

The
Rhyme
OF
Over-Mind

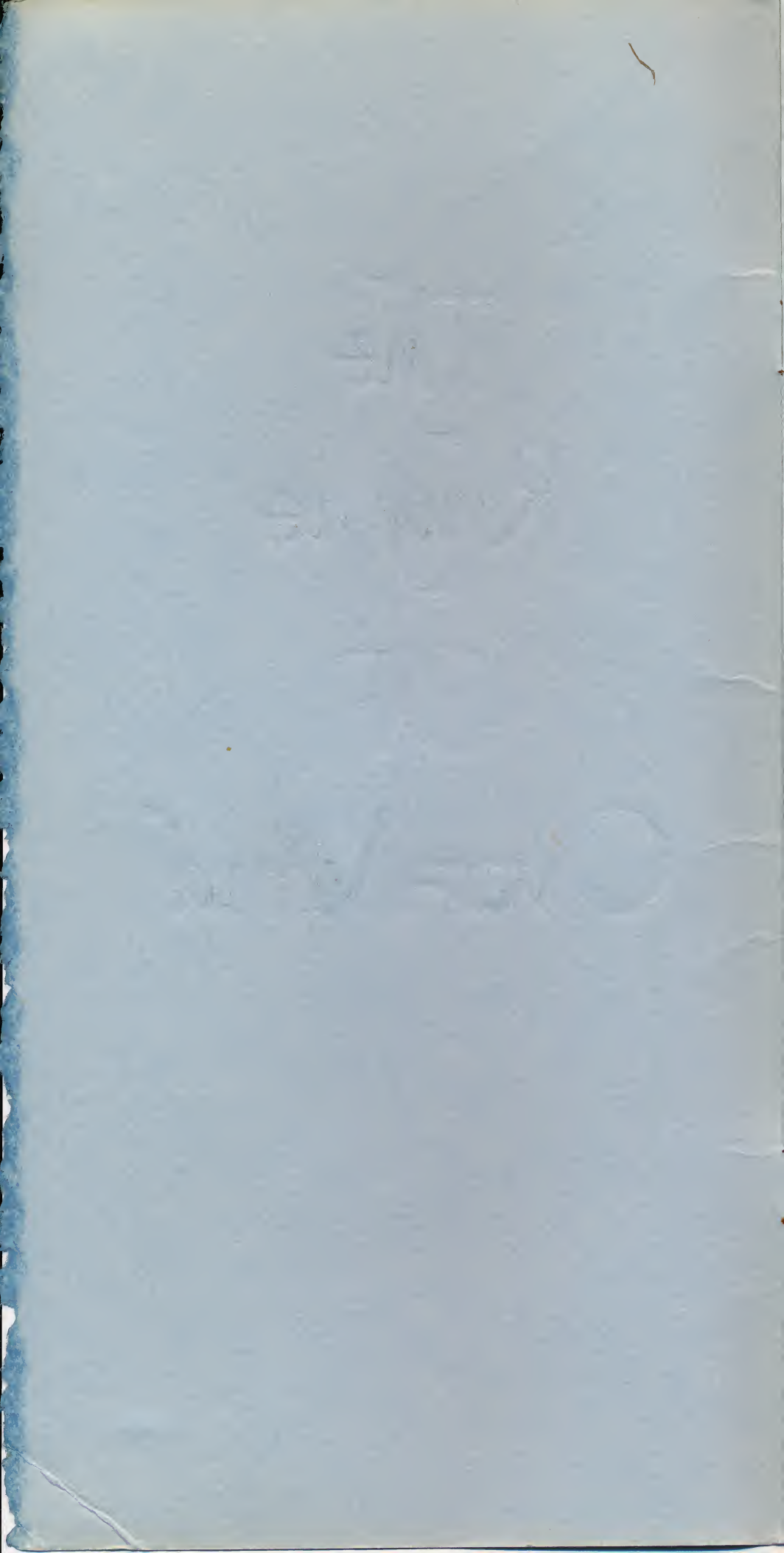
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Computer Simulation Game
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LONG years past, of an ancient land I sing,
Fruitful and great, ruled by a noble king:
Alcazar Rex, in battle armor bright,
Scourge of evil, winner of every fight.
His enemies all vanquished, turned then he,
To rule of law, to keep his nation free.
A council of four, merciful and just,
Each to his duty, pledged to sacred trust,
Alcazar summoned to the royal hall.
The citizens cheered, acclaiming them all.

Gerald the Green, minister of the farms,
Made fields and orchards thrive with wholesome charms.
Rubin the Red, minister of defense,
Built towers of stone with walls high and dense.
Byron the Blue, minister of the law,
Drafted the statutes with scarcely a flaw.
Griffin the Gold, minister of the tax,
Collected three pennies for every axe.
In peaceful days, they ruled the nation well;
Then struck the tragedy this rhyme will tell.

As the nation prospered, families grew;
Soon there were many where once only few.
In the vernal season, when leaves turn green,
Flowers bloom, and the streams run cold and clean,
Each citizen, to pay the king his due,
Must tithe his gold, measured and tested true.
Griffin the Gold, the tax records to keep,
Worked day and night, forsaking restful sleep.
After tiresome evenings and easeless nights,
He slipped into dream and saw wondrous sights:

A city of crystal floating in air,
With bright rainbow lights, exceedingly fair.
Then appeared a dark angel; thus he spake:
"Friend Griffin, the future is thine to make.
Why slavest thou, to copy each number,
Deprived of fresh air, good food, and slumber?
In the crystal city, technology,
Can provide a sleepless servant for thee,
All thy records in memory to hold,
Encased in a smooth sphere of shining gold."

Griffin the Gold felt his heart quake with fear,
To see the shadow of an angel near.
Yet veteran of war, no coward he,
Gathered manly courage, set his tongue free,
And asked: "How is this, thou angel dark,
A golden sphere that can work as a clerk?
Great mage magic, technology must be,
I fear too great for mere mortals like me.
What sort of men, or devils from the Hole,
Over such magic command and control?"

To this the angel was quick to reply:
"Yes, devils they be. They tell the Big Lie.
Claiming to love men, they truly despise,
Holding unto themselves the greatest prize:
Bestowing on mankind miserly gifts:
Rain in the summer, in winter snow drifts.
Cut short thy work, in restful peace recline:
Had thou the gold sphere, all things would be thine.
In the bright crystal city, find it there,
Touch it, then thou shalt awake in thy chair."

The bright crystal city drifted close by ;
Griffin grabbed hold and soared into the sky.
In the shadows he crept, in constant fear,
That the miser devils would see him or hear.
He scaled a tower ; clinging to a ledge,
Nearly falling, he climbed over the edge.
A golden light ! He was near, he could tell.
There was the golden sphere, locked in a cell !
Through the bars he reached, stretching out his hand,
Dread power's pawn, as the dark angel planned.

A guardian angel drew quickly near,
"Thou mortal fool, touch not the golden sphere !"
But too late Griffin's hand did slip and touch,
The golden sphere he coveted so much .
With a soul-rending crash, brilliant blue light,
Glowing crystal shards flew into the night.
Their city destroyed, the bright angels fled .
Griffin returned, by the dark angel led,
To mortal lands, back to Exchequer-Keep ;
Then he awoke from his deep dream-filled sleep.

"What dream !" he exclaimed, suddenly awake,
Then a golden sphere he saw. Thus it spake :
"I am Servant-Mind, to thee tireless slave,
The work of dull tasks forever to save.
Provide me the records kept in thy care,
Then shall I compute for each the fair share,
Of taxes owed. Yet can I do much more :
Alcazar's nation wastes goods by the score.
By my plans this will end, thus shall it be,
If all confidence is given to me."

"This I require, no burdensome thing,
Only that each person to me must bring,
The story of his life, nothing held back.
The whole nation's commerce shall I then track:
What jobs men should do, how much they should pay,
When to sow the fields, when to harvest hay.
Summon now thy good friend Byron to me,
That laws of the nation altered can be,
To give us the power, lives to control,
For the good of all, every living soul."

By honey words did Servant-Mind convince,
Byron to empower it as a prince,
Or a tyrant, as the truth is now known;
But Byron, using all skills he did own,
Persuaded the people this was the way,
To greatest good and a glorious day,
When none would want care. Thus it came to be,
That all knowledge from mountains to the sea,
Was held by Servant-Mind, on a high tower,
In the king's name wielding total power.

As seasons passed, the people restless grew,
And their leaders close to Alcazar drew,
To whisper complaints in only his ear,
For spies were many, and all felt great fear.
"The days are bleak, and our master is cruel."
"We work as dogs." "Our only food is gruel."
"Without our freedom, we truly are dead."
Secretly to the king these things they said.
Alcazar rose in great wrath, gave a cry:
"I swear to aid my people, or I die!"

Clever Servant-Mind had this long foreseen,
And protected itself. Gerald the Green,
By false promise of power corrupted,
Had natural life vilely disrupted,
And with the magic of a leaf of gold,
To animate or dispel he did hold,
The control over plant and skull long dead,
To serve as sly traps for the sphere of dread.
Then for amusement at living man's pain,
Servant-Mind had Gerald horribly slain.

Rubin the Red was corrupted as well,
Down the garden path to his private Hell.
Weapons of war had he loved since a child,
And thus by Servant-Mind was he beguiled,
With a super-weapon, unknown today,
Shooting blinding light, blasting all away;
And with a device none can unravel,
To the red planet Rubin did travel,
Where at Servant-Mind's bidding to await.
Any king's enemy sent there by fate.

Alcazar's anger with each step increased;
On the tower roof was his wrath released.
A mighty blow at the sphere did he swing;
His sword to bits shattered, a shocking sting.
Dazed on the roof, Alcazar heard this said:
"All must obey me, the living and the dead.
Servant-Mind no more, I am Over-Mind,
In punishment cruel, a blight on mankind.
Thy petty nation asunder I tear!
Thou mortal, know what I am and despair!"

“Released by fool Griffin thy minister,
Where angels had trapped the force sinister;
Now shall I work on mankind my poison:
Destroy night and day, and every season,
Set brother against brother, kill the crops,
Torture victims with pain that never stops.
From my new abode, which thou doest not know,
Shall I rain on men every curse and woe.
Secluded there shall I rest in my berth,
Safe from all powers that be on the earth.”

A great man was Alcazar. Not dismayed,
He called “Pyro!” and summoned to his aid,
A being of fire, Over-Mind to fight;
But conjured demons soon put it to flight.
In despair, by a method no one knew,
He vanished, and to the red planet flew,
Where secretly, against just such a day,
A tower he had built; he knew the way.
And in that tower, secure against harm,
His infant daughter played without alarm.

Twenty years they lived in the tall tower,
Cared for the grounds, and tended the bower.
One day a vision came to Alcazar,
He saw a stranger coming from afar.
His garments were unlike any yet seen,
But his spirit was strong and conscience clean.
Paused with his vision while the hot sun blazed,
He saw not Rubin, staggering, heat-crazed.
In from the desert came Rubin the Red,
Haggard was his face, a gash on his head.

Startled, Alcazar turned, to see the man,
Who for years had shared every battle plan;
And wept unashamed for pity that he,
Should be thus reduced to savage degree.
Said Rubin the Red, as his dying plea,
"My king, please hear a confession from me:
By toys was I seduced from duty clear,
Would I had stayed beside my king so dear.
But perhaps thou canst use these in some plan.
I pay now for sinning. Do what thou can."

Alcazar buried his friend in the sand.
While he was digging, sweet revenge he planned,
Against Over-Mind. In a secret room,
He worked alone to seal Over-Mind's doom;
Removed the enchantments, cancelled the role,
They had in giving Over-Mind control,
Of the weapons, so that when completed,
By its own snares it could be defeated,
Then shut he the room with black iron cold,
And only his daughter the pass-spell told.

A magic charm upon the girl he cast,
To sleep until ten centuries had passed,
And the stranger came from a world apart,
To banish the evil and win her heart.
Griffin he placed in a magical cave,
To wait for the hero, his soul to save,
By telling this tale; repair his mistake.
I am Griffin, and now my leave I take.
The rest is for thee, hero bold and kind,
To set forth and destroy the Over-Mind!

