The Original Darwin's Daybook

Fancy spring-cleaning the attic. That old trunk has been lying right in the way for ages. What will it hold? The hinges creak open and... wow! That's Darwin's daybook in the rough. Well... yes, it's full of splotches and worm-holes that make it something short of rubbish – but then the charm is all there.

You grab it with eagerness, hold it carefully and, "Damn, this is nothing but a phoney doc!"

1. First of all, you'll need CorelDraw. Create a new doc, 150 dpi of resolution and the size you like best, it doesn. Select the Text Tool from the toolbar and draw a rectangle across the window, about 140 mm wide. Copy the following text and paste it into the text box — or type it manually if you feel like typing.

After having been twice driven back by heavy southwestern gales, Her Majesty's ship Beagle, a ten-gun brig, under the command of Captain Fitz Roy, R. N., sailed from Devonport on the 27th of December, 1831. The object of the expedition was to complete the survey of Patagonia and Tierra del Fuego, commenced under Captain King in 1826 to 1830, to survey the shores of Chile, Peru, and of some islands in the Pacific, and to carry a chain of chronometrical measurements round the World. On the 6th of January we reached Teneriffe, but were prevented landing, by fears of our bringing the cholera: the next morning we saw the sun rise behind the rugged outline of the Grand Canary island, and suddenly illuminate the Peak of Teneriffe, whilst the lower parts were veiled in fleecy clouds. This was the first of many delightful days never to be forgotten. On the 16th of January, 1832, we anchored at Porto Praya, in St. Jago, the chief island of the Cape de Verd archipelago.

2. Don't mind if the text won't fit exactly in, we'll fix it later on. Now select Mistral (you find it in Corel's CD as Staccato 222) from the font list drop-down, and give it a 24 pts size, left alignment, without hyphenation. Now you can resize the text box's height, if needed to fit the text in. Finally, click on the Fill Color button on the Fill flyout (see on the right) and give the text the following fill:

Red=61, Green=26, Blue=7.

Copy the text object to the clipboard (Edit>Copy).

After laving been twice driven back by beary southwestern gales, the Hajesty's alip Beagle, a temper bit, ander the command of Captain fitz Ray, R. N., sailed from Department on the 27th of December, 1839. The abject of the capabition was to complete the account of Partment and Teres del Frequ, commenced works Captain King in 1876 to 1830, to sweep the stones of Chile, Pern, and of your islands in the Pacific, and to carry a chain of chronometrical measurements round the World. On the 6th of January of ranked Teneriffs, but were executed landing by flare of our bringing the shooten the next of another the peak of the next most faction, and southerful illuminate the Peak of January island, and subdistly illuminate the Peak of January, which the most faction of most viled in Macry clouds. Wis new the first of many delightful days never to be forgetten. On the 18th of January, 1832, at anchored at Porto Praya, in 5t days, the shift island of the Cape de Vend archipelage.

3. Create a new PHOTO-PAINT doc, 165 by 220 mm, 150 dpi, white background. Select Edit>Paste>As New Object.

Now that you have the text, create a sheet of paper (It is singularly odd that a writing comes in before the paper on which it is supposed to be written). Pick the Rectangle tool from the toolbar and draw a rectangle slightly wider and higher than the text box. A new object is automatically created above the text. Select it in the Object docker and drag it right below the text object. With the rectangle still selected, check the Lock Transparency checkbox in the Object docker and then go to Edit>Fill... In the dialog, select Bitmap fill and click Edit... A second dialog appears. Click Load... and locate the bitmap fill called Paper 01 (note: Windowscompatible name is likely to be paper_01). Click Open, then OK twice.

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4. All very well, but we would expect the writing to be worn out after so long a time. We'll get this effect by adding a little of noise. Deselect Lock Transparency. Select the text object from the Object docker and apply Noise>Median... Adjust radius to 2 pixels and click OK. Repeat for the paper object, but with a radius of 1. This will give text and paper a realistic worn-out look. See below the text before and after noise effect.

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5. Make it splotchy. Select both text and paper object by shift-clicking on either name in the Object docker, and combine them by selecting Object>Combine>Combine Objects Together or right-click (Mac-users, Ctrl-click) and selecting Combine>Combine Objects Together from the drop-down list. Go to Effects>Artistic>Canvas... Click on Load... and pick Cracks from your canvas presets folder. Set the effect as follows:

Transparency: 60%; Emboss: 35%; X and Y Offset: 0%; Stretch to fit checkbox: on.

Click OK.

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6. Select Mask>Paint on Mask. This will activate the POM mode, that is all you draw on the screen will be turned into a mask. Go to

Effects>Artistic>Canvas... and load Bonedry from the preset folder. Set Transparency to 50% and Emboss to 20% and leave the rest unvaried. Click OK.

7. Go to Image>Transform>Threshold... A dialog will appear. Click on Reset and set the Threshold limit to 190. You may also activate the live-update button (the one with the eye in) and move the right triangle right below the istogram to see the effect for yourself. The huger the black areas the more worm-eaten the paper will be. Click OK.



8. Now go to Image>Transform>Posterize... and type 2 in the level field. This will reduce the gray levels to black and white only, as you can see if the eye icon is activated. Click OK.



9. Return from POM mode by selecting Mask>Paint on Mask. You should see a highly irregular mask now.



10. Select Mask>Invert. Select any mask tool in the toolbar and hit delete on the keyboard (or select Edit>Clear). Remove the mask (Mask>Remove). All of selected areas are now turned into random holes.



11. Go to Image>Adjust>Brightness-Contrast-Intensity... Set as follows:

Brightness: -8; Contrast: -10; Intensity: -2.

Click OK. Note: you can skip this passage, or set the filter otherwise, according to your taste.

12. Apply a shadow. Go to Object>Drop Shadow... The drop-shadow dialog appears. Set as follows:

Shadow type: Flat; Direction: 315; Offset: 1.4 mm; Opacity: 85; Feather Width: 4; Feather Direction: Inside; Feather Edges: Linear.

And that's all folks!

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A remark — I tried to curl up the sheet using the Paper Curl effect, but there's apparently no way to give it a less than glossy, resin-coated look. It was clearly meant for greeting cards or stuff like that, I take it.