can see a number of star patterns clearly (these will serve as Alexander's clues for finding the isles). Cassima is crying.

Cassima: "Oh, Alexander, I need you. I have never been so unhappy. Why do you not come? Have you forgotten me so soon?"

The mirror fades back to a dazzle. Fade back to the "Davertry Throne Room" screen.

Alexander: "But... what?!" Alexander: "Mother! Mother, come quick!"

Valanice rushes in. The two meet in the middle of the room and grab hands. Fade to the "Close-up of Alexander and Valanice" screen. Valanice: "Alexander! Your face is so white! What happened?"

Alexander: "I've just seen her - Cassima! She was in the magic mirror! Mother, she needs me!" Valanice: "But... what about finding the isles?" Alexander: "Stars, Mother! The magic mirror showed me the night sky and I can navigate by the stars!" Valanice: "I can see that there's no talking you out of it. But I have a bad feeling, Son. Please be careful. If I lost you again, I don't know what I'd do." Alexander: "Oh, Mother. Everything's going to be fine. I promise. Now I must go prepare my ship." Alexander and Valanice hug. He leaves the room. Fade out to the "Ship's Voyage" screen.

Puzzles & Clues & Notes: None. Computer controlled cartoon.

Transition: Fade to Alexander at sea.

2. The journey to the Land of the Green Isles.

Plot Summary:

The journey is shown with a far shot of a ship on the "Ship's Voyage" screen. Use alterations in the weather and waves (night - stars matching magic mirror vision, day, calm, rocky) to indicate the passage of many days. Fade to the "Close-up of Alexander on ship" screen. Alexander is looking anxiously out to sea, as though urging the boat to fly faster to his love.

Print a message, "Three long months Alexander follows the stars to reach the other side of the world, where the mysterious Land of the Green Isles lie scattered on the ocean."

Show Alexander raise a spy glass. He looks in various directions through it. Fade to a black screen with a small, round inset that shows the distant ocean as seen through a telescope. The inset pans over ocean. Suddenly we see an island on the horizon. Zoom in to the island.

Fade back to the "Close-up of Alexander on Ship" screen. Alexander, obviously excited, points and yells "Land Ho!" We see crewman start to scramble.

Fade back out to the "Ship's Voyage" screen. The boat rocks and gets caught in the strong currents, reefs, and rocks that surround the island. They are obviously struggling.

Overlaid over this screen as we watch the ship struggle, we see text. A crewman shouts "Prince Alexander! We're barely holding against the currents! It's like a whirlpool here!" Another crewman shouts "Sir, the rocks!" Just then, use a screen shake to imply that the ship hits something. Show the boat start to sink. Iris to message screen. "...The next morning."

Fade to a shot of a beach. Alexander is lying face down on the sand, alone. It is morning. Slowly Alexander rises, staggers, and rights himself. He looks around. We'll print some text here about Alexander mourning the loss of his crew.

The game is now under player control.

Puzzles & Notes & Clues: None. Computer controlled cartoon.

II. Act I

Purpose of act: To find a way to travel to the other islands. Trigger for next act: Getting the magic map.

Places involved: Isle of the Crown

1. Getting the magic map

Plot Summary: To get the magic map, Alexander will have to explore the Isle of the Crown quite a bit. He will need to talk to the owner of the book shop in the village, the old man living in the ferry down at the docks, and then the owner of the pawn shop in the village. These must be done in this particular order. The Book Shop Owner refers Alexander to the Ferryman. With the referral, the Ferryman agrees to talk to Alexander and tells him that he heard the Pawn Shop Owner had a magic map. Alexander needs to learn this so that he can go to the pawn shop and ask about the map. From these three characters, Alexander will also be given story detail about the islands, Cassima, the Vizier, and the general situation in the Kingdom.

Puzzles & Clues & Notes:

A. Finding out about the magic map

- 1) Hand on Ferryman's door, shows Alexander knocking on the door of the Ferryman's boat. The door opens and the Ferryman peeks his head out. Ferryman: "Whaddya want?" Set a 5 second timer. Talk on Ferryman before talking to the Book Shop Owner, and Alexander asks about the boat. The Ferryman grouchily tells him to "Go away! The ferry's not running!" and shuts the door in his face.

- 2) Talk to Book Shop Owner and Alexander introduces himself and says "What can you tell me about the Land of the Green Isles?" (this is the standard question he'll ask everyone he "talks" to). The Book Shop Owner, however, will give Alexander some good answers to that question:
 - There are 3 other islands; the Isle of the Sacred Mountain, the Isle of the Beast, and the Isle of Wonder.
 - Some folks say there's a 4th island, but it's probably just local superstition (this turns out to be Isle of the Mists).
 - If Alexander wishes to learn about the kingdom, he should travel to the other 3 isles and meet their leaders.
 - He might also try going to the Castle of the Crown and seeing if he could get a meeting with the Vizier, Abdul Alhazred.
 - Unfortunately, the ferry is not running due to "political unrest", but, if Alexander goes and talks to the Ferryman, he might know of a way to travel.
- 3) Talk on Ferryman at door after talking to the Book Shop Owner, and Alexander mentions the Book Shop Owner to the Ferryman. The Ferryman invites Alexander inside. Bring up the "Ferryman's House" screen. The boathouse is a cozy room with two stuffed chairs and various nautical decorations/objects. Between the two chairs is a small table. The only thing on the table is a rabbit's foot. Alexander and the Ferryman enter the room and sit down in the two chairs and begin to talk. The Ferryman will tell Alexander that:
 - The ferry is not running because the other islands are angry with each other. The Vizier ordered the ferry to cease operation because he wanted to "give things time to settle" between the islands.
 - Cassima used to visit the islands with her mother, Queen Allaria. Cassima was terribly upset by the island's troubles, saying on her last trip, "But, who's spreading these lies?"
 - The poor Ferryman is now out of a job - the job his ancestors have held for generations. He's the only one trained to avoid the reef and the rocks, but that knowledge does him no good now. The ferry's been inoperable for so long, she's no longer even seaworthy.
 - There's only one other way to travel that he knows of - a magic map. He believes it might currently be in the Pawn Shop Owner's possession.

B. Getting the magic map

- 1) When Alexander was shipwrecked on the beach on the Isle of the Crown in the opening cartoon, his royal insignia ring came flying off his hand and landed in the sand near him. The player does not see this occurring, but will be able to see a glint on the sand near Alexander. Look at glint on beach, gets a text message "Alexander's royal insignia ring is lying on the sand. It must have come off in the shipwreck." Hand on royal insignia ring, shows Alexander bending down and picking up the ring.
- 2) Talk to Pawn Shop Owner before learning of magic map, and Alexander says "What can you tell me about the Land of the Green Isles?". The Pawn Shop Owner replies that he only knows that his business has suffered because he's not receiving the imports from the other islands

anymore. Look on pawn shop front counter, and the Pawn Shop Owner will describe each item 'looked' at (tinder box, wind-up nightingale, painter's brush, or flute).

- 3) Talk to Pawn Shop Owner after learning of magic map, and Alexander will ask him about the magic map specifically. The Pawn Shop Owner brings the magic map out from the back and tells Alexander that the map is very valuable and he'll need something of equal value to exchange for it. Alexander's royal insignia ring is the only thing Alexander could possibly have that's valuable enough to exchange for the magic map. Use <something else> on Pawn Shop Owner, and the Pawn Shop Owner says "I'm sorry, but I'm afraid that's nowhere near the value of this magical map."
- 4) Use royal insignia ring on Pawn Shop Owner, shows Alexander handing the ring to the Pawn Shop Owner. "Will this do?", he asks. The Pawn Shop Owner examines the ring. Alexander explains who he is and where he is from ("Prince Alexander of Daventry"). The Pawn Shop Owner is delighted with the beautiful gold and jeweled ring and gives Alexander the magic map. He tells Alexander that he realizes the ring is a family heirloom and that he will give him some time to come back for it if he can find something else of equal value. He also tells Alexander about the operation of the magic map - that the map will only work "in the open and within sight of the sea" (i.e. on the beaches).