

## A History of The Lands of Mahid

### CENTRAL MAHID IN THE TIMES OF KARTH

There came a time in human history when the lands as we know them first began taking their present shape. The polar ice sheets had receded for the last time, and mankind had matured to the level of agrarian society and communal dependency. Archeology places this time at about 10,000 B.C.E., and little is known or been studied concerning this dark age of humanity. However, it was a time of change, rich in the experience of growth that would shape mankind and the lands for ages to come. And it was a time of living myths and magic that to this day live in our psyche.

The continent of Africa was called Mahid in those days long past. A lush paradise, the ancient cradle of man was dotted with small areas whose names were only known to the local tribes. Richest among these lands were Muwura, Shagamuth, and Bosusha. Thriving on the gifts of the earth, trading freely amongst their tribes, the people of these lands knew

nothing of war or greed. Until the day a shadow fell on the jungle; the shadow of Mobatu Thoroko, the Dark Shaman.

Mobatu swept into Bosusha first from the north with his hordes of demon warriors. Pillaging and destroying, Mobatu captured and enslaved all inhabitants in that land who did not fall to the swords of his evil minions. He forced the Bosusha men to fight in the ranks as his force crossed the Spring of Thurath into the land of Shagamuth. The Wahuru of Shagamuth, bravest of all tribes, fought valiantly, but fell back before the vast numbers of Mobatu's armies. When it seemed that nothing could stop Mobatu and that Shagamuth would fall as Bosusha before it, there came a powerful wizard from the south; Komo Satu, the Leopard Shaman.

Komo Satu rallied the remaining Wahuru warriors to stand against the forces of Mobatu. Leading the way with his Voodoo Fire Stick, Komo Satu's warriors pushed the army of the Dark Shaman north across the Great River into the plains of Muwura. There, before the Mountains of Zachoba, a great battle was joined to decide the fate of the lands. After three days of bloody fighting, the army of Mobatu retreated into the mountains. The Wahurus did not have mountain fighting skills, and their forces were depleted from the battle, so Komo Satu wisely gathered his army and took his forces back to Shagamuth. Camps were

built in the plains of Muwura to guard against the return of Mobatu's hordes, and the Wahuru rebuilt their villages in Shagamuth.

Mobatu Thoroko was not one to leave business unfinished, though. After a few years, he and his demon warriors stormed down from the Mountains of Zachoba and laid waste the plains of Muwura, destroying the Wahuru camps. Komo Satu once again led a Wahuru army across the Great River. Battles were fought, lives were lost, and plains of Muwura became a blasted wasteland of foul stench and poisonous vapors. Finally, a truce was called, and all the land north of the Great River was ceded to Mobatu. Mobatu vowed never to enter Shagamuth, but claimed that Bosusha was rightfully his by conquest. Komo Satu demurred and claimed that Bosusha was free and that Mobatu should be satisfied with Muwura. The claim of both shamans was never resolved, and Bosusha became a wild land where Mobatu's raiding parties took slaves and Wahuru warriors kept outposts to guard against invasion from the north.

A hundred years of uneasy peace passed in which no land or people prospered. Komo Satu built a hut in the middle of the Shagamuth jungle near the Great River and lived alone. He would not be king among the Wahuru, but desired more to keep a watchful eye upon the borders. One day, while getting water from the enchanted Spring of Thurath, Komo Satu spied a raiding party of Mobatu's demon warriors heading back to Muwura. Before them they drove a haggard group of Tisho women from Bosusha, future slaves of the Dark Shaman. Komo Satu cast his water skins aside and, raising his Voodoo Fire Stick, attacked the demons. He drove them off, killing a few. The bulk of the evil warriors escaped across the Great River with their captives, slashing down those who lagged behind with their cruel swords rather than allow their rescue by the Leopard Shaman.

As Komo Satu walked among the unfortunate dead, he found one Tisho woman still moving with the shallow breath of life despite her grievous wounds. Cradling her head, Komo Satu knew her spirit would soon leave this world. Her eyes fluttered open and beheld the shaman, and a faint whisper issued from her bloody lips. Komo Satu bent down to hear her last words.

"My child, you must take my child," she said with what passion was left in her. And as she spoke, she lifted away her tattered raiment to reveal a suckling newborn she had hidden against her breast. Komo Satu's eyes filled with tears as he thought how she had purposely stumbled so that a demon warrior could strike her down and give her young son a chance to be rescued and live.

"His name is Karth, son of D'arthshoga," she continued, a smile coming to her face in spite of her pain. "His father... great warrior... chief among my people." She turned her pleading eyes to Komo Satu.

“Please, take him, raise him to avenge his father and mother. Please, you must...” Her voice trailed away to a shudder as she fell deeper into the waiting arms of Death.

“I will take him, good women,” answered the Leopard Shaman.  
“And I will never let him forget the bravery and love of his mother.”

The woman smiled once more, painfully leaned over and kissed the crying child one last time. Her eyes closed and she was no more.

Komo Satu gently lifted the baby from its mother's dead embrace. Holding the boy above his head towards the green canopy of the jungle and the sky beyond, he uttered a solemn vow; “By the gods of all Mahid and by the names of my ancestors, I will give life to this Karth and train him to be the greatest warrior in the land. He will right the wrongs of Mobatu, he will avenge the death of his proud people, and he will bring peace to Mahid. By my heart and soul, I will do this! Mobatu, take heed this oath if you can hear my words!”

And so Komo Satu returned to his lonely hut with Karth. He would raise the boy himself, knowing the Wahuru to mistrust and castigate Tisho people. Feeding him antelope milk to make him fleet of foot, the Leopard Shaman labored long and hard to care for the infant as best he could. Anyone raising a baby knows how much time it demands, and Komo Satu's vigilant eyes were taken away from the borders. Mobatu was quick to notice such things, and his evil spies and sly minions began to cross the Great River and cause trouble in the land of Shagamuth.

Time passed, and Karth grew into a strapping boy full of energy and intelligence. Komo Satu taught him the ways of the jungle and the creatures who inhabited it. Karth could stalk the lion silently, travel among the trees as a monkey, wrestle the jungle bears, and swim as a fish by the time he was twelve. And every night after their evening meal, Komo Satu would reveal wisdom and knowledge to the boy of things beyond the touch of the hand or the sight of the eyes. And he told him of his people, his brave mother and strong father, and of the evils of Mobatu.

When the boy became a youth, the Leopard Shaman had trouble keeping his vengeful spirit in check. Karth wanted desperately to avenge his parents and put down the sway of the evil Dark Shaman. But Komo Satu checked the young man's passion to keep him from destruction worse than death.

“You have not the power or the wisdom to even look upon the face of the Evil One,” he told Karth. “I myself, a magician and shaman of many seasons, could not put him down with an army of Wahuru. What could a mere boy do? Tell me, Karth, how would you end the existence of one you cannot even comprehend?”

The question left Karth stuttering and looking at the ground until the Leopard Shaman dismissed him to gather water or firewood. But deep in his heart, Komo Satu knew Karth was the one - the one who would set the land of Mahid right again. In his strong, young hand the Voodoo Fire Stick would obliterate the shadow of maleficent blight cast by Mobatu's outstretched hand. Karth was chosen, and Komo Satu prayed to the gods that the youth would be ready when it was his time.

A day came to pass when Komo Satu sent Karth to purify his spirit in the rain forest with nothing more than a loincloth girdled about his waist. Karth wandered far into the jungle seeking the spirit of his totem, the swift-footed antelope. The Leopard Shaman had felt a strange change on the wind, one that signaled a turning point in time. For some unknown reason, the old shaman wanted the youth to be ready for something.

As the Karth wandered, a regiment of Mobatu's demon warriors came to Komo Satu's hut. The Dark Shaman sensed that Komo Satu was near the end of his time, that he was weakened by years and constant vigilance. While his enemy was weak, Mobatu struck.

Komo Satu was before his hut, cleaning the skin of a zebra Karth had brought down the previous day. When the warriors broke from the jungle into the clearing he tossed his adamantite dagger into the hut and picked up the fabled Voodoo Fire Stick. Aiming at the evil warriors and grasping the amulet that gave him the power to wield the powerful weapon, blue bolts of energy blasted the vanguard of the troops into oblivion. Komo Satu raised the weapon again and blasted more demons into the gaping jaws of Hell. But more came, and the Voodoo Fire Stick was good for only two blasts of energy. Uttering a spell of distance, the Leopard Shaman hurled the Voodoo Fire Stick and the magic amulet far into the jungle, hoping Karth would some day find them.

As the last of the demon warriors advanced towards the old man, Komo Satu twisted his grizzled face into a grin and said, "Come, fools! Who will be the first to die trying to take me?" Shouting more in fear than battle spirit, the foremost warriors sprang at the old man, only to be killed instantly by a powerful sweep of his sinewy arm. But Komo Satu's strength was gone, and the rest of the troops wrestled him to the ground. As they bound him, Komo Satu called in spirit-voice to his apprentice, Karth, before the gag was in place - "Come, oh my son! It is time to avenge all!"

At that, the demon warriors gagged the Leopard Shaman and hoisted him on a pole. They rummaged through the hut looking for the Voodoo Fire Stick as their Master had ordered, but to no avail. Nor did they find the dagger. They heard the approach of someone and quit the hut and clearing, carrying Komo Satu as a slaughtered pig to the waiting hatred of Mobatu across the Great River.

Karth had run as fast as the wind when he heard his Master's spirit-voice. Komo Satu would only use that call if great danger was near. But when he arrived at the clearing before the hut, only blasted ground and a strangely silent jungle awaited him. Fearing the worse, Karth entered the hut ...

## World Builder™ Game Play

Now that you have some background concerning the plot of the game, you can go ahead and play if you're familiar with World Builder™ gaming methods. If you've never played a World Builder™ game, than here's a very short synopsis on the basics of what you can do.

World Builder™ games combine graphic scenes with accompanying text and digitized sound. You can type commands with the keyboard into the text section of the screen to achieve your ends, or select actions from the menu bar. Using either method allows you to move in compass directions or up and down, rest, search, look, check your inventory of items, or check your status of well-being as the player/character. These choices are usually available from the COMMANDS menu.

As you move about in the world of Karth, you collect weapons and items that you can use to overcome enemies and do certain things. Actuating these items is done with the WEAPONS menu. In the beginning of the game, all you will have as weapons are your fists and feet. These are sufficient for overcoming some foes, but terribly inefficient with more powerful enemies.

Moving about in the world of Karth is much like moving about in the real world. You'll meet challenges, puzzles, enemies, friends, and danger. It depends on your actions how you profit from encounters as you move from scene to scene. Anytime a fight ensues between you and a foe, your physical and spiritual strength is weakened with each blow that connects, be it from a weapon or other source of harm. If you get into a fight for which you are unprepared in armor, weaponry, or too low in physical/spiritual strength, the outcome will probably mean your death. Therefore, it is a good idea to save the game occasionally as you travel about with the SAVE command from the FILE menu. This will allow you to continue the game from the scene in which you saved data without having to start at the beginning again. Successfully completing the game will send you to a FINALE scene, in which further information about the next phases of Karth of the Jungle will be revealed.

With the above information, a novice player should be able to play with little problem. Like every program and application on the Mac, the best method of learning is by doing. Jump in, get killed a few times for stupid moves, and you'll get the hang of it in no time.

## Game Specs

I wrote this game with World Builder™ version 1.1 on a Macintosh 512 equipped with a stone-age HyperDrive internal hard disk. It has been tested on a regular Mac 512, Mac 512E, and a Mac Plus and run with no problem. I have not run it on a Mac SE, but if Silicon Beach played by the rules (which they always do, being an excellent software development company), there shouldn't be any problem. As far as a Mac II, who knows? There's only one Mac II in the computer wasteland of Las Vegas that I know of, and that's in the showroom of a computer store run by hosers who won't let you play on the damn thing.

I did many of the digitized sounds in the game and used some sounds from World Builder™ sources. They sound fine on a decent speaker attached to the sound port on the back of the Mac. On the internal speaker, they sound kind of tinny. You might want to connect to something better to get the full effect in the audio part of the game.

## Some Strategy

Though this is an action/adventure game, violence is not always the solution to all things. In fact, killing with abandon is contrary to the teachings of Komo Satu and you'll end up regretting it. Use your head when dealing with humans and try other means of getting what you want.

I won't give you a lot of hints here because this is a game of skill and learned knowledge. It's easier than any Infocom game in many aspects, but still requires some thought on your part to be successful.

- Don't assume any empty scene is really empty. Search and ye shall often find.
- The Swamp Demon likes to collect things left about. Try visiting his digs to find stuff you might need.
- Watch how you use weapons. Don't try to overcome brute force with a puny dagger. If faced with a foe beyond your weaponry, retreat is often the better part of valor.
- Click on doors, gates, items, etc. This generates animation built into the game and saves typing. Also, all compass directions can be achieved with entering the first letter of the direction followed by pressing the RETURN key. Command keys are active in many scenes.
- Directions in the jungle can get muddled. Don't assume that moving in a direction that took you to a particular scene the last time you tried it will get you there again.

- Believe it or not, taking notes will help you at times, especially if you get killed. Learn from mistakes!

One last note: Though World Builder™ is an excellent program, it has some inconsistencies at times. For example, often the text will tell you something is lying on the ground when you're not anywhere near the ground. This is written in the internal workings of the program and beyond me to fix. Just take such statements with a grain of salt and continue on. By the way, the password to start play is "cheetah"

And Now, The Pitch...

I hate it when shareware developers use guilt to try and get folk to send them money for their efforts. Reminds me of a whining kid trying to get ice cream money when the ice cream truck comes up the block. Suffice to say, I invested some cash in hardware and software, not to mention a hell of a lot of hours, to be able to design and write this game. I would have done it anyway, even if only a small group of friends played the thing.

I actually wrote the game years ago when I was a freelance writer for RDI Video, makers of Dragon's Lair, Space Ace, and Thayer's Quest, games of arcade fame. Those classics were laser disc Don Bluth animation, and superb to play. Karth of the Jungle was intended (along with a host of other games) for a home version that included a laser disc player and game computer with voice recognition. Neat stuff - and it only cost around \$3,000, a price way above what anyone was going to pay for a game system. Hence, RDI died, and Karth of the Jungle went nowhere until I discovered World Builder™. Thank the gods of Mahid for Silicon Beach!

Anyway, this is only phase one of three phases. The ensuing phases will include more fantasy, more foes, and more intricate game play. However, I need your support to continue. Letters are nice, but money is better to be honest. At least I can show my wife and kids that something came out of all that time daddy spent glued in front of the Mac screen and cursing at code that didn't do what it was supposed to do.

Therefore, if you like the game and want to see what the future holds for Karth, send me some bucks. Ten would be nice, but send whatever you can. Also, if you find bugs or want to rag on me for something done wrong, let me know; I'll do what I can to fix it. Send your contribution to 3001 Lake East Drive, Apt. 1032, Las Vegas, NV 89117. For correspondence, my GEnie mail address is E.BATZLOFF (original, huh?), or mail a letter to the above real-world address.

Thanks for playing - I hope you enjoy. The final scene can be reached; I've done it a few times. Then again, I know how the thing works.