

Expect, telnet, frozen console.

Source: <http://coding.derkeiler.com/Archive/Tcl/comp.lang.tcl/2004-03/1561.html>

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Hi all.

I have Expect v5.38.0/tcl v8.4 on linux 2.4.20 – Slackware 9.0.

I have a simple task I wish to automate:

telnet into remote host, provide username/password, surrender control to user. This script will eventually be tied into /etc/inittab so that it can be run in multiple consoles. (Another question in its own time.) The script is called with a character and a tty as arguments. The script, quoted below, works but hangs in a specific situation;

```
#!/usr/bin/expect --
log_user 0
set stty_init "sane cs8 -istrip"
spawn -nottycopy -nottyinit telnet $HOST
set tty_spawn_id /dev/[lrange $argv 1 1]
expect login
send "$USER[lrange $argv 0 0]\r"
expect Password
send "$PASSWORD\r"
log_user 1
interact eof
```

For each \$USER on \$HOST there are [a..j] logins, named [\$USERa..\$USERj].

the command:

```
# autologin b tty2
```

logs in to \$HOST as \$USERb. the .profile for said user starts a custom app called 'loe' which presents a login screen in 80x24 ASCII a la ncurses. (NOT ncurses tho...) from this point, I can login, use the app, and all the f-keys, CTRL sequences etc work fine. To back out of a screen, the user presses ESC, which also works fine. However, when the user presses ESC to back out of the main menu, to the login screen, All I/O stops. The cursor disappears, and no further input is accepted. The processes stay active however, and if I 'kill -HUP' the telnet process, expect exits cleanly. If I telnet manually to the host, this problem does not happen at all.

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I have compared the output of 'env' for the telnet, and the expect logins, and they are identical. It is as though the "login" screen that is displayed sends a control character which takes expect out of the "interact" command.

I have, on occasion, been able to avoid this by pressing ESC twice, (or ESC,ENTER) with enough speed that they transmit before the screen redraws. I have also tried removing "eof" from interact, but still the problem persists.

The "set stty_init ..." line is an attempt to solve the problem as was done here: <http://tinyurl.com/ytpse> which met with limited, (though unrepeatable,) success. The line "set tty_spawn_id" was yet another attempt to fix the problem, again unsuccessfully. (Now I leave it as an artifact for adding the aforementioned virtual terminal support.)

I now turn to the sages at c.l.t in hopes that someone has seen this before, or knows where to turn.

One last thing: I have been in contact with tier 1 support for the 'loe' people, and they were unable/unwilling to furnish further details on the output of their login screen.

Thanks for your help,
Gavin McDonald.