

# Adventure Lantern

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Broken Sword 4: The Angel of Death  
Mr. Smoozles Goes Nutso  
The Exchange Student – Episode 1: First Day in Sweden  
The Shivan

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**Halloween  
Edition**



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# Editorial

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Several years ago, in an adequately messy university dorm room. The walls are covered with posters. Countless images from video games, geeky movies, and comic books. Clearly, the most popular kid on campus does not live here.

Books are scattered across the desk in front of the window. Both of the bunked beds are unmade. The computer is on standby, almost certainly with some kind of video game in the CD drive. The TV and the PlayStation 2 are turned off, even though it is not quite 3:00 AM yet.

I am standing in front of the only mirror in the room, putting on my costume. It is nothing exceptional, but it does look sufficiently spooky. I am wearing a black suit with a white shirt and a red tie along with a red devil mask and demon-claw gloves to match. As I fix my tie for the last time, I am quite proud of the effect: The Devil in a fancy suit.

In just a few minutes, my roommate and a couple of other friends are ready to go as well. But no, we are not headed to some fraternity party. We are not going into the woods for a twisted cult ritual either. We have a much different mission.

It is Halloween. Many children must be wandering their neighborhoods and asking for candy right about now. Of course at a college campus, you don't get to experience much of that. Much too old for trick-or-treating, the students are perhaps partying, studying for a midterm, trying to finish up a pesky paper, or just spending a calm evening in their apartments or dorm rooms. Since nobody is going around the campus asking for candy, we have decided to take it upon ourselves to distribute however much we could afford on our meager student budgets.

Each of us is carrying bags of candy as we head towards the central areas of the campus. We are just about the only ones dressed up for Halloween. Students who wouldn't care to look at us twice any other day are awfully curious about our outfits.

We go into the cafeteria, the library, the study halls, and every other place we can imagine to track down students. Most of them are extremely surprised as we offer them free candy. Perhaps they are wondering who these freaks are. A few are not willing to trust us enough to actually take the candy. Of course it is hard to blame them. Haven't we been all advised not to accept candy from strangers? And they can't even see our faces. But many students are more than happy to join in the fun.





After a while, we are getting more and more comfortable in our costumes. Casually stepping into computer labs, study rooms, and the most quiet corners of the library, we startle a few unsuspecting students. But before long, we deplete our precious supply of candy along with about four rolls of film.

After wasting some more time shopping at the local grocery store in our costumes, we head back towards our dorm rooms. There is an undeniable feeling of exhilaration in the group. We know that hundreds of students were entertained by our simple excursion. And not a single one of them knows who we really are. None of them has seen our faces. It is a strange feeling of satisfaction. We already can't wait to see how the pictures will turn out.

We know this will be the beginning of a tradition. Every year we spend on the campus, we will look forward to Halloween so we can don our costumes and pass out candy again. We give it a simple unpretentious name: Reverse trick-or-treating.

We do manage to keep up the tradition for three years. But after I graduate and move away to a different city, the connection is lost. The costume now sits somewhere in the closet, never worn in several years. The geeky posters no longer decorate the rooms in my apartment. And it sure has been a long time since I took a midterm or turned in a college paper. The memory of the fun we had however, will always remain.

Who knows, perhaps a couple of you out there have also done something similar. Perhaps you are already planning to visit a library, school campus, or some other public area this year and try your hand in reverse trick-or-treating. Surely my old friends will not be able to join me. But nevertheless, perhaps I'll buy a few bags of candy and make sure the mask and the gloves still fit.

As you delve into Adventure Lantern's first special Halloween edition, we hope you are getting to enjoy the season no matter whichever part of the world you live. We hope you'll have fun reading our reviews on a number of new adventure game releases along with archived reviews, walkthroughs, and articles that have been included in conjunction with this month's horror theme.

Until next month...

-Ugur Sener







## News

Compiled by Gnome, Erdalion, and Ugur Sener



### **Nancy Drew: The Creature of Kapu Cave released**

Her Interactive has released the latest title in the Nancy Drew series. No less than the fifteenth installment in the long-running Nancy Drew series, The Creature of Kapu Cave takes players to Hawaii. This time around, Nancy is a research assistant under Dr. Quigley Kim. Upon arriving on the island however, she discovers that the doctor has gone missing. Villagers speak of the awakening of the legendary Kāne 'Ōkāla. As usual, it will be up to Nancy to uncover the mystery. You can take a trip to the Her Interactive Web site at [www.HerInteractive.com](http://www.HerInteractive.com) to find out more about the game. Be sure to catch our November issue for our review.

### **EVIDENCE: The Last Ritual has shipped**

The sequel to the successful adventure game MISSING is finally here. EVIDENCE: The Last Ritual has gone gold and shipped to retail stores. You will get to assume the role of an investigator as you piece together clues you will receive through e-mail and solve puzzles with the help of the Internet. The game might already be available at your local video game store as you read this!



### **Secret Files: Tunguska ships to retail stores in North America**

For those of us here in the U.S. that have not yet had a chance to play the game, Secret Files: Tunguska ships to retail outlets in North America late in October. Inspired by the unexplained Tunguska phenomenon that dates back to 1908, Secret Files tells the story of Nina who is on a journey to locate her missing father.

### **Sherlock Holmes: The Awakened**

Sherlock has always been the most popular opium addicted adventure game character. And apparently he's back for another game. Again. Behold: "Sherlock Holmes: The Awakened" by Frogwares, the people behind 80 Days and – amazingly – more Sherlock Holmes games, that will sooner or later hit the stores. Have a look at the official site here: [www.sherlockholmes-thegame.com](http://www.sherlockholmes-thegame.com).



**Belief & Betrayal gets an official site**

The upcoming adventure game Belief & Betrayal has a new official Web site available at

[www.beliefandbetrayal-game.com](http://www.beliefandbetrayal-game.com). Currently under development by Artematica, Belief & Betrayal tell the story of the journalist Jonathan Danter. The journalist receives a phone call explaining that his uncle has been found dead. But there is one curious detail:

Jonathan's uncle was thought to have died ten years ago. Before long, events escalate and Jonathan finds himself in the middle of an adventure that will take him all over Europe. Take a look at the Web site for more information as the game is getting ready for a 2007 release.

**Touch Detective gets an official Web site**

The upcoming DS adventure Touch Detective now has its own website and a released date for the U.S, October 2006.

Described as "a mystery adventure game with quirky characters, witty dialogue, and

surprises around every corner" and stars the young girl Mackenzie who "has inherited her family's business: a renowned detective agency. However she is lacking in experience and self-confidence." The website offers information on the game's characters and general information on the game itself, as well as several themed wallpapers. The official Touch Detective website can be found at:

[www.atlus.com/touchdetective](http://www.atlus.com/touchdetective).

**House of Tales launches new Web site**

House of Tales, the development studio behind the highly successful adventure game The Moment of Silence has launched a new Web site available at

[www.house-of-tales.com](http://www.house-of-tales.com). The Web site features

new pages dedicated to House of Tales games and the development team promises updates on their current project, Overclocked. The upcoming psycho-thriller Overclocked will tell the story of psychiatrist David

**Raven's Hollow**

Indie developer Hidden Sanctum have just announced their new horror adventure game "Raven's Hollow", that is scheduled for release sometime in 2007. Well, make that late 2007. Raven's Hollow will be a rather high-res first person game set in Lovecraftian New England during the early 19th century, filled with your typical, but always fun,

"rumors of restless spirits, strange disappearances, and horrific suffering abound". Seems interesting... Have a look at

[www.hiddensanctum.com/RavensHollow/RavensHollow.html](http://www.hiddensanctum.com/RavensHollow/RavensHollow.html).





### **xii games is preparing something...**

...and most probably it will be another great freeware adventure, in the vein of the visually impressive and innovative "Anna", and the hilarious and gothy "Spooks". Just have a look around [xiigames.com](http://xiigames.com). Try to locate and fully understand the meaning of the following quote: "I've been quiet lately, because I've been busy working away at xii game #3. And if I do say so myself, it's coming together pretty well".

### **First Gray Matter fansites have been launched**

For all of you looking to find out more about Gray Matter, two fansites have already been launched. Owned by Nico Sels, Cort-X (<http://cort-x.feheel.net>) features news updates as well as general information about the game. The second site, operated by Karbous, also offers some information about the upcoming game along with some artwork. This Czech Web site is available at: <http://GrayMatter.Mysteria.cz>.

And a couple of non-adventure updates to round up this month's news section:

### **Family Guy Video Game released**

2K games has announced that their video game based on the highly popular Family Guy TV series has been released. Featuring the entire cast of characters from the TV show, the Family Guy video game gives players a chance to experience Quahog firsthand. While Peter tries to stop Mr. Belvedere from taking over the world, the evil genius Stewie will have to face his half-brother Bertram. Brian on the other hand will have to find a way to escape prison and clear his name... The game is available on the Xbox and PlayStation 2 systems.



### **GameTap Halloween release**

With Halloween just around the corner, a number of games with a theme well-suited for the season are available on GameTap. The release includes Silent Hill 2: Restless Dreams, which contains the original version of the game as well as the extra features added to the PC version. In addition, GameTap players will have a chance to take a look at the first

three Castlevania games along with Contra and Super C. Take a trip to [www.GameTap.com](http://www.GameTap.com) to find out more information.





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## Interview with Mike Adams on Murder on the Orient Express

Conducted by Ugur Sener

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*On a journey from Istanbul to Paris, renowned detective Hercule Poirot finds himself on board the Orient Express. A colorful assortment of passengers accompanies the detective on his journey through Europe. From the reserved English governess Miss Debenham to the strong willed Russian grande dame Princesse Dragomiroff, the train carries a number of colorful passengers with greatly varied backgrounds.*



*The journey starts fairly uneventfully, Poirot enjoying the company of his friend M. Bouc who is a director of Compagnie Internationale des Wagons Lits, the company that owns the train. Yet sometime into the trip, Poirot is approached by one of the passengers to take on a case. Mr. Samuel Edward Ratchett, the wealthy American who traveling around the world, feels that he is in grave danger. Ratchett asks Poirot for any protection the detective might be able to offer, but Belgian detective turns down the case.*

*The following morning, Ratchett is found dead in his compartment. M. Bouc enlists the detective's help in identifying the murderer. But the task will not be easy. There are many curious details about the murder that don't quite seem to fit together. The list of potential suspects is long. Cut off from any means of verifying the passenger's backgrounds and conducting the investigation in a proper manner, Poirot has to rely on his observation and deductive reasoning skills alone to find the truth.*



*Without a doubt among the best-known Agatha Christie novels, Murder on the Orient Express can most certainly deliver an enjoyable reading experience to anyone who enjoys detective novels. The interesting ensemble of characters and Poirot's ever-fascinating detective skills alone would have made Murder on the Orient Express an entertaining read. But the novel is perhaps best known for its surprise ending.*

*Originally published in 1933, Murder on the Orient Express has two movie adaptations released in 1974 and 2001. In November 2006, adventure gamers will also have a chance to experience the famous novel as a video game. As the official release draws ever closer, we conducted an interview with the game's producer, Mike Adams, to gain some insight into the adventure game adaptation*







*of Murder on the Orient Express. Mike kindly gave us a lot of good information about various aspects of the game. Without further ado, here's the interview:*

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**[Adventure Lantern]:** For those who may not be familiar with the original novel, can you describe the overall premise of the game?

**[Mike Adams]:** Well, you play a new character not found in the novel, Antoinette Marceau. Antoinette works for the train company, and is given an assignment to escort famous Belgian detective Hercule Poirot to his home in England.

Shortly after departing, you will find yourself entangled in a murder investigation, involving everyone aboard the train.

**[AL]:** At what point during the storyline will the game actually begin? Will players become involved with the case right after Samuel Edward Ratchett is found dead?

**[MA]:** The game begins before you even board the train. You will find yourself maneuvering your way through a busy Turkish market, which is where you will meet many of the characters who will be directly involved in the murderous storyline aboard the train.

**[AL]:** Can you describe the character players will be controlling? Who is Antoniette Marceau? How will she become involved with the murder and end up helping Hercule Poirot?

**[MA]:** The player character is indeed Antoinette Marceau. She is an amateur sleuth who has admired Hercule Poirot's work for years, and the two become quick friends as they board the train. Antoinette will aid Poirot in the murder investigation after an unfortunate event falls upon the famous detective.

**[AL]:** How was the structure of the storyline altered for the game? What kind of surprises should players expect to encounter?

**[MA]:** As with *And Then There Were None*, a new player character was introduced, altering the storyline quite significantly, while still remaining true to Agatha Christie's novel. If you are familiar with the novel, you will find the surprises during the game quite satisfying. I really don't want to give too much away, but there are new environments to explore not found in the novel, which include a





mountain cabin and a mine among others, all of which will add their share of surprises to the game.

**[AL]: What kind of a role will prominent characters from the novel play? How do you envision the interaction between Antoniette and the main characters to be like? Can we still expect Hercule Poirot, Bouc, and Dr. Constantine to play pivotal roles?**



**[MA]:** As in the novel, the prominent characters will all become suspects in the murder, giving the player the opportunity to interrogate each and every passenger aboard the train. Hercule Poirot will absolutely play a pivotal role throughout the game, guiding you to find the evidence you need to solve this crime. Dr Constantine also plays a major role, while Bouc will only play a minor role in the game.

**[AL]: What can you tell us about the potential suspects? Will the game feature any that were not part of the original novel?**

**[MA]:** The suspects will mirror those in the novel with the addition of a few others, specifically a few members of the train staff.

**[AL]: How will players actually go about conducting the investigation? What kind of techniques will have to be employed?**

**[MA]:** A lot of detective work. You will have to interrogate, finger print, analyze documents including collecting everyone's passports. You will not leave any stones unturned during your investigation, even as it leads you to the snowy outdoors.



**[AL]: In your previous game, there were tasks that could be completed which added to the depth of the story. However, you could move on to the next chapter even if you had not completed these tasks. Are you planning to continue this trend in the latest game?**

**[MA]:** There will be tasks that will need to be completed prior to advancing in the game. A slight change from our first title in the series.

**[AL]: What kind of players would you expect to get the most out of Murder on the Orient Express? Can players who are not familiar with the novel expect to enjoy the game?**





**[MA]:** Absolutely. Those who *have not* read the novel need not worry. As with our first Agatha Christie game, *And Then There Were None*, you will find that *Agatha Christie: Murder on the Orient Express* will tell you the entire story from beginning to end. There are also many subtle changes that have been made while designing the game, giving consideration to those who have already read the novel. It will be a satisfying experience for everyone.

**[AL]: Do you have any plans to release future titles based on Agatha Christie novels?**

**[MA]:** Yes we do. We are slated to begin production on our next title very shortly. Stay tuned!

**[AL]: What is the expected release date for *Murder on the Orient Express*?**



**[MA]:** Expect to see *Agatha Christie: Murder On The Orient Express* on shelves sometime in November. Just in time for Christmas !

**[AL]: Is there anything else you would like to share with our readers?**

This is truly a fantastic game, with an amazing storyline, huge cast of characters, first class voice over talent, state of the art cinematics, wonderfully detailed environments, and an orchestral musical score that matches that of a major motion picture. We are all so very proud of this game and can't wait to share it with everyone.

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*Adventure Lantern thanks Mike Adams for providing us information about the video game adaptation of *Murder on the Orient Express*. We would also like to thank Mary Leddy for facilitating the interview.*

*Based on the information available about the game *Murder on the Orient Express* most certainly sounds interesting. Including a new character, adding new locations, and altering certain aspects of the storyline while staying true to the spirit of the original novel is most certainly a tall order. However, AWE Games has already delivered a successful adventure game based on Agatha Christie's *And Then There Were None*. With *Murder on the Orient Express*, AWE Games and The Adventure Company could certainly deliver an entertaining gaming experience. It should be interesting to see how the investigation unfolds in the video game adaptation.*

*If you want to obtain more information about the game, visit the official Web site at [www.AgathaChristieGame.com](http://www.AgathaChristieGame.com).*





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## Interview with Bill Fisher of WRF Studios

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Conducted by Wendy Nellius

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*This year, I got a chance to play and review an independent game called Last Half of Darkness: Shadows of the Servants. The game has had quite a lot of success over the years. I was really impressed by just how good the game was. It made me want to make a game myself. I can do it! Oh.....but.....wait.....that would require some kind of talent, right? Ah, such is life. I think I'll leave that to someone like Bill who obviously knows what he's doing. At the time of my review, I asked Bill if he had anything new we could look forward to.*

*His answer was: "I am playing around with a few ideas and technology on another game... but nothing worth mentioning yet since I want my next game to be scarier than LHoD: Shadows of the Servants".*

*Hmmm....Bill's keeping his cards close to his chest. Is there a way to get him to crack? Perhaps alcohol? Given the stories he writes, scare tactics aren't going to work well. Thankfully, a short time later he spilled the beans about his latest project: "Last Half of Darkness: Beyond the Spirit's Eye".*

*A deserted town.....a black jewel protected by evil....Vampires??? My interest has been more than peaked and I thought it was high time we got to know a little more about Bill.*

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**[Adventure Lantern]: Let's start off with something obvious. Can you please tell us a little bit about yourself and WRF Studios?**

**[Bill Fisher]:** My name is Bill (William R Fisher III Studios) and I developed the original "Last Half of Darkness" almost 17 years ago in 1989. The original contained only 16 colors, approximately 40 locations and was released primarily as Shareware. As technology evolved, so did my interest in making a scarier adventure experience. And with that, "Shadows of the Servants" was born in 2005.



**[AL]: What made you decide to try your hand at game developing?**

**[BF]:** My first computer was the Radio Shack MC-10 and I just began playing around with the BASIC language then started programming very simple text adventures in high school. I continued to improve gameplay and graphics on newer computers throughout the years until something was developed worthy of distribution.

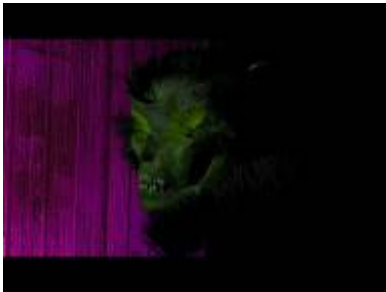






**[AL]: What do you think is the most difficult part of being an independent developer these days?**

**[BF]:** Basically it all comes down to resources. As an independent my resources are somewhat limited and I continuously find myself having to balance certain features, animations or areas due to the fact that there are only so many hours in the day.



**[AL]: Last Half of Darkness: Shadows of the Servants (LHoD: SotS) has gained quite a following and continues to spark interest in the adventure gaming community. Do you think adventure gaming websites are an important aid to the independent developer?**

**[BF]:** Absolutely. Adventure websites provide a great way of informing the public on projects they might not otherwise ever hear about. Of course the same is true for independent movies which I am a fan of too. Especially horror (though that's probably no surprise huh?)

**[AL]: For the gamers out there who have not had a chance to play LHoD: SotS, can you please give a brief summary of the storyline?**

**[BF]:** A dark spirit, spawned through the death of a cursed monkey, has governed the deserted New Orleans estate of the late Dr. Muretta and her family for over fifty years. The ancient voices of the black world exist here among the ashes of the dead, where a new story is born and the graves of a thousand monkeys set the eerie backdrop for a terrifying exploration into terror. The latest installment to "The Last Half of Darkness" story, the new title offers a spine-tingling story of terror, mysterious puzzles and bizarre imagery. Summoned to a world of voodoo and black magic, the player must explore a ghostly New Orleans estate and local town to solve the riddles of the darkness left behind.

**[AL]: How did you come up with the idea for the storyline in LHoD: SotS?**

**[BF]:** It was on my vacation to the uncharted section of the Brazil rain forest where I first heard the legend of the dark monkeys from the locals....just kidding! Actually the story simply evolved through several weeks of imaginative writing and rewriting.

**[AL]: I can honestly say I would not want to meet up with any of your characters in a dark alley.....or a fully lit one either. And, I'll never look at monkeys the same way again. Was your original intention always to scare the "you know what" out of us?**

**[BF]:** I definitely wanted to make "Shadows" a little scarier than the original story





(1989 version). Hopefully, I succeeded.

**[AL]: I, being quite the chicken, played with all the lights on and I still jumped out of my skin. Do you think most people took your advice to play in darkness or are there more chickens out there like me?**



**[BF]:** Well, I hope people play it as suggested. In fact I make my nephew (who is 14) beta test my games completely alone in a dark room late at night. Sometimes I catch him turning the sound down because he feels something freaky is about to happen. I wonder if anyone else does this?

**[AL]: LHoD: SotS makes excellent use of ambient sounds, music, or lack of music to create the mood. It was right on target in making the hair on the back of the neck stand up. Was it difficult to find just the right balance?**

**[BF]:** The "Less is More" theory seems to work here. More music was actually designed but was not used to create a slightly creepier feel.

**[AL]: You've been tweaking LHoD: SotS for quite a while now. At this point with the latest release, is there anything you would still want to change?**

**[BF]:** No. I don't think I will touch "Shadows" anymore. Anything else I want to add, I will reveal it in a new chapter. Such as "Beyond the Spirit's Eye".



**[AL]: There is definitely a buzz of anticipation on the game forums about "Beyond the Spirit's Eye". Can you start us off by giving us the premise of the story?**

**[BF]:** Can't answer this one yet. (I don't want to say much yet as far as the story is concerned since I am continually tweaking the story.)

**[AL]: Will we start off in the same town as LHoD: SotS? And, will it be played from the 1st person perspective?**

**[BF]:** It will be 1st person and it will be in an entirely new location.

**[AL]: What made you decide to take your story in the vampire direction? Is it related to the story in "The Lost City of Vampires" which you feature on your website as an RPG?**

**[BF]:** Not entirely a new direction. (Remember the vampiric monkeys who attacked Jaja?) No it is not related to "Lost City"





**[AL]: Will "Beyond the Spirit's Eye" maintain the same interface style as Shadows?**

**[BF]:** Yes. I think previous players of "Shadows" would not want me to change that.



**[AL]: Are you planning on scaring us yet again?**

Absolutely.

**[AL]: What can we expect to be different in "Beyond the Spirit's Eye"?**

**[BF]:** No maze...but other than that it's really cut from the same mold as "Shadows". I think previous player of "Shadows" enjoyed the balance of mechanical, cryptic poetry, and inventory puzzles, so I don't want to change much in that way. Of course since it's a new chapter, it will involve new puzzles, characters and storyline.

**[AL]: The trailer looks exciting! Quite Creepy. Will you be maintaining the same style of graphics in "Beyond the Spirit's Eye"? What will be improved for the new game?**

**[BF]:** The graphics are slightly improved for this version.

**[AL]: Will there be a lot of different characters in the game? Will we be able to interact with them?**

**[BF]:** I'm shooting for a very similar interactive feel to "Shadows" in this respect.

**[AL]: Shadows started off with a child's voice asking a question. A child's voice is also in the trailer. Is the child significant to the story or is this just to give you that "Children of the Corn" feeling?**

**[BF]:** I think it is just to evoke the innocence against evil feeling. That contrast seems to provide a good creepy story.



**[AL]: Another enjoyable feature of LHoD: SotS is the puzzles. What I loved the most was really having to pay attention and even taking notes. You don't get everything handed to you on a silver plate. And, the puzzles were different from the normal fare. Having to play a boardwalk style cups game was a wonderful addition. What kinds of puzzles can we expect to play in Beyond the**





## Spirit's Eye?

**[BF]:** Similar yet different (If that makes sense?) This is the hardest aspect of designing the new chapter. I think my players enjoyed the balance between different puzzle types in "Shadows of the Servants" and I want to provide the same experience in "Beyond the Spirit's Eye"

**[AL]:** I know that you don't like to give out release dates way ahead, but I've seen 2007 on the various gaming sites. Could you at least narrow us down to 1st or 2nd half? Pretty please!!!!



**[BF]:** Although the "Last Half" seems more fitting due to the games name - I'm shooting for the "First Half".

**[AL]:** Is there anything else you'd like to share with our readers about "Beyond the Spirit's Eye"?

**[BF]:** "Beyond the Spirit's Eye" is another chapter in the twisted dark story of the "Last Half of Darkness" that should provide the player an exciting and enjoyable experience in the world of Adventure gaming.

**[AL]:** One final question. Do you think there is a brighter future out there for adventure games? And, how much of a role do you think Independent games will play?

**[BF]:** I think there will always be a future for Adventure games. Although I enjoy all types of games, it is so nice to have the option to sit down and relax with an interesting adventure game without the frustration of timed or action sequences.

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*Adventure Lantern thanks Bill for taking time out of his busy developing schedule to talk with us. It is with great anticipation that we await his newest release. Get ready to have some medical bills.....we'll be hitting our heads on the ceiling once again.*

*Be sure to check out Bill's website: [www.lasthalfofdarkness.com](http://www.lasthalfofdarkness.com) You can order Last Half of Darkness: Shadows of the Servants here and also play a free online version. Other great games can be found there as well.*

*More information and the trailer of Beyond the Spirit's Eye can be found at: [www.lasthalfofdarkness.com/beyond](http://www.lasthalfofdarkness.com/beyond)*







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# Top Ten Scariest Games of All Time

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Written by Randy Sluganski

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*When I heard we were going to dedicate the October issue to Scary horror related games, I knew it would be a struggle for me. My history of horror/scary games consists of Last Half of Darkness: Shadows of the Servants and Phantasmagoria. Considering I already reviewed Last Half of Darkness and Phantasmagoria was a loaner way back when, I was going to need a good source to help make my choice. A memory lingered in the recesses of my clouded brain of an article I once read.....somewhere.....on scary games.*

*After searching a while, I hit pay dirt. The article I remembered was written by the esteemed Randy Sluganski over at JustAdventure ([www.JustAdventure.com](http://www.JustAdventure.com)). I re-read the article and it was just what I needed to make my choice (Blackstone Chronicles). Now, Randy's a pretty tough guy. You'd know that if you've ever read any of his articles. But, would a game that creeped him out end up giving me nightmares for the next 5 years?? I will say that it made a very deep and dark impression on me and I have a bad feeling that mark is going to stay for quite a while.*

*Randy has graciously given Adventure Lantern permission to reprint his article in this issue. Thank you for the excellent article, Randy!*

Wendy Nellius

*So, without further ado.....*

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What is horror? This is a question that has been the subject of voluminous tomes and endless documentaries and editorials. Horror is the psychological terror of Stephen King and the gruesome carnage of Clive Barker. Horror is the loneliness of Frankenstein's monster and the sadism of Freddy Krueger. Horror is a prison system that allows murderers to go free and imprisons marijuana smokers. For the purposes of the subject of this article, let's keep it simple--horror it that which scares you.

Unfortunately, even the best of computer games have been unable to evoke this seemingly simple emotional response on a sustained basis. Too many games go for the cheap, quick approach (i.e., the dogs bursting through the window in *Resident Evil*) rather than attempting to sustain and build upon a feeling of dread. Interactive adventure games are extremely immersive and time-consuming. An average of 30 to 50 hours may be consumed playing one game, as compared to an average movie length of two hours and an average of 8 to 10 hours to read a book. Computer horror also suffers in that the bond with that game is broken and





must be reestablished every time that game is restarted. A good horror film is the equivalent of a two-hour roller coaster ride; a good horror game must whisper for your return to the monitor, regardless of the time of day. Yet the gaming medium has failed, with few exceptions, to elicit a strong emotional response. Once the industry begins to mature and realize that a great script should come before graphics and bloodshed, then, and only then, will computer games attain the level of respect that movies and books have obtained.

As it stands now, it is rare for a "game" to reach that level of emotional involvement.

The following ten games all have something in common. Be it an underlying Lovecraftian theme, computer technology gone mad, a plot driven by psychological horror or a story penned by a well-known horror author and translated to computer imagery. They have all transcended the limitations of the genre and are most assuredly games you should not play with the lights out.

## 10. Alone in the Dark

**Publisher: I-Motion**

The granddaddy of action/adventure games. It has lost a little of its luster over the years, but it still has the power to emotionally involve first-time players. The plot did not always make sense, but what Lovecraftian tale ever did? The French-spawned *Alone in the Dark* was the first game to involve the player in an immersive cinematic gaming experience. Camera angles and a 3D graphics engine heightened the suspense as you explored Decerto, a creepy old mansion rumored to be cursed. The previous owner has taken his own life, and you, as Edward Carnby, Supernatural Private Eye, have been hired to investigate a mysterious presence in the house.



What are those strange lights inside the house at night? What could account for the eerie noises you hear each time you approach the estate? What is Decerto's terrible secret? You are about to find out, for once you enter through Decerto's front door, the only exit is through hell.

Two excellent sequels followed (and a third will be released next year!), but none have yet matched the suspense of the first outing. An honored member of the Just Adventure Hall of Fame ([www.JustAdventure.com/Reviews](http://www.JustAdventure.com/Reviews)), *Alone in the Dark* is one game that must be played by every horror fan.

**[Editorial Note:** That third sequel Randy mentioned has been already released in 2001 and it is called *Alone in the Dark: The New Nightmare*. But a newer game, the fifth one in the series, is currently in the works.]





## 9. The Lurking Horror

**Publisher: Infocom**

**Release Date: 1987**



Proof positive that the potent combination of written word and vivid imagination are and always will be the best source of horror. Written by Dan Lebling, co-author of *Zork I* through *III* and *Enchanter* and author of *Starcross* and *Suspect*, *The Lurking Horror* is text adventure at its best. No small feat when one considers the impressive library of Infocom games.

*The Lurking Horror* casts you as a student at G.U.E. Tech. You have braved a snowstorm to get to the Computer Center to finish a class assignment. Beautiful snowflakes have gathered into a raging blizzard, and you are now trapped for the night in this complex of buildings. Did I forget to mention that G.U.E. Tech has the highest student suicide rate in the country? That large, underground tunnels connect most of the buildings and that several student deaths have been attributed to nocturnal explorations in the tunnels? That the tunnels are your only route to freedom?!

*The Lurking Horror* was the first of many computer games to be loosely built around Lovecraftian themes (*Shadow of the Comet* and, of course, *Alone in the Dark* being two other notable examples). That this game is still played and discussed almost 13 years after its release is an example of the ongoing influence the Infocom classics have had, and still have to this day, on the industry.

## 8. Jack the Ripper

**Developer: GameTek**

**Release Date: 1995**



A reconstruction of the actual murder locations and suspected haunts of Jack the Ripper. Long-lost photographs and blueprints authentically recreate the eerie ambiance of Whitechapel in 1888--Victorian London. Using the actual clues and evidence assembled by Scotland Yard, you can interview over 100 real people and suspects as you not only attempt to discover the Ripper's identity, but also try to stop him before he disembowels again.

Short on graphics and long on text, the recreation of actual photographs and maps succeeds in immersing the player into the heat and the horror of this snapshot of history. Acting as an amateur Sherlock Holmes, the advantage of hindsight actually increases the tension as you slowly realize that some of the people you are questioning will soon be lifeless murder victims and you will find yourself whispering--"This is not a game."



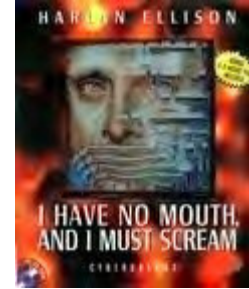


## 7. I Have No Mouth and I Must Scream

**Publisher:** Cyberdreams

**Release Date:** 1995

Have you ever wondered what it would be like to be a Nazi doctor performing unethical operations on unwilling patients? I hope not, but this is a game that will force you into that uncomfortable position.



Based on a Harlan Ellison short story of the same name, *I Have No Mouth and I Must Scream* is one of the ten most-reprinted stories in the English language. You must assume the roles of five very different characters as you are plunged into their tortured and hidden pasts. Five souls who are trapped in the depths of an insane computer known as AM--as in I AM. A deranged AM has carried out the Prime Directive and started the Final War. These last five damned souls alive have been imprisoned in AM's underground domain for 109 years. Now they must outwit their captor in one last attempt to escape. But even if they do escape, the Earth was destroyed in the Final War. Or is that merely another one of AM's lies?

Featuring adult-oriented themes and provocative psychological plotlines, *I Have No Mouth and I Must Scream* is not for those timid few who demand a positive conclusion to their gaming experience. There is no winning in *Mouth*, only ways to lose either heroically, at the peak of one's humanity, or ignominiously--in a selfish, cowardly frightened manner. A must-play for the adventure gamer who demands intellectual confrontation.

## 6. The Blackstone Chronicles

**Developer:** Legend Entertainment

**Publisher:** Red Orb

**Release Date:** 1998

Psychological horror at its very best. Your son has been kidnapped by your deceased, despotic father and is hidden somewhere in the dank bowels of the shuttered Blackstone mental asylum. Tortured spirits from the asylum's bloody past are your guide as their disembodied voices direct you through room after room haunted by the unspeakable horrors visited upon their former occupants. Ancient torture devices share their shameful secrets as they simultaneously invite you to experience their misery.



This is a game that subtly plays upon your senses. Written by famous adventure game author Bob Bates, *The Blackstone Chronicles* breaks all of the rules of traditional computer gaming. There are no other characters with whom to interact, no shocking revelations or plot twists. You know what to expect every step of the way, and *The Blackstone Chronicles* does not disappoint. All the more testament to the power of solid writing in computer games.







Originally planned as a continuing series of games and add-ons, it looks as though Blackstone has forever closed its doors. That is a shame, for not only did *The Blackstone Chronicles* set new standards in computer horror but it also paved the way for other authors to hopefully enter the burgeoning field of computer horror.

### 5. Bad Day on the Midway

**Developer:** Inscape

**Release Date:** 1995

This is not so much a horror game as it is a bizarre, surrealistic fantasy world populated by characters who would do David Lynch proud. Lottie the Human Log, Dagmar the Dog Woman, the IRS Man and Oscar the Racing Rat are but a few of the warped personalities dwelling about the Midway.



*Bad Day on the Midway* focuses on character development and the life stories of these misbegotten creatures. We can choose who we wish to inhabit as we meet with other characters and examine the various midway exhibits. You can play as the same character for the entire game or "jump" into another character's body and experience the world from a different point of view. Each character has a specific role to play toward solving a twisted mystery of murder and intrigue, but the outcome of the story is flexible and varies as you discover new storylines and subplots. This game gets under your skin and causes major discomfort.

Inscape described *Midway* as an anti-game in that it focused on the darkness of its characters in order to exploit the negative or darker sides of their personalities. Survival is the only obvious goal of this game, and the reward for surviving is the ability to leave this doomed whirlpool of pain and depravity. Inscape's creative process was, and still is years later, light years ahead of what the computer field is ready to accept.

### 4. Sanitarium

**Developer:** DreamForge

**Release Date:** 1998

Part allegory, part symbolism, *Sanitarium* is one of those games that, like the movie *The Sixth Sense*, you cannot say too much about for fear of revealing the plot twists. A story that begins as a B-movie cliché--Who am I? How did I get here?--slowly evolves into a horrifying story of self-discovery. You will embark on a surreal journey through grotesque yet strangely familiar environments populated by freakish denizens. The strange becomes familiar and the familiar strange as you slowly reconstruct your past.





*Sanitarium* is a story that propels you forward to piece together the unsettling answer to who you are and how you came to be an occupant of the sanitarium. A nice, tidy finish removes some of the game's edge, but overall *Sanitarium* is a well-constructed game that entices you to empathize with its main character.

### 3. System Shock 2

Developer: Looking Glass

Release Date: 1999



The genres collide! Adventure meets action; RPG meets first-person shooter ... and the world still spins on its axis. *System Shock 2* is the only game in this revered group to successfully combine not only all of the genres but also to utilize 3D sound and music to create the total horror experience.

In the original *System Shock*, we battled SHODAN--a computer with a God complex--and as with any sequel worth its salt, SHODAN is back--and of course this time she is stronger, smarter, and has brought along some help. The first *System Shock* is widely considered to be a minor classic that was limited by the technology of the time. Well, technology has finally caught up, and *System Shock 2* exploits it to the fullest. 3D sound swells from the appropriate speakers, be it during combat or as you pass a whining piece of machinery that emanates only from the left speaker and is hauntingly sparse when traveling down the deserted ship corridors. Your efforts to hack a door lock will quicken as you hear footsteps shuffling from behind. The plot is basic sci-fi/horror. After attempting to contact an unknown planet, your space ship is attacked. When you awaken amid the ship's ruins, the entire crew seems to be dead or missing. You must now explore the deserted hull for clues. Sometimes simple is best.

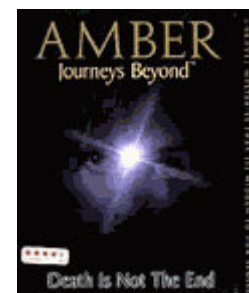
Bodies swaying from nooses, a strange noise above that you cannot identify, ghostly apparitions reconstructing their death throes--these and much, much more contribute to your plight. Trapped on a spaceship billions of miles from earth with a mass murderer on the loose. Not to be played in the dark.

### 2. Amber Journeys Beyond

Developed by: Hue Forest

Release Date: 1996

*Amber* is without a doubt the least-played but most widely known horror game ever released. Created by a husband-and-wife team, Frank and Susan Wimmer, *Amber* is one game that should be experienced by all true fans of the horror/adventure genre.



Your friend Roxy has been conducting paranormal tracking experiments and has contacted you for help. Upon finding her unconscious, you explore the old Victorian house she has been monitoring and discover a headpiece that allows you to experience in-depth encounters with the supernatural. You will take an



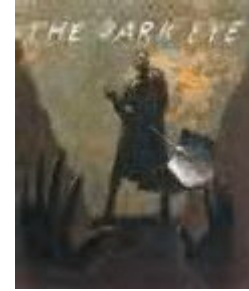


unprecedented journey into the world beyond as you unlock the mysteries of the past and discover the secrets of life after death by possessing the spirits of dead souls still not at peace with their situation.

If the thought of inhabiting the spirit of a dead child searching for his beloved teddy bear gives you a chill, then this is the game for you. Play *Amber* with the lights out, and snatches of the game will haunt your memory for months.

### 1. The Dark Eye

Developer: Inscape  
Release Date: 1995



Inspired by the works of Edgar Allen Poe, *The Dark Eye* is a descent into the madness and mayhem of one man's twisted world. More of an experience than a game as you explore the minds of murderers, madmen and their terrified victims as almost every animate and inanimate object you touch draws you deeper into new levels of intrigue and horror. And what is it precisely that instigates this journey? A sniff of paint thinner.

The incredible 3D animated stop-motion characters that populate the multiple story paths are so lifelike and quirky that you can easily imagine them having a separate life outside of this game. Four separate stories cross paths numerous times and are eventually resolved in one satisfying, yet troubling, conclusion. *The Dark Eye* features the voice of legendary author William S. Burroughs and features memorable characters developed by animator Doug Beswick, who also worked on *The Addams Family* and *Aliens* movies.

How scary is *The Dark Eye*? (Major spoiler ahead!) It has the power to so involve that you forget you are playing a game. One of the multiple story lines concerns a woman who has a sleeping sickness and, mistakenly diagnosed as dead, is buried alive. As you are occupying the character's body, you are not aware of your desperate situation. All we as the player see is a pitch-black monitor screen, and all we as the player hear is our fingernails scratching the inside of the coffin. It was right at this point of realizing that I was buried alive that my son entered the dark computer room and, since I was wearing headphones, tapped me on the shoulder. There is still to this day an indentation in the ceiling from my head.





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## Playing Old Adventure Games: Part 2 – The Wanadoo Games

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Written by Sir Dave

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When I think of October, like most people, I think of Halloween which, of course, makes me think of The Wanadoo Games! Huh? Well, actually, it makes me think of the 'scary-season' adventure games *Dracula Resurrection* and *Dracula The Last Sanctuary* which were the beginning of a series of games with a similar look-and-feel, published under what was, or what was to become, Wanadoo Edition

and Wanadoo International. Unfortunately, as has too frequently been the case with adventure game publishing, this was to be a short-lived period, but it did result in a string of games that are underrated and often forgotten. I still see some of them in the original large boxes or shrink-wrapped jewel cases selling in close-out bins for \$9.95 USD.

I particularly enjoy researching the background behind the development and publishing of adventure games. Many players and even game reviewers don't realize that some games are tied together by a common bond probably because information on the box and/or in the documentation gives no indication of a connection. This results in the attributes or characteristics of games being credited to the publisher rather than to the developer and the game engine used. In some cases, the developer and the publisher are one and the same, but more often than not, they are separate. The Wanadoo Games are examples of both situations.



The Wanadoo Games, as I choose to call them, share the common bond of publisher, game engine and general look-and-feel and, for the purposes of this discussion, include:

- *Dracula Resurrection* (2000)
- *Dracula The Last Sanctuary* (2000)
- *The Messenger (Louvre: The Final Curse in Europe)* (2000)
- *The Cameron Files Secret at Loch Ness (Loch Ness in Europe)* (2001)
- *The Cameron Files Pharaoh's Curse* (2002).

The history of the period that led to The Wanadoo Games is interesting: The French game developer, Index+, originally created edutainment games such as *Crusader*, *Vikings*, *Paris 1313* and *Genesys* (the latter with co-developer Galilea), released in 1997 to 2000, all of which were marketed in Europe, but not the U.S. You can almost trace the birth of the use of the Wanadoo name and







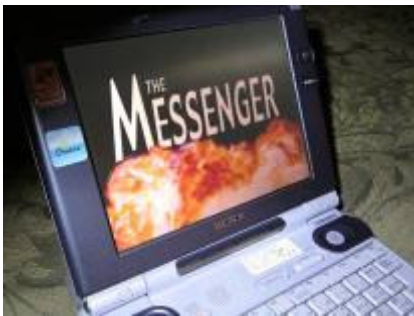
distinctive logo on adventure games by looking at the game boxes. The games *Crusader* and *Vikings* of 1997 and 1998 have only the Index+ logo on the front of the box while on the back or the spine is a very subtle France Telecom Multimedia logo. The 1999-2000 games, *Genesys* and *Paris 1313*, on the other hand for the first time have the very distinctive Wanadoo/France Telecom Group (and Canal+ Media) logos. In 2000-2001, Index+ was acquired by France

Telecom Multimedia and the result was Wanadoo Edition. For the next few years, a flurry of adventure games appeared with the memorable Wanadoo logo (appearing even on games as esoteric as the re-release of Arxel Tribe's *Pilgrim*) but, alas, after 2003, Wanadoo Edition was no more. What might have been a promising large adventure game developing and publishing house totally disappeared from the scene!

It is not just the Wanadoo logo that binds these games together in my mind, but more importantly, the use of the distinctive Phoenix VR engine. Index+ first introduced it in *Dracula Resurrection* and *Dracula The Last Sanctuary*. Prior to that, the company had used the popular combination of Macromedia and Quicktime for its edutainment games. The Phoenix VR-based game engine is easily recognizable: 360 degree around plus up and down views and nodal paths indicated by an arrow cursor (ala *Myst Exile*) and also *hand*, *magnifying glass*, and *gears* cursors to indicate various actions. The inventory is easily accessed by a right-click and its use is highly intuitive. Hitting the escape key brings up the main menu that includes the options Play Game, Save, Load, Quit. The gameplay in all five games is similar in that they are point and click, first person with 3<sup>rd</sup> person cutscenes, more linear than not, of easy to moderate difficulty with nice graphics and logical puzzles often using inventory items. Even though, they are not similar in all respects by any means, if you play one of these games, you will be at home with any of the others. All five



games are two-disc sets and they play largely off the CDs. If you are familiar with the use of virtual-disc programs such as Virtual CD or Virtual Drive, they work very well with these games so that no disk-swapping is necessary. No intrusive copy-protection is used and all the games are essentially bug-free. They all play under Windows XP without a problem and you can easily Alt-Tab between the desktop screen and the game.

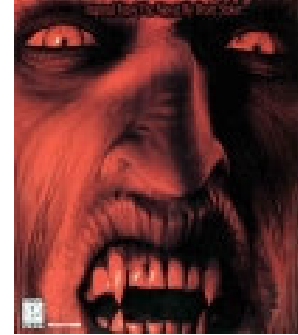


If you haven't yet played *Dracula Resurrection*, you're in for a real (trick or) treat! It's a great October game. In many ways I look on it as an example of a *pure*





adventure game in that it provides something for all tastes: There is the first person solitary adventuring with some challenging puzzles for those *Myst*-like game lovers and then there is a very nice plot with some dialogue and character interaction that others prefer. The game is not that difficult, though you might find yourself a little stuck now and then, and it can be finished in a week or so by playing just an hour or two every day. The sequel, *Dracula The Last Sanctuary* and the game, *The Messenger* (released in Europe as *Louvre: The Final Curse*), are almost as good. An interesting factoid is that Arxel Tribe, though uncredited, created some of *The Messenger's* 3D scenes and animations. *The Cameron Files* games are also good games though they may not attract the same broad audience that I think the *Dracula* games do. The reason for that and the reason why I haven't mentioned another Wanadoo game of that period, *Necronomicon*, requires a little more history.



I don't consider *Necronomicon* to be a part of The Wanadoo Games as I define them. The development of *Necronomicon* parallels the period of the acquisition of Index+ into Wanadoo Edition. Somewhere between the first and second discs of *Necronomicon*, the game seems to go totally off the rails as if two different development teams were at work and, although I have no proof to support it, I sometimes wonder whether some of the original Index+ talent bailed on the project as a result of the 'demise' of their company. **[Editorial Note:** Take a look at La Primavera's *Necronomicon* review on this issue for more observations on this.] Further evidence of that possibility is the fact that Wanadoo brought in the company, Galilea, to develop the two *Cameron Files* games that followed. (As mentioned above, Galilea had already co-developed the edutainment game, *Genesys*, published by Wanadoo in 2000.) The game, *Loch Ness*, was originally published by Wanadoo in Europe in 2001, but DreamCatcher, the publisher of all the Wanadoo Games in America, preferred to have a name that focused on the hero of the story, so the game was published in the U.S. as *The Cameron Files-*



*Secret at Loch Ness* in 2002. Later that same year, the sequel, *The Cameron Files Pharaoh's Curse*, was released. It's of some interest also that the 2003 Frogwares game, *Mystery of the Mummy*, was one of the last adventure games published by Wanadoo in Europe and Galilea also went on to develop *Jack The Ripper* (which, by the way, also uses the Phoenix VR engine) in 2004, published by DreamCatcher.

All of the five Wanadoo Games are available at The Adventure Company site, <http://www.adventurecompanygames.com>, at [www.cdaccess.com](http://www.cdaccess.com) or, of course, on eBay.





# Sam & Max: Season 1 – Culture Shock

PC Review by Gnome

It certainly is a joy writing for Adventure Lantern. Not only do I get to play the first *Sam and Max* game in 13 years almost a month before it is available in Europe, I also don't have to explain why Sam's referral to a certain gruesome crime that was committed in 3.3.04 was particularly satisfying. Then again, playing through the first episode of *Sam and Max: Season 1* was nothing but satisfying.



## I find your lack of pants disturbing

Naked rabbits or not, this is a game that reaches monumental scales by managing to fit in toilet humor in the most literal of senses, despite it's admittedly short length. You see, oh wisest of readers, any seasoned adventure gamer should be able to beat *Culture Shock* in less than five hours.

Those five hours though are really entertaining and they can be easily expanded to hundreds of hours of psychotic fun, provided of course you enjoy non-arcade driving mini-games that let you ram, pull-over, and shoot a variety of colorful 50's cars. For those less keen on vehicular mayhem, there's the choice of endlessly trying to interact, examine and talk too everything.

Telltale's highly commendable attention to detail should be a blueprint as to how adventure games should be made. This game is obviously a labor of love and if (as most neurotics would have it) the devil is in the details, it also is a very polished little hell-spawn. Snapping Max out of Sam's way and listening to the smile-provoking Weeee cry (or is it Wii?) should be proof enough.



Fine, but what is it all about, I hear the masses ask. Well, it's about Dave Grossman of *Day of the Tentacle* and *Monkey Island* fame, Steve Purcell of ... er... *Sam and Max* fame, Jared Emerson-Johnson of *Bone* (the soundtrack that is) fame, Brendan Ferguson and the rest of the Telltale team striving to bring the lagomorph-canine duo to the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

It is also about Sam and Max trying to expose







a not-so-sinister former child star mystery and violently subdue the evil-doers, but you'd better find out more by playing the game yourself. Wouldn't want to spoil it for you, you know. I'd rather let Max do that for you, but I will just randomly recite a little something plot oriented he mentioned: *Wow, an actual celebrity vandalizing our neighborhood!*



### It talks (and even makes phone-calls)!

Sam and Max is rich in both eye and ear candy. It easily manages to retain the style of both the original Hit the Road game and the Steve Purcell comic books, albeit in glorious 3D. And while the gameplay still is an almost typical –as typical as anything S&M related can be – point and click adventure, with added shooting, interrogating in the traditional good cop / deranged cop style and driving, something has changed. It is the voices. Neither the Hit the Road nor the cartoon series actors were available, and, well, the voices are definitely different. I still love 'em. Especially Sam's. And Max's. And don't argue. It's a matter of personal taste after all...



Just like the violence versus animals thing. Or even rodents, or to be more precise rodents called Jimmy Two Teeth. The quality of the writing and dialog, on the other hand, is *\*in the most objective of ways\** top notch. The humor is always successful and at times *laugh-out-loud-and-look-like-a-silly-person* brilliant. So is the animation, general art-directing and screenplay of the game, and don't get me started on the quality of the puzzles.

They might be on the easier side of things (slightly above Bone 2 level), but the puzzles are varied, sometimes randomized, seamlessly integrated to the plot and downright fun. Oh, and worry not, you will not find any irritating mazes, pixel-hunts, sliders or any of the usual adventure game burdens. Nope, this is pure cartoon adult (or, mostly adult – kids will not appreciate the paranoid humor) fun, with a great jazzy soundtrack. Getting a smart psychoanalytic puzzle should be considered an added bonus.

### Go fetch!

Enough with my sad fanboy banter. Just do as I tell you: stand up, don't bother to dress formally, call everyone you know and let them know that Sam and Max are back, visit your nearest video game store, fail to buy the game, return to your







home/office/wherever your PC is, visit Telltale or Gametap, get the game, praise your good luck, send me \$10 (10 euros would be preferable), and then call yourself a true lover of the adventure game. Yes, it's that good!

**You crack me up (i.e. in a nutshell)!**

It's been 13 years, but it was worth it. Sam and Max have returned and even managed to meet the impossibly high – even unfair – expectations of adventureheads worldwide. Kudos to Telltale. Apparently adventures are back in the mainstream. Episodic adventures actually, but it's the same thing really... The story of Culture Shock is totally self-contained.

The final grade is 92/100.



<p><b>Developer:</b> Telltale Games  <b>Publisher:</b> Telltale Games  <b>Platform:</b> PC  <b>Genre:</b> Adventure  <b>Release Date:</b> October 2006  <b>Grade:</b> 92/100</p>	<p><b>Minimum System Requirements:</b>  Windows® XP  Pentium® III 800 MHz *  256 MB RAM  32 MB 3D-accelerated video card  230 MB hard disk space</p> <p>*Processor requirement is 1.5GHz if using a video card without hardware T&amp;L</p>
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# Broken Sword: The Angel of Death

PC Review by Donna

The first Broken Sword game came out in 1996 and it was a hit. Interesting storyline, witty main character George Stobbart, and beautiful locations won the hearts of many. It was done in a detailed, cartoony style, with a point-and-click interface. The second game used a similar style, with improved graphics, and it was a success as well.



However, series took a downfall with the third installment – it was done in full 3D, and was keyboard-controlled. It probably wouldn't have been as hated if it wasn't for annoying (and sometimes very tough) action scenes, where player had to press certain keys as they flashed on screen or had to run away from danger *really* fast. No wonder everyone was skeptic when they announced yet another Broken Sword.

Action sequences? 3D or back to basics? Is it good? Is it bad? The answer to all of this is: It is pure fanservice. You didn't expect that, did you?

## So, how does it work?

It's very simple, really. The game is in full 3D again, with more or less fixed camera angles. It's back to old-school point-and-click control, although you can use arrow keys to move around. If you click somewhere, George will walk or run there (run/walk can be toggled via mouse wheel). You can also drag the mouse and George will follow it. Fun, huh?



I really liked the new system. There was one small problem, though. If you moved around by dragging your mouse, George would stop walking if you entered another room. It *does* get on your nerves after some time, so I recommend using arrow keys instead.

When there's an item to pick up or object to use, the pointer changes (eye for looking at item, gear wheels for using it, etc.). The inventory is located at the top of the screen. All you have to do is drag your mouse up to display it. You can use, explore, and combine items inside your inventory.





If you've been wondering, nope, there are no action sequences. Rejoice! But to make up for the lack of them, there's a bunch of sneaking sequences. You'll be having fun sneaking past guards, Vatican monks and many more. If you make a mistake (i.e. the aforementioned people spot you), you'll be taken to the starting point and have to do it all over again. Luckily, these are very short, so you shouldn't have much trouble. However, you cannot save in the middle of a sneaking sequence.

### **Beauty is in the eye of the beholder**

This game left me a very sad beholder. When someone mentions Broken Sword, I immediately think of colorful graphics and detailed surroundings, with silly little animations that make game come to life. Broken Sword 4 is devoid of all of that.



Levels look big and empty, with no details whatsoever. I have a friend, a future architect, whose idea of an ideal room is something very huge and very blank, with no more than a chair in the middle. She would've loved the game. The most colorful location you will visit are the sewers, I kid you not.

However, characters are more detailed and nicely animated. Some of them are detailed to the point you'd think all you have to do is reach out and actually touch them. A certain homeless man looks particularly real.

While overall animation looks nice, facial expressions are far, far away from that. George likes grinning, and when he does, you will be presented with the biggest, most idiotic grin in the history of gaming. On the upside, at least it will make you laugh.

Yes, the system requirements for *Angel of Death* are pretty low and you can probably thank the graphics (or a lack of) for that. But that is not a valid excuse. Broken Sword 3 was way more detailed (and prettier looking in general) than this installment. But let's not be too nitpicky – good thing is that you can find items with ease.



### **Walking and talking pictures**

Short cut-scenes are all over the place, which I found really nice. There is only *one* fully-rendered scene, and it's the opening. Which doesn't make any sense whatsoever. But it is filled with magic and sparkles, so it can be forgiven.





You'll be getting lots of information from other characters, which makes the conversations essential. Most of the time, topics will disappear as you discuss them. There are rare cases in which they stay where they are, although there's nothing more to talk about. In these cases, conversation will just be repeated. Here's some bad news for chitchat haters: you can't click through conversations to skip them. Sorry!



### Step there, turn this, push that...

Ah, the puzzles. There's a nice share of inventory-based ones, but also a few of those where you have to push an object around. Nope, no box-moving puzzles this time, although there is a room full of boxes early in the game.

There are also logic puzzles, where you have to match some symbols or click certain things in a certain order. There are two huge sets of such puzzles that are pretty entertaining. You'll have to play and see, though, because I don't want to give anything away!

If you get stuck in the game, you can always follow a link to the game's official page with hints. A warning, though – they're not exactly spoiler-free.

### Hacking the system

In your inventory, you will find George's PDA among everything else. You can use it to call people, take notes and – hack servers. This is where a really entertaining, albeit tough, mini-game comes along.

You will have to send signal from spot A (you) to spot B (server you need to hack) by using various routers, mirrors and pipes while making sure signal doesn't end up hitting devices that can discover you. All of this may sound easy, but trust me – it's not. Some of them may make you spend days hacking.

### Templars strike again



Broken Sword is well-known for its plots based on Knights Templar, the second game being the only exception. The story goes:

A blonde, green-eyed girl named Anna Maria comes to you seeking for help. She owns an old manuscript (what else?) Made by Templars and needs you to decode it. In the middle of the conversation, bad guys burst in and the two of







you run. Long story short, George develops some kind of a crush on Anna Maria and goes desperately looking for her when she disappears one day.

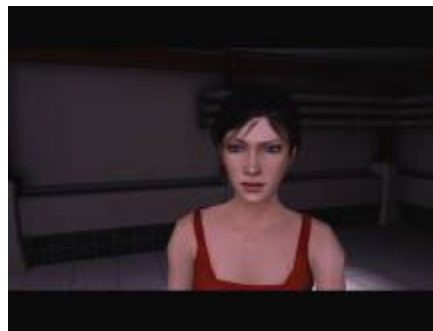


And that's all the story has to offer, really. There are some small twists and turns and the story unfolds nicely, but it's still a bit too weak to be taken seriously.

### Smoke and mirrors

Silly grins and empty spaces aside, *Broken Sword 4: The Angel of Death* is a true candy for fans. For one, you will often find yourself in *very* familiar locations and positions, and characters also often reference the previous games (for example, one character says "Smoke and mirrors, smoke and mirrors..." alluding to the second game titled *The Smoking Mirror*). Also, one must not forget the ever-charming Stobbart humor. To be honest, I was scared this game wouldn't be as funny as previous installments – but it *was* funny. Hilarious, even. There is this little bit in the game where you find yourself tied to a chair, Broken Sword 2 style. It makes *very* little sense, but I couldn't stop laughing. The funny part involves a certain box, but I am not going to spoil it for you.

The 'fan' part of fanservice includes a few returning characters that will certainly make you smile. Nico, George's former girlfriend, is back, too. As usual, you will be able to play as her for some time. I find it funny how she changes with each game – her



### A Gnome's Opinion on Broken Sword: The Angel of Death

Well, let's be honest here. The Broken Sword sequels never really matched the first game's brilliance and this forth installation, unimaginatively titled *The Angel of Death*, is no exception. Revolution though did come close though to its 90s masterpiece this time around, as this very pure, very point-and-click adventure game has moments of grandeur, some excellent puzzles, occasionally ace visuals and a generally epic feel. It wouldn't actually be an overstatement to call this the second best Broken Sword game ever, even though the distance to the first place would be on the rather long side of things.

You see, George is as irritating as ever, the few new crate puzzles are very well implemented, a new character has been added, and ancient conspiracies are still the plat du jour. I swear there even were two or three instances I actually laughed, and that during a certain Nico-featuring segment of the game I almost thought this were adventure gaming nirvana. But, alas... The game is very uneven. For each great part there's a dull one, for every well-written piece of dialogue there is a clichéd one and for every impressive bit of eye-candy there's a totally uninspired one. Add a general lack of polish, weird camera cuts, graphic glitches, nasty bugs, a Lara Croft-ish Anna-Maria, and a slightly problematic interface, and you got a game I would grade with a 77%, if of course I were to grade it, which I won't.

Come on Revolution. Release a patch. Make it a hefty one too please.

-Gnome



clothes, style, even her face change. In this one, she reminds me a little of the fellow adventure game heroine, Victoria MacPherson.

In the 'Extra' menu you will find concept art and 3D renders which is a very cool addition.

### In conclusion

Broken Sword 4 is a game worth playing if you've played previous games (you'll miss out on a lot of fun if you haven't). It's not a requirement, though – it is fun enough to hold your attention for a while and it can be beaten pretty fast if you know what you're doing. It's not terribly good nor terribly bad – it's one of those games that will make you laugh a lot, that you will finish and probably forget. But definitely worth playing, if only to hang out with George and Nico one more time.

Final mark: 82/100



**Developer:** Revolution Software  
**Publisher:** THQ  
**Platform:** PC  
**Genre:** Adventure  
**Release Date:** 2006  
**Grade:** 82/100

#### System Requirements:

Windows® XP  
 DirectX 9.0c (included)  
 Pentium® 4 1.4GHz  
 256 MB RAM  
 2.6 GB free hard drive space  
 2x DVD-ROM Drive  
 128 MB Shader model 1.1 compatible video card\*  
 Windows compatible sound card\*  
 Keyboard, Mouse

\* Indicates that device must be compatible with DirectX 9.0c.

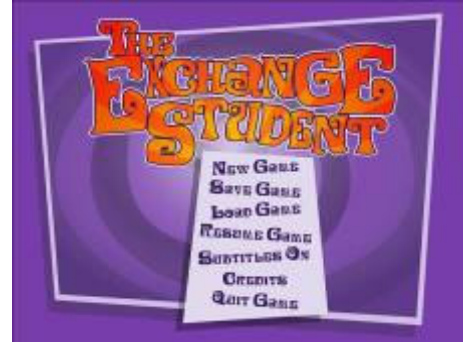




## The Exchange Student – Episode 1: First Day in Sweden

PC Review by Thaumaturge

Meet Emilio. He is a twenty-two-year-old Italian man – in the prime of his life, as some might say – and quite convinced of his allure to the ladies. Therefore, it should perhaps not be surprising that Vincenzo’s account of his successes (of the feminine kind) in an exchange program in Sweden incites Emilio’s envy – until, that is, Vincenzo suggests the obvious: that Emilio enroll in the same student exchange program that Vincenzo participated. Emilio takes to the idea with great enthusiasm. Thus he is set for Sweden – or, as he calls it when looking at his tickets, “the ‘eaven of the blonde angels.”



The introduction done, First Day in Sweden opens on Emilio’s bedroom in Italy, where Emilio’s mother is tearfully lamenting to her son the impending departure of her “baby,” wondering what her little boy will do all alone in a strange country, despite the latter’s objections. At last Emilio wins a reprieve, and starts his final preparations for the trip (not all of which he would be happy for his parents to discover), and the game begins in earnest.

Once in Sweden (and past one minor airport hurdle), Emilio will meet a variety of people, primarily other exchange students like himself. First met is Sara, who fetches him from the airport (and who is very dissimilar to the image that he imagined for her prior to their meeting), while the others, his fellow students and neighbors, are encountered once Emilio has been delivered to his new room (although a few are only mentioned, not yet met, in Episode 1).



Michelle, the French girl, seems sweet – but communication is a little hampered by her limited command of the English language. Jonas is Swedish, with a serious demeanor, while Pedro and Miguel, the two students from Spain, appear to have a rather more fun-loving approach to their scholarship – as exemplified by the game to which they introduce Emilio, and the “initiation” which they require for joining it. Finally (and to

Emilio’s dismay) only one Swedish girl, Frida, lives on his floor – but on meeting her he seems more than pleased that she does.

This cast is certainly fun, if not at this point terribly deep. However, none get very much time in which to develop in this initial episode, and their characterizations





may yet be filled out in the future episodes to come. Furthermore such “light” characters fit well with the casual nature of the game. All of the parts are voice-acted, the acting being overall decent and in a style well-suited to the tone and atmosphere of the game. The parts are nicely-written, as far as they go in this episode, and produce some effective moments of humor, including some obligatory language and communication jokes.



The Exchange Student is an episodic game, likened on its website ([www.TheExchangeStudent.com](http://www.TheExchangeStudent.com)) to an “interactive sitcom,” each episode of which is bought and played individually. The comparison is, I would say, very fair, with a sense of humor, style, and characters similar to those which might be found in a television sitcom on top of the aforementioned episodic format.

This first episode primarily acts to set the scene, taking Emilio to his room in Sweden and introducing him (and through him the players) to some of his fellow cast members. As such, little story is told (although at least one plot would seem to have been introduced – that of the “point game”)

The graphics which depict the game are overall quite good (if not always perfect). The style is cartoonish and often exaggerated, with colors generally bright and bold – a style which suits the concept and contributes to a fun and casual atmosphere – exactly what one might expect from an “interactive sitcom”. The point of view with which the player is presented is the classic static third-person perspective, breaking up Emilio’s environment into a number of “areas” which the player can explore.



Animations are usually good, with a nice cartoon flair, although a few are less impressive. The only real annoyance comes when characters pass through doors leading from the current area to another, at which point they simply vanish – a minor nuisance which might perhaps have been avoided by the inclusion of entrance and exit animations.

Both sound and music are on the whole very good. The music is fun, energetic and enthusiastic, producing just the right slightly over-the-top sitcom style for the game. The sound effects work well and are nicely done, although one or two are perhaps just a little too far over-the-top.

Control of Emilio is achieved via a simple and effective mouse-based interface. A single click of the left mouse button on an open spot with the normal cursor







instructs Emilio to walk to that point (presuming that the point is not already occupied and that Emilio is free to walk, that is). When the mouse cursor passes over an object, place or person of interest, however, it lights up, indicating that the player may attempt to perform action.

If the left mouse button is clicked when the cursor is over a hotspot, the “Amore” interface appears, consisting primarily of an image of a heart surrounded by three icons: an eye, a hand and a mouth, corresponding roughly to “look at,” “use” and “talk to” respectively, although they may take specific meanings similar to these depending on the situation (such as the hand icon denoting taking when it applies to an item that can be taken). A single click on one of these icons instructs Emilio to attempt the indicated action.



The inventory is accessed by moving the mouse to the top of the screen. In general, when the hand icon is selected from the Amore interface for an item in the inventory, Emilio is instructed to use that item. To this end, the cursor becomes the image of that item, gaining a yellow hue when the cursor is over a hotspot. A single click instructs Emilio to attempt to use the item on the indicated person, object or place. Conversely, a single

click with such an inventory item cursor on an open spot switches back to the normal cursor.

Conversations are generally carried out by clicking on one of the characters that Emilio encounters and selecting the mouth icon from the Amore interface that should pop up. Should Emilio have anything to say to the indicated person a conversation will follow, usually rather brief, with any further conversation being enacted by subsequent repetitions of the same procedure.

All of this results in a clean, simple interface that is well-suited to the casual nature of this game.

A final interface note is that a “ints and tips” option is available via a button that appears with the inventory when the mouse cursor is moved to the top of the screen. Clicking on this button causes a box to appear over the game area containing information about what Emilio should be doing and, in some cases, hints as to how he should go about it.

Episode 1 contains few true puzzles; for the most part there are simply tasks which Emilio





has to perform in order to move on. Nevertheless, some puzzles do exist, those that do being generally not very difficult. All of these are inventory-based puzzles, involving using the correct inventory item in the right manner and place to achieve the desired result.

In conclusion, The Exchange Student, Episode 1: First Day in Sweden is an enjoyable game. It is short and light, ideal for a game that would seem to intend to cater to the casual gamer market, especially those that might not want to spend large amounts of time on their gaming. The tone is humorous and fun, with a cartoon style and a classic sitcom plot. The characters, if handled well in the coming episodes, could potentially provide a lot of amusement. All in all, First Day in Sweden is a very promising start to the series.

Final Score: 84/100.

The first episode of The Exchange Student can be purchased from the game's official Web site at [www.TheExchangeStudent.com](http://www.TheExchangeStudent.com).



**Developer:** Pan Metron Ariston  
**Publisher:** Pan Metron Ariston  
**Platform:** PC  
**Genre:** Adventure  
**Release Date:** August 2006  
**Grade:** 84/100

**System Requirements:**  
 Windows® 98, SE/ME/2000/XP (The Latter Two Recommended)  
 Pentium® II 350 MHz (2 GHz Recommended)  
 128 MB RAM (256 MB Recommended)  
 128 MB Video Card  
 80MB Free Hard Drive Space  
 Keyboard, mouse, speakers

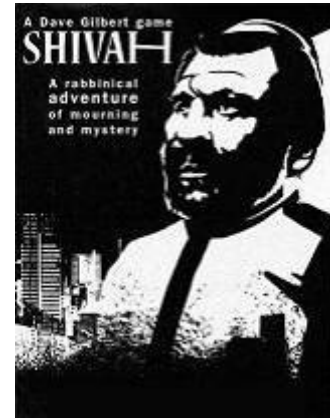




# The Shivah

PC Review by Erdalion

A Shivah, which literally translates from Hebrew as “seven”, is a period of mourning in the Jewish religion. As you may have already suspected, The Shivah is a game rich in Jewish culture and religion, a subject not entirely common for an adventure game, and for this reason provides a refreshing change from the usual settings. The game’s protagonist, Rabbi Stone, is a disgruntled old man who has been gradually losing his faith. He is suddenly presented with a large sum of money from an old acquaintance of his, Jack Lauder, who has been recently murdered. Given his rabbinical teachings and his belief that God only helps those who help themselves, Stone decides to help himself and use the ritual of the Shivah as an excuse to begin his investigation of Jack Lauder’s murder.



The Shivah began its “life” as an award-winning freeware game in June 2006. Since then, its creator decided to remake it and release it as a commercial project, with the most notable changes being the character graphics and the audio of the game. Live music and voice-overs were added to the game. The developer also added some new puzzles that make the game slightly longer than the original. Despite these changes, The Shivah still cannot be compared with other commercial games, but such a comparison is unfair in the first place. It is important to note that despite the overhaul, this is still a game that was initially supposed to be over in a month, so the end product still reflects that. It is also important to note that the Shivah does not wish to compete directly against its high-profile contenders, given that it is being sold for only five dollars, a much lower price than the average mainstream game.



The technical aspects of the Shivah are not exactly state of the art, however, that is not to say that the game is technically inept. The graphics are charming in their own way, given that they are well designed for the most part, and the characters themselves have quite a lot of detail and are smoothly animated. Although, it has to be said that if you value graphics and associated technology more than anything else, you might not be able to stomach the retro look

of this game. On the other hand, the music is of high quality even when it is held up to regular commercial standards. The themes are mostly moody and contemplative, and as such, fit the atmosphere of the game beautifully. A nice





touch to the music is the way one theme blends into another whenever you enter a new area with a new theme.

The voice-overs also deserve special mention, given that they are among the best found in an independent game. While perhaps not as convincing as the ones found in regular commercial games, they are still very well done, as all the actors do a solid job at portraying their characters and none of them overact at any given point. Another nice touch available in this version is a commentary track by the game's creator, Dave Gilbert, offering inside information on certain parts of the game, which is a very welcome addition as it helps to de-mystify the whole game-creating process for aspiring game developers. My favorite insight would be the method that the author uses to choose names for the people that get killed in his games, which I found to be quite chuckle-worthy. The name for the commentary track, "Kibbitz", is also amusing since it stands for "unwanted and intrusive comments."



However, as far as the quality of an adventure game is concerned, most fans would agree that the graphics and sound, while pivotal to portraying a story in a riveting way, still play second fiddle to the gameplay. Luckily, the gameplay found in The Shivah is of excellent quality, even if there is not too much of it to be found, given the game's short length. One radical change that takes place in the game is the complete lack of inventory puzzles, and if you ask me, that is not a bad thing. After all, mindlessly using all your items either together or with everything that can be found in your surroundings has lead to some really poor puzzles in the past.



Thankfully, this is not the case in The Shivah. Inventory items are only there to provide you with hints for certain puzzles, while the actual role of your inventory is played by a second inventory called "Clues", which, as the name implies contains clues about the case that you have picked up during your investigation. These can be used on one another, but not the environment. Combining clues in turn leads to new clues, making puzzles less tedious but still

challenging. A word of caution; it is possible for Rabbi Stone to die during the game, so remember to save often.

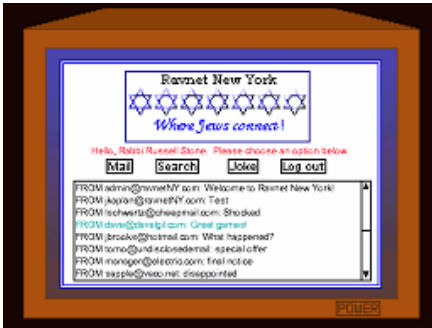
The puzzles themselves are excellent, and also make perfect sense, which is definitely something we do not get to see very often. Even the trial-and-error sequences near the end make sense when you look at them in retrospect, even







the “insult-boxing” sequence at the very end, since you are given hints about it throughout the game (and yes, this may be considered a meta-hint). The only downside to the gameplay would be the fact that the game is really short. It took me about an hour to complete, though I would speculate that it would take anywhere from 30 minutes to two hours on average to finish it, depending on how much time you would spend listening to every line of dialog in the game. Still, given the fact that there are several different endings to the game, with subtle hints given when a different path is available, there is a real incentive to replay it.



This brings us to the best part of the Shivah, its story. While stories about disenchanting religious people that have lost their faith are anything but original, Rabbi Stone’s tale is so well-written that you will not have to worry about the slightly less-than-original concept. Plus, if it is originality that you are after, ask yourselves, when was the last time you played a game starring a rabbi? Rhetorical questions aside, the story does not shy away from asking some strong questions

about the nature of things, and providing us with some possible answers. Furthermore, the plot of the game is really interesting, as it constantly keeps in you on the edge since for every question you answer (Why was Lauder killed? Who did it?) there is always a new question raised. The only negative aspect of the game’s story that I could find was the ease with which Rabbi Stone, a man who is not familiar at all with computers, suddenly starts logging on to different computers and accounts during his investigation of Lauder’s murder. Not entirely plausible, but nothing too bad either. Furthermore, the main story of the game is characterized by a lack of humor, and that is to be expected given its nature. Still, the jokes in Ravnet (an in-game website where Jewish people commune) kind of make up for that, given that some of them are hilarious.

The aspect of The Shivah that is the greatest testament to the quality of writing is the character development found in the game. Despite spending minimal time with most of the characters, their personalities are really fleshed out through some intense dialogues. Especially in the case of the protagonist, Rabbi Stone, some of his rabbinical replies in certain discussions are bound to get a wry chuckle out of you, as you experience first hand his disassociation with a world that at times seems to have no purpose or meaning. It is also important to note that Stone is a deeply flawed character, even though he is a religious person, someone to whom other people look upon for guidance. He is anything but perfect, yet still that only makes him appear more human and helps us sympathize with him more. The





other character that really stands out is the antagonist of the story. For obvious reasons I will not disclose their identity, but it has to be said that very seldom has the personality of an antagonist been explored so deeply in a game, their motives so clearly described. This is a person not simply mentally unstable, nor a delusional megalomaniac or anything like that, their reasons for acting the way they do are quite realistic. In fact, several mainstream movies of recent years would have loved to have a villain with such a deep personality. Again, it has to be said that it is quiet amazing that such a short game, created over such a short period of time is capable of telling such a deep story with characters so believable.



I keep mentioning over and over again the fact that this game was created in a month, but it is really important to keep that in mind when playing it. Not as an excuse because it did some things really wrong, but because it does a lot of things *right*, and that is an incredible accomplishment. Moreover, at the price that it is being offered, you really get your money's worth, even if its length is a couple of hours at most. This is a game which proves the old motto "Quality over quantity" true. If you are a fan of point and click adventures and do not mind the outdated graphics, you will most likely find the Shivah to be one of the most entertaining games you have played recently.

The Shivah can be purchased from the author's site at <http://www.davelgil.com>

The final grade is: 89/100.



<p><b>Developer:</b> David L. Gilbert  <b>Publisher:</b> Davegil Games  <b>Platform:</b> PC  <b>Genre:</b> Adventure  <b>Release Date:</b> 2006  <b>Grade:</b> 89/100</p>	<p><b>System Requirements:</b>  Windows® 98/ME/2000/XP  Pentium® 600MHz  128 MB RAM  Video Card Capable of 320x200 in 16-bit Color  Windows Compatible Soundcard  Keyboard, mouse, speakers  (Note: This game may well run on slower machines than listed above)</p>
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# Necronomicon

PC Review by La Primavera

## Inspired by Lovecraft's story...

I have read H. P. Lovecraft's short stories. They are strange, dark, and often incoherent like ravings of a man half crazed with horror. So, I had certain expectations about the game claims to have been directly inspired by Lovecraft's writings. The game's retail box has great screenshots - realistic, dark, and eerie. It looks promising...



The opening of the game doesn't disappoint. A huge full-moon gives way to a dark, menacing sky with swirling yellow and black clouds. The sky then gradually becomes gray and wintry as the camera descends to a plain-looking house with a large front yard. A sense of foreboding behind the normalcy of life. So far so good, even though it's more Edgar Alan Poe than Lovecraft. I see someone running into that house.

## Can't hear, can't see!

Then, abruptly I am inside the house, and I hear a loud banging on the door. I manage to get to the front door to answer. A skinny, serious-looking man dressed in a gray suit starts talking to me rapidly. Hey what's the problem here? I CAN'T HEAR A THING! It's not my PC speakers, because even after I turn up the volume I still can't hear well. I stop the game, trying to find the game option menu to turn on the subtitles. AND THERE IS NO SUCH THING!



With only a vague idea as to what this person said, I am left in this house. Hmm...

I decide to take a look around, but then I immediately get disoriented. WHAT'S THE MATTER WITH ME? Well, the game fixes the mouse pointer at the center of the screen. That's OK, a lot of games do. But in this game, the fixed point seems to serve as a vanishing point in perspective. When you move the mouse, everything around you is re-drawn with the center as a vanishing point. You get a weird sense of seeing everything from inside a fish bowl. (This has a repercussion later in the dark.)





## What am I supposed to do?

Since I couldn't understand that man, I figure I'd better read the manual. But there is not much there to help me. So the year is 1927. I am William Stanton, and the rapid talker is my childhood friend (even though William Stanton looks like a 17-year-old while his friend looks 40-something). And my friend's strange behavior may have something to do with some alchemist's lab somewhere and a book called *Necronomicon* (Book of the Dead).



I take a look at the box, and it says: "Join William Stanton on a mysterious journey, in a desperate quest to save the life of his friend." OK, so I am going to save my friend. The narrative continues: "Travel beyond the realms of science and discover the mysterious apparatus which holds the secrets to the afterlife." Well, I haven't gotten much from the box either, other than some vague horror and mystery. I will just restart the game and see what I can find out the second time...

So my friend's name is Edgar Witcherly. A good doctor who visits me right after Edgar tells me so. The place is somewhere in Rhode Island. He says my friend needs to be interned for insanity. I am supposed to find out what he's been doing in secret with a dubious chemist. It has something to do with reviving the dead.

My journey will take me to a small fishing village, a dilapidated old barn with cabalistic symbols, an underground alchemical laboratory, and finally to the underground tower built by the Old Ones.

## (More or less) non-linear gameplay

Many adventure games claim to be non-linear, but most of them usually proceed on a more or less predetermined path. I recently played a "non-linear" game which did not become fully non-linear until about 1/2 of the game was finished. Often, certain places don't open up until certain events trigger them. Some games won't even let you out of the initial location until you finish everything you are supposed to do.



*Necronomicon* is one of the better "non-linear" games; you are free to go outside and check things out even before you do anything in the initial location (the house). Go out the front door, walk up to the road, look left and right. You see the motorcycle leaning against the white picket fence. You also see the mailbox, and you can read the mail if you click on it. Face the road







again, and it looks like there are two directions you could go – left or right.



In order to go either direction, you will need to use the motorcycle. But as soon as you find the ignition key in the house you are free to go, either right to the fishing village or left to your friend's house. There may be certain things you cannot do in the village because you lack the necessary inventory items, but you are free to knock on the doors, interact with people there. The events that take place in your friend's house won't be triggered until you do certain things, but at least from the beginning you are able to walk up to the front door.

### Story collapses as puzzles defy logic

Lovecraft's stories may not be logical, but for any game to be credible, it has to have a consistent, internal logic - even a madman's logic, both in the storyline and in the puzzles.

This game starts out logically enough, and you are able to comprehend what transpires in the early parts of the game fairly well. However, the story stops making sense about halfway into the game. William Stanton has his friend locked up in a sanitarium for his own safety. Yet William seems to all too easily forget about Edgar's protection when he refuses to answer my trivial question. Huh? Didn't the box say that I am on a desperate quest to save the life of my friend? It's all downhill from there. Toward the end, the developers seems to have totally abandoned the effort to tie the loose ends of the story (there are many) in their desperate quest to end the game.

The puzzles in the game are solved by collecting information (by talking to people, collecting documents) and combining inventory items that you pick up along the way. In the beginning where there is still a semblance of a cohesive story, the puzzles are logical enough, and you can follow the reasoning behind the puzzles.

However, after the game proceeds beyond the point where you need to insert 2<sup>nd</sup> CD to continue, the puzzles become increasingly arbitrary and meaningless. Once you go to underground maze that leads to the tower built by "The Old Ones", don't waste your time trying to figure out the puzzles. Just go the hint sites and get the solutions. You won't get any insight into the supposed secret; I still don't know what is.





Aside from the non-linear game play, there is one more thing I did like about this game. It is one of the two endings you can trigger this during the final sequence of the game. You get to relive the excitement and anticipation of the game's opening scene.



### **It's so dark in here**

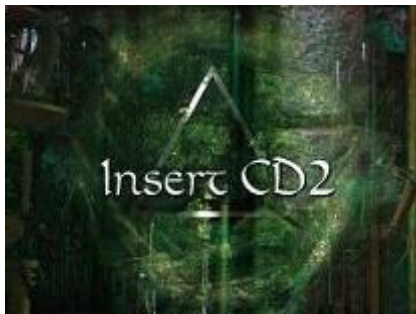
The developer seems to have taken the "dark" aspect of the story way too seriously and literally. In many indoor locations, you cannot see well. Turning up the brightness on your computer and adjusting the lighting in your room may help, but not much. The mouse pointer should alert you to a hot spot in the dark, but often I couldn't even find it because of the skewed perspective that the game uses. You lose your sense of location. I was lost in the underground maze in pitch dark for what seemed like eternity (40 frustrating minutes in the real world).

When it is light enough to see, the graphics look good. They create a realistic, sinister atmosphere appropriate for a horror adventure game. However, the characters that inhabit this realistic world look like cartoon characters. Their bodies and faces are not proportioned like human beings. The doctor who advises the protagonist has an extremely fine set of teeth that seem to form a circle in his mouth. (And to see his hair follicles up close is a horror indeed.)

### **Game control: You have no choice in the matter**

Usually the game control issues do not make or break a game. But in this case they contribute significantly to breaking the game.

First and foremost, there is the strange fish-bowl perspective the developer decided to use for navigation: I didn't like it, I never got used to it, and it screws up the spatial orientation, making it harder to find hot spots in the dark.



Second, you have to swap discs. Aggghh. It's not a big game, but the developer decided to keep most of the game on 2 CDs. Not only you have to have a disc to play the game, but you have to swap discs after you are about halfway through, in the middle of a dark hallway beneath the barn. You insert Disc 1 to start the game and select the saved file, then you have to switch to Disc 2 to play the saved file.

Third, as mentioned earlier, you don't have access to any settings in this game. No sound level adjustment, no brightness / contrast control, no subtitle options.





No matter how you tweak your PC's hardware, you can't hear well, and you can't see well. After a while, you simply lose interest in continuing to play.

Fourth, there is no explanation of what it is that you pick up as an inventory item. Although it is pretty obvious what most items are, sometimes I did not have a clue what I was carrying.

The final nail in the coffin is that you have only 8 save slots. I don't know what the developer was thinking. Even back in 2001 when this game was released, didn't a typical PC have enough space on the hard disk for almost unlimited saves?

If you are running Windows XP, you may need to use the compatibility mode to play the game. Right-click on the game icon, go to Properties, click on the Compatibility tab, and check the box in "Run this program in compatibility mode for" and select Windows 95, 98, or Me from the drop-down menu.

**Verdict: Great promise never delivered**

I am afraid that the claim of having been directly inspired by Lovecraft was too tall a claim. As far I could figure, the extent of inspiration was to borrow the title of the game and the idea of the Old Ones (not that they did anything with it). Perhaps the developer shouldn't have mentioned Lovecraft. A story where you are out there trying to stop a madman from unleashing the dark force that would destroy the world can be developed into an interesting game without resorting to Lovecraft or Necronomicon.



My final score is 51 out of 100. If you can borrow this game from a friend or somehow get it for free or close to it, it may make a nice short diversion on a lazy weekend, but don't expect much.

<p><b>Developer:</b> Wanadoo  <b>Publisher:</b> The Adventure Company  <b>Platform:</b> PC  <b>Genre:</b> Adventure  <b>Release Date:</b> May 2001  <b>Grade:</b> 51/100</p>	<p><b>Minimum System Requirements:</b>  Windows® 95/98/ME  Pentium® 200 MH  32 MB RAM  Video card capable of thousands of colors  16 Bit Sound Card  8x CD-ROM Drive  Keyboard, mouse, speakers</p>
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## Blackstone Chronicles: An Adventure in Terror

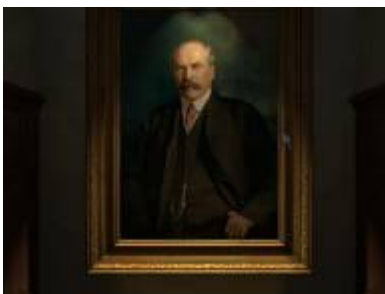
PC Review by Wendy Nellius

Blackstone Chronicles is based upon a series of 6 books by John Saul. Each book represents a specific tragedy that took place in the town of Blackstone and somehow seemed to be connected to the Asylum. Each story is linked to a mysterious dark figure that brought gifts that destroyed the receivers' mental health and their lives. Through a team effort with Bob Bates of Legend Entertainment, a psychological horror like none other was born.



For years the Blackstone Asylum run by Malcolm Metcalf sat on the highest hill in town always maintaining a constant threat to the community. If you talked back to your parents, you could get sent there. If no one could care for you in your old age, you could get sent there. If you committed a crime, you could get sent there. Slightly confused lately? You could get sent there. The asylum was always there looming in the background filled with a dark and foreboding history.

The asylum was closed in 1959, but has recently been acquired by the Blackstone Historical Society as a museum of psychiatric history.....or perhaps we should say torture as most of the methods originally used in psychiatric medicine fell into that category. They have done extensive renovation to and in an effort to maintain realism, have even restored the living quarters of a few former patients (or inmates as they were called) complete with their original belongings.



Oliver Metcalf (son of Malcolm) has returned to the place where he grew up after being gone for 5 years. Upon entering the asylum, he is greeted by his father Malcolm. The only problem here is that Malcolm is dead. Is Oliver only imagining his father's voice? As the conversation continues, we realize that this was not the typical father-son relationship.

***"You disobeyed me Oliver. You never finished the task."***

***"I used pain as a motivational device. I never hurt you in anger Oliver. Not every father can say that"***

***"The son disobeys the father. Perhaps I'll have better luck with your son."***





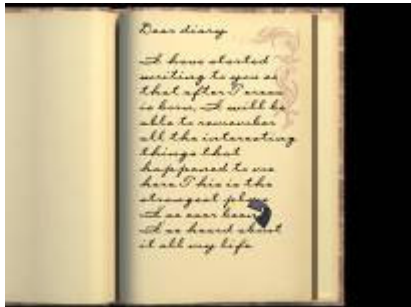


***“He’s in the secret room. You have only until dawn. You must get there by daybreak or Joshua will be taught what it means to be a Metcalf.”***

Ok....so you can pretty much tell Malcolm isn't the loving and giving father that you can't wait to see during the holidays. Malcolm has kidnapped Oliver's son Joshua. He played the sweet old grandfather to get Joshua to accompany him to a secret room. Now....it's not clear right now what it means to be a Metcalf, but it sure as heck doesn't sound good. And, you only have until dawn to find Joshua.



The entire game takes place in the asylum. So, the first step is to start exploring. As you check out items in the room, Malcolm will pompously provide a little description of the item and the asylum in general. The way he describes things, the asylum seems like it had a very healing and enriching environment. And, Malcolm comes off sounding like a saint who saved a lot of people from their sad, demented lives. But, as in real life, you shouldn't believe everything you hear.



Blackstone Chronicles comes with 2 CD's. Installation is completed using the 1<sup>st</sup> CD. You then have a choice of playing the game with the 1<sup>st</sup> CD which allows you to play the movies at low resolution or the 2<sup>nd</sup> CD with the movies at high resolution. The game is played from the 1<sup>st</sup> person perspective and is mainly point and click. However, you will need to use your keyboard a few times for a specific purpose. I have read that

Blackstone Chronicles can be run on XP. However, my Windows XP system did not seem to like the game.....perhaps it was scared. So, I ultimately ran it on an older computer with Windows 98. No problems were encountered during the installation or during game play.

The main menu can be accessed at the top of the screen during game play. Features include:

- Save, Load and Quit
- Restart: This will allow you to restart the game without having to quit the game.
- Settings: Allows you to adjust the voice, music and environment volume. You have the option to turn on/off panning. Also, there is the option of turning the undo function on or off.
- Undo: Click on undo and your last move will be reversed. This is a great feature although I never really needed to use it.
- Help: This feature gives you additional info on navigation within the game.





Getting around is accomplished using classic Adventure game cursors. Large directional arrows allow for movement between nodes. Your basic directions are straight, right and left. Unless you turn the panning off, each time you move, you will encounter animation. Even with the panning turned on, this can be eliminated by right clicking the directional arrow. However, this is only suggested only when you are running back and forth in areas you have already visited. The animation and sound is truly integral to setting the mood. The cursor will light up if an item can be interacted with. Clicking on an item will produce a drop down menu detailing your interaction choices. Interaction will vary. Some items can be only examined. Or, you may have the option to pick an item up, read a book or document, or perhaps open an item to examine it further.



All items you have collected during your investigation are accumulated at the bottom of your screen. Hovering the mouse in that area allows viewing. Pleasing was the fact the inventory box expands in size as you collect more items. Near the end, it can encompass nearly half of the game screen. The upside is that you can see all the items at once without have to scroll through them. One negative note is that you do

not get a description of the item without actually clicking on it. Drop down menus are also used for each item in inventory by left or right clicking.

All of the main rooms have a small display stand with two objects of relevance to the history of the asylum. Pressing a question mark below the item will give the museum friendly description. Oliver can also take some of the items he feels will be useful to his quest. There is also a touch screen that can describe general psychiatric history, information about specific disorders and particular inmates of the asylum. However, listening to and reading this information seems extremely clinical and does not take into account the toll taken on the inmates. But, you will learn that part soon enough. The backgrounds are pleasant enough on the first floor.....nothing too scary. Rich red colors and ornate doors surround you. A large staircase sits in the center of the room. At the top of the staircase is a large painting of Malcolm.....just watching.

As you continue your journey throughout the asylum, you will meet some of the former inhabitants in spirit form. On the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor of the asylum are private rooms which could be acquired for an inmate if their family had enough money. But, these souls seem to be trapped due to the fact that a treasured item has been stolen from them by Malcolm Metcalf. All are willing to provide Oliver with help providing he is able to find





and return these items. It is in speaking to these souls that you begin to understand the true horror of their lives. They have ended up in the asylum for various reasons; not all due to mental illness. All their stories have one thing in common.....hatred or fear for Malcolm who subjected them to such evil treatment.



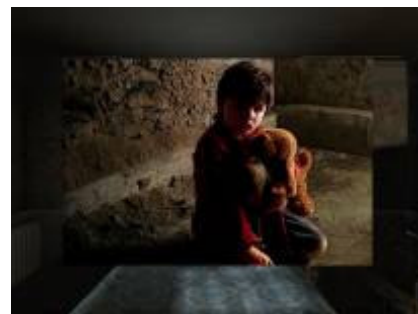
In the basement, nightmare meets reality. As you first enter the dark basement you will immediately notice large blood stains. Hmm....blood stains should be unusual for the lovely place Father described. Heavy metal doors in the hallway provide access to the therapy rooms. Therapy can involve being forced into a steam box or hot water for hours on end, being injected with deadly viruses in order to produce a fever, or the ever popular electric shock. What is perhaps most poignant is the devastation in the voices of those who actually went through these treatments and ultimately did not survive. The emotion in their voices, whether it is sorrow, fear or anger, is transferred to you as the gamer. As bad as this may sound, what you have experienced by this point in the game is most certainly not the worst. So, be prepared.....it gets worse if you can imagine that.

It is with superb story telling where Blackstone Chronicles makes its mark. You are not told all of the horrors at once. There is a consistent slow build throughout the game and it is extremely disturbing. There is one particular character near the end that I can not get out of my head no matter how hard I try. At certain points, I even felt sick to my stomach and a bit depressed. Depression and horror are intertwined throughout. Take for instance the following:

***“Even a criminal knows when he’s going to get out. We were imprisoned with no release date”.*** – Yes, that’s depressing alright.

***“You sit in that chair with those electrodes clamped to your skin and between the shocks there’s this strange odor. And, then you realize that the last smell in your nostrils as you die is the stink of your own flesh burning.”*** - Are you horrified?

But, a story told by the wrong voices can go downhill fast. That doesn’t happen here. The voice acting is incredible. Malcolm Metcalf’s voice is absolutely perfect. He sounds like a true psychopath devoid of any compassion and his voice will make the hairs on the back of your neck stand up. All the inmates were done just as well. They truly made an effort to evoke emotion from the gamer. Oliver’s voice which is





extremely mellow can be interpreted as a lack of urgent concern for the well being of his son. But, this can easily be reconciled by considering the fact Joshua is quite young. Since he is in a locked secret room, it wouldn't make sense to traumatize him as well. As long as Joshua seems ok, it allows Oliver to concentrate on finding his location.



You will never see any of the characters. You will talk to them through a picture of them or an item of importance to them. Even though Joshua is alive and hidden in the secret room, Malcolm is allowing you to talk to him. A picture of Joshua will appear at random times during the game. When speaking to characters, dialog will pop up on the screen. Think of what you see on the screen as a thought in Oliver's head. What he actually says will be different from the typed question on screen. If you have done all you can with a specific question, it will become italicized on the screen.

You will need to speak to specific characters more than once as they hold the keys to your continued journey within the game. Most of the puzzles are inventory based and really aren't that difficult. The answer most often can be found in a conversation with one of the ghosts. There are a couple of logic puzzles as well, but these won't tax the seasoned gamer. The game is linear and certain tasks must be completed in order to move forward to a new chapter. You may find yourself unsure of where to go. But, you usually can figure this out by visiting everyone again. You can ask your questions all over again to see if you missed something.

There are however, some timed puzzles. Each time Oliver retrieves a stolen item for one of the inmates, a sort of evil trance takes hold of him. He will then try to kill himself using one of the various treatments the inmates suffered through. It's not that these are so difficult to figure out. It's just that the music is creating tension and there can be a ghostly inmate telling you to hurry up over and over or you're sure to die. Well, that's a



lot a pressure to think fast and I fall into the category of a "take your time and really think it out" puzzle solver. I don't do well when I'm rushed. So, basically I died. And, in case you're wondering.....these are very slow deaths. You're meant to experience what it's like to die of electric shock or by slowly passing out as your body temperature soars beyond its capacity. Even in a game, it is a horrible feeling to know you're dying and you can't save yourself in time. You're just listening to the sounds of your body giving out. This is truly a mind screwing process. If you do happen to die, you'll get the option of restarting right before







the puzzle. Or, you can get a hint or have it solved for you. But, these puzzles are definitely solvable after the initial heart pounding death.

Ambient sounds are used to full effect to convey the atmosphere of the game. In the kitchen, the constant drip of water into the sink would drive anyone crazy. Depending on where Oliver is walking, the sound of his footsteps is modified to reflect the location. So, he will sound different upstairs as opposed to when he is walking on concrete in the basement. The big metal doors open and shut with finality. The authentic sound of the elevator as you travel between floors really puts you in the environment. The music is equally suited to the mood of the game. Each location has different music. Truly, the music isn't that bad down on the main floor, but it gets darker in other areas of the asylum.



Graphically, this game still holds up pretty well considering it was released in 1998. The asylum is a combination of many elements of its' past; the mansion it began as, an asylum which it morphed into and the final classification as museum. You will see all aspects in the backgrounds. Large animal heads hanging on the wall and beautiful guest rooms on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor speak to the mansion. The horror in the basement and clinical nature of some of the surprise areas are all representative of an asylum. Of course, the museum added some new seating and the displays. There is also a beautiful chapel that I'm not sure fits, but is quite detailed. And, of course there are the secret locations...but those will remain secret until you play the game.

Overall, Blackstone Chronicles is a great game that will play with your mind and not let go for quite a while. I can honestly say this because it made me feel things I didn't want to feel. I can also say I won't revisit this game for exactly the same reason. If you can handle the dark subject matter, then you should definitely give Blackstone Chronicles: An Adventure in Terror a play. It is a true example of storytelling at its best.

Final Grade: 92/100

<p><b>Developer:</b> Legend Entertainment  <b>Publisher:</b> Mindscape, Inc.  <b>Platform:</b> PC  <b>Genre:</b> Adventure  <b>Release Date:</b> 1998  <b>Grade:</b> 92/100</p>	<p><b>Minimum System Requirements:</b>  Windows® 95/98 (XP Possible)  Pentium 166 MHz or higher  32 MB RAM  24-Bit PCI Video Card (2MB Video RAM)  DirectX 6 compatible sound card  8X CD-ROM Drive  Hard Drive space of 350 MB  Mouse, Keyboard and Speakers</p>
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# Shivers II: Harvest of Souls

PC Review by Ugur Sener

Cyclone... A quiet, secluded town in Arizona. Few strangers ever travel through this place. It is a humble town with a small population. You will not find the rhythm of a large city here. But you might enjoy discovering the remnants of Native American culture through artifacts carefully protected and displayed inside virtually every structure. On the surface, Cyclone certainly looks like a pleasant place. Perhaps it is stuck in the past, but the town is also charming in its own way with a strong touch of mysticism.



Your friends choose Cyclone as the ideal place for filming the first batch of videos for their aspiring rock band called Trip Cyclone. Being miserably broke however, they cannot afford the equipment needed for the production of their videos. As such, they have to spend some time working at the local businesses trying to save up some money before the recordings can begin.

In the meantime, strange events have recently started to occur in the town of Cyclone. Just before Trip Cyclone's arrival, an abandoned jeep is found at the entrance of the Devil's Mouth Canyon. The couple that owns the vehicle has been staying at the local motel. During the search that is conducted to find the missing couple, another person mysteriously disappears in the canyon.



Rather than being scared by these disappearances, your friends decide to take it upon themselves to find out what might have happened to the missing people. Their videos are meant to contain clues that lead to the capture of the person responsible for the disappearances. After all, solving such a mystery is sure to get them some attention from the media.

Unfortunately, let alone solving the mystery, your friends have a very rough time saving enough money for the equipment they need. When they have just about given up all hope, a mysterious benefactor appears. He is only known to the band members as Darkcloud. He refuses to reveal his true name and he will not allow your friends to see his face. Darkcloud always wears a kachina mask. However, having found a sponsor that will pay for all the equipment, the band members choose not to ask too many questions.





Several days later, you finally arrive at Cyclone after having stayed behind to work in the city. As you approach the town, you are confronted by a rockslide blocking the way into Cyclone. Fortunately, your dirt bike is designed to handle these kinds of situations. You deftly go over the rockslide and make it to the town's only motel.



The owner is less than pleased to see you, immediately labeling you as a troublemaker. Nevertheless, he does confirm your reservation and gives you an extremely alarming note. The message says that your friends are captured. Only the warrior is capable of saving them now... It is obvious you are not going to get any real information out of the motel owner. But something is definitely not right here. What caused that rockslide? Where are your friends? What happened to the other missing people?

As you walk across the parking lot to your room, you can almost sense something disturbing in the air. Something terrible is about to happen, you just don't know what it is yet. But you do know that you can't abandon your friends, you have to find them. Then you have to figure out a way to get away from here.

All of that is going to have to wait however. As you step into the motel room, exhaustion takes over. You barely manage to turn on the light and set your luggage down. Walking over to the bed, you almost immediately fall asleep. Unfortunately, you can forget about a good night's sleep. You are haunted by a strange dream.

The images are not altogether clear. Everything seems a little incoherent. But you can still see group of people getting out of a building. Are those empty alcohol bottles? They get into their cars. You can make out parts of an argument. What are they trying to settle? Suddenly, you see an accident. Cars hitting each other in full speed as one of them almost instantly erupts in flames. A woman is being carried away. She must have died in the horrible accident. "Guess we don't have to worry about the police" you hear a man say. "Yeah..." answers another, "Money took care of that!" The dream ends as you see the image of a man wearing a strange mask.



You finally wake up, but you cannot seem to forget the images from your dream. Who was the woman that died? What really happened? What was the cause of the accident? Who is the mysterious figure wearing a mask? You step outside your room to start searching for some answers. But something has changed. The town seems to be deathly quiet. Everyone has simply vanished without a trace.





The eerie stillness of the town is extremely unnerving. You want to get away from here. But you cannot leave. You have to find out what happened to your friends. There must be a way to save them. The entire town is yours to explore. There must be some clues hidden somewhere. You remember the note that was left for you. It said only the warrior could save your friends. What could that mean?

Harvest of Souls is the sequel to the successful horror-themed puzzle adventure game from Sierra Studios. However, while carrying undeniable structural similarities to the original game, Shivers II features a new setting and a new storyline while putting more of an emphasis on the plot than its predecessor. The resulting game features a variety of interesting puzzles, a strong atmosphere, and a few unique elements that set Shivers II apart from many other adventure games.



Harvest of Souls is comes on two CDs and the game is played from a first-person perspective. The game is controlled through a simple mouse-driven interface. You can pan the camera by moving the mouse icon to the edge of the screen. Unless you turn off a setting from the options menu, the mouse icon will change as you hover the cursor over a hotspot. You can attempt interact with a hotspot with a single left click on the mouse. This will allow you to take a closer look at certain objects, put items in your inventory, or use various objects. The inventory is presented as a list of items that appears along the bottom of the screen. In order to use an item, you have to select it from the inventory list and click on an object in the environment.



Harvest of Souls opens as you arrive at the only motel in the town of Cyclone. After having a brief conversation with the motel owner, you make your way to one of the rooms and have the vision about the tragic car accident. When you wake up from the strange dream, the game truly begins.

A quick survey of the room and your belongings reveals several important details. Stepping outside, you face the abandoned town. Somewhere among its buildings you will find the key to unlocking the mystery. But the path is not easy. Before long, you will discover the first Bahos stick as you begin to understand what you are expected to do.

Even though you are not quite sure how he single-handedly accomplished it, the mysterious Darkcloud who sponsored the Trip Cyclone videos seems to be responsible for the disappearances. Now, he is asking you to complete a task for







him. You are to find a series of Bahos sticks hidden throughout the town and deliver them to a sacred place.

You are not quite sure what these sticks are or how you will go about finding every single one of them. But this does seem to be the only way you can hope to obtain clues as to how you can save your friends. Fortunately, you will not be completely alone in your search either. An enigmatic ghost appears before you shortly after you find the first Bahos stick. She seems to be genuinely concerned about your safety. Perhaps she can help you in your quest by offering some much needed guidance.



The storyline in Shivers II works at multiple levels. Your immediate quest, clearly spelled out for you very early in the game, is to locate a set of Bahos sticks that are hidden throughout the town. It will soon become clear that you will need to overcome a series of puzzles in order to find each of the sticks. Once you locate one of the sticks, you have to take it to a special place in the Devil's Mouth Canyon. Before the holy artifact can be placed in the proper position however, you will need to solve one more puzzle.

While you will spend the majority of time playing Shivers II trying to locate the sticks, there is much more to the game than a simple scavenger hunt. Your real goal is to find out what happened to all the missing people and come up with a way to save your friends from Darkcloud. In order to accomplish that, you will have to do more than solving each puzzle you encounter. Clues scattered around the town hold the key to the mystery.



Every document you find has a significance. Every simple note, every picture has a meaning. It will be up to you to understand the significance of the Bahos sticks and find out why they are needed. In your quest to rescue your friends, you will come to realize that every single citizen of Cyclone has his or her secrets. As you examine each building, you can find out the identities of the ghost and Darkcloud. As you discover the true nature of the car accident, you may come to realize that Cyclone is not exactly the pleasant and secluded small town it appears to be.

While Harvest of Souls may not have the most intricate plot to ever grace an adventure game, there are plenty of elements to spark your curiosity from the very beginning and keep you interested until you reach the end of the game. The game directly provides most of the answers through a series of documents, but it also leaves it to the players to deduce part of the underlying mystery. While it will





certainly not take legendary detective skills to understand the events that took place in Cyclone, it is nice that the game offers a few things to contemplate without meticulously explaining every single detail. In order to fully enjoy and appreciate Shivers II, players are just about required to make sure they read every document and uncover as many clues as possible.



Just like the original Shivers, Harvest of Souls has been designed to have an overall creepy atmosphere. The game accomplishes this by combining multiple elements. First of all, the underlying abandoned town setting definitely creates a scary feeling from the very beginning. The effect is magnified by the fact that every single citizen seems to have disappeared while you suffered from a strange nightmare at the motel. They are nearly ten years old, and on occasion they certainly feel very dated, however the graphics still manage to convey the right kind of unsettling mood in many of the game's environments. Then there are the subtle hints about the nature of the town and its surroundings dropped from the very beginning of the game. The rumors of a curse, the disappearances, the regular appearances of the ghost, and the knowledge of the tragic accident all add up to create an overall eerie tone that stays with you throughout the game. As you find out more about the townspeople, Cyclone increasingly feels more twisted and disturbing.

Among the biggest contributors to the game's atmosphere is the music. In many of the locations where you quietly explore the town, the soft yet creepy tunes feels right for underlying tone of the game. Perhaps the best example of this is the track that plays while you are exploring the church. It is a fairly simple tune, but it has a haunting quality that is fitting for both the location you are visiting and the overall mood of the game. In addition, if you pay attention to the lyrics, they actually relate very well to the puzzle you have to solve inside the church. It is not the kind of thing that would make the game, but it is a nice touch nevertheless. In the locations where there is an imminent danger threatening your life, the soundtrack also manages to convey a sense of urgency. But that is only part of the picture. The best part of the Harvest of Souls soundtrack is in the music videos featured in the game.



As it turns out, with Darkcloud's sponsorship, your friends have actually managed to record a number of their songs. While the music or the videos may not necessarily be of exceptional quality, the tunes and the imagery certainly help enhance the game's atmosphere. More importantly, the videos contain hints that are extremely useful in solving some of the game's puzzles. It is by no means impossible to finish the game without the help of the videos, but having them at





your disposal is most certainly useful and you might even find several of them quite entertaining to watch. For those of you who are not thrilled about spending long chunks of time analyzing these videos, it is worth noting that each of them are fairly short, covering only a portion of the song as opposed to the full track. Players do not have to view all of them at the same time either.



As with Shivers, the puzzles are among the biggest highlights of the game in Harvest of Souls. The game offers a nice variety of challenges as you explore the town. Inventory-based puzzles make up only a small portion of the game's challenges. As long as you explore each location carefully, these should not be much of a problem. The music videos are particularly helpful for the inventory-based puzzles. Many of the remaining puzzles are self-contained and put your deductive reasoning skills to test. Finally, a number of challenges require you to uncover some clues before you will be able to find the correct answer. Once again, the music videos are a good source of hints for these puzzles.

While Shivers can be an overall enjoyable experience for adventure gamers, there are a couple of aspects of the game that might be frustrating for some players. First of all, if you do not like tangram-style puzzles, you might want to stay away from Harvest of Souls. Every time you manage to locate a Bahos stick, you will have to take it to the sacred place inside the Devil's Mouth Canyon. Before the Bahos stick can be delivered however, you will have to solve a puzzle by clicking on one of the petroglyphs along the canyon wall. These puzzles work in a very similar fashion to traditional Chinese tangram puzzles. You will have to use a set of geometric shapes to fill in the symbol on the petroglyph. Since you have to complete one for every single Bahos stick, if this style of puzzle does not appeal to you, the overall experience can suffer.

Shivers II also has a couple of slider-like puzzles. Similar to traditional slider puzzles, the goal is to manipulate tiles to create an image. The difference is that you will be moving the tiles using a series of buttons along the top and the left side of the puzzle. While there are only two of these puzzles in the game, if you do not like the style, they can once again take away from the experience.



The last aspect of the puzzles that can be remarkable frustrating is the need to revisit certain locations as you play through the game. While in general Shivers II is good about letting you know you have to go back to another location, there might be a couple of time when you are not quite sure how to proceed. Upon





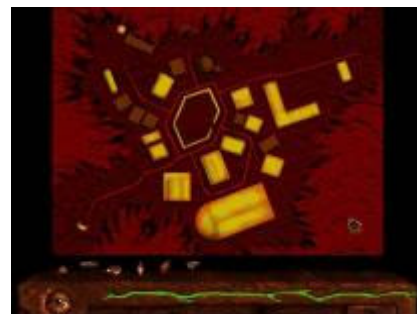
revisiting the locations you have already explored, you might find that something has changed in your absence. It is possible to argue that this adds to the suspenseful feel of the game. After all, somebody is clearly sneaking around without you being able to see them. In practice however, having to go through every single building for a second time just to make sure nothing has change can certainly be annoying.



Fortunately, Harvest of Souls also features a good number of quite creative puzzles that can be highly entertaining to solve. In addition, if you are completely stuck on one of the puzzles, it is possible to bypass it by using a button on the options menu. The game does have a scoring system and using this option costs you points. However, having a lower score at the end of the game might be well worth saving yourself the frustration of being stuck at a puzzle.

It is worth noting that it is possible to die during the course of the adventure. Each time you pick up a Bahos stick, your life essence slowly starts to drain away. If you do not make into the canyon to deliver the stick in time, you will lose the game. In addition, the petroglyphs around the canyon will periodically attack you while you are exploring the canyon, taking away your precious life essence. Thankfully, the gradual drain you have to endure while carrying a Bahos stick will temporarily stop while you try to solve the petroglyph puzzle inside the canyon. As such, you can take as long as you need to solve the puzzle. You will regain a portion of your life essence each time you successfully deliver a stick. In addition, there are a handful of healing symbols scattered around the canyon. Each of these symbols can be used once throughout the course of the game. Fortunately, once learn the layout of the canyon, delivering the Bahos sticks should not take you much time. Thus you should not have to pay too much attention to your life meter as you proceed through the game.

In addition to the option to have the game solve puzzles for you, Harvest of Souls has a couple of features that prove to be extremely helpful without making you feel like you are cheating. The game has a map that is accessible through a button underneath your inventory list. As you gain access to different structures around the town, you will be able to go back to them using the map. This will most likely save you a good chunk of time as you go back and forth between different locations.



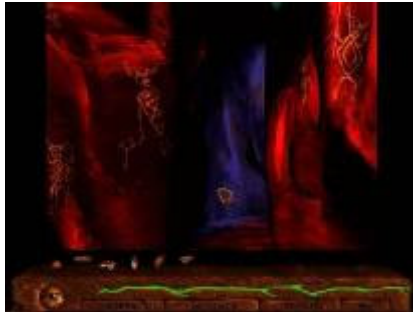
Just like the original game, Shivers II also has a flashback feature that can be quite helpful. All the important documents you find throughout the game will







become accessible through the flashback screen. You can also access the flashback screen to review the music videos and the important cinematic sequences that will be triggered as you go through the game. The flashback functionality not only saves you the trouble of relocating documents, but also provides a way to remember the key events if you stop playing the game for a while.



Viewed as a whole, Shivers II can certainly be an entertaining game to play. While the story is not incredibly complex, it does have multiple layers to keep you interested. Finding out the dark secrets of the townspeople, uncovering the mystery behind the car accident, and understanding the nature of the calamity that has befallen Cyclone makes up for a sufficiently engaging experience.

The game has a strong atmosphere created by the eerie presentation of the town, fitting soundtrack, and cleverly designed music videos. There are a good number of unique puzzles to solve and plenty of clues to uncover as you explore the town. While it ultimately depends on a decision you make at the end of the game, Shivers II also has multiple endings.

Without a doubt, the game has certain negative aspects. The tangram-style puzzles can become tiresome, having to revisit locations you have already explored can be annoying. You will not see much of it, but the acting also most definitely leaves something to be desired. Nevertheless, the positive aspects of the game manage to outweigh its problems. If you enjoy adventure games with a scary theme and an emphasis on the puzzles, consider giving Shivers II a try. It may not be the best game that will ever grace your computer, but Harvest of Souls has plenty of fun to offer as you try and uncover the tragic mystery behind the disappearance of your friends.



The final grade is 86/100.

<p><b>Developer:</b> Sierra Studios  <b>Publisher:</b> Sierra Studios  <b>Platform:</b> PC  <b>Genre:</b> Adventure  <b>Release Date:</b> 1997  <b>Grade:</b> 86/100</p>	<p><b>Minimum System Requirements:</b>  Windows® 95*  486 DX/2 66 Processor  16 MB RAM  15 MB Hard disk space  SVGA Video Card  2x CD-ROM drive</p> <p>*Runs on Windows® XP under Windows NT 4.0 (Service Pack 5) compatibility mode.</p>
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# 5 Days a Stranger

PC Review by Erdalion

5 Days a Stranger was released in 2003 as an independent freeware game by renowned indy developer Ben “Yahtzee” Croshaw and managed to gather several independent gaming awards, mostly for its story and gameplay. It has since spawned two sequels, with a third one scheduled for a 2007 release. With that in mind, let us take a look at the original game to see whether or not it is worthy of the following it has created since its release.



The protagonist of the game is the self-proclaimed “gentleman” cat burglar, Trilby. We join him as he is about to “liberate” the seemingly abandoned DeFoe manor of any valuable items that may be found within it. However, old and seemingly abandoned residences are of course rarely what they seem to be. Thus, instead of completing the job quickly as usual, Trilby finds himself trapped inside the manor, surrounded by other people who have seemingly been trapped there too, and without a viable way out. It is at this point that the player assumes control of Trilby and has to find a way to get out of the manor, during the five day period implied by the game’s title.



5 Days a Stranger puts an emphasis on creating a creepy atmosphere, aiming to disturb the players, rather than directly scare them, in a Resident Evil 1 “zombie dog jumping through the window” way. That is a good thing, given the fact that the visuals of the game are quite simplistic, and realistically, the chances of someone being scared by the game’s graphics alone are pretty slim. Things have changed a lot since the original Doom. There are still a few visual tricks

that may catch you off guard though, such as paintings that change from normal to twisted. Nothing terrifying, but it definitely adds up to the spooky atmosphere of the DeFoe manor. Pixelated gore can also be found during the game, so younger players and those with sensitive stomachs may want to approach 5 Days a Stranger with caution.

The game’s sound also does its part well in creating a creepy atmosphere, with footsteps that can be heard when nobody else is around but Trilby, or the sound of whispers that are audible enough to be heard yet not enough to be able to discern what they say, and so on. The only aspect that leaves something to be





desired is the music. You only get to hear any music during specific events, and even then, while suitably moody, the themes feel somewhat uninspiring. This may have to do with the fact that the music was not created for the game itself, as it was borrowed from a public domain source instead.



The gameplay is what you would expect from the typical third-person adventure game. There are inventory puzzles, dialog puzzles, and a lot of searching for clues. Thankfully there are no blatantly illogical puzzles, so everyone should be able to reach the end of the game, regardless of their previous experience with the genre. It is possible to die during the game, so you are advised to save as often as possible, but given the setting, that only seems appropriate. A neat and functional inventory ensures that the gameplay of 5 Days a Stranger, though hardly ground-breaking, remains solid throughout.

Besides creating a strong atmosphere, 5 Days a Stranger also puts a strong emphasis on delivering an entertaining story. Given the genre and the setting of the game, it is pretty much inevitable that there is a dark mystery to be solved. A malevolent entity apparently haunts the old mansion, and threatens to kill every single person who has been trapped in it. As in all good scary movies, the identity of the serial killer remains a mystery throughout, and everybody is a suspect. And this includes even our protagonist, Trilby. This makes the story a lot more interesting, since you will not be satisfied until you find out who the real killer is.

However, the final resolution is somewhat weak, since the explanation provided for the nature of the killer is lacking in coherence and has some logical gaps. Regardless of that, the game still manages to tell quite a strong, pretty entertaining, and suitably creepy story. It should also be noted that further explanation on the mystery provided on the third game, Trilby's notes, which covers some of the logic gaps of 5 Days a Stranger's resolution.



Character development is quite good too, with Trilby portraying the role of the gentleman quite well, even if he is not the deepest character you will ever meet in a video game. The supporting cast is very interesting as well, especially regarding their interaction with each other. However, we do not get to see them very often, given that the emphasis of the story is on Trilby and the mansion's dark history.





Since its initial release in 2003, 5 Days a Stranger has been re-released as a special edition, which offers a commentary track from the author, a whole new scene, three concept sketches, and the soundtrack of the game. The price of this edition is five dollars, something that most everyone would agree is a very affordable price, but it should be noted that the freeware version is still available for downloading. Deciding whether to buy the special edition or download the freeware one is up to your individual desires, but for fans of the horror genre, 5 Days a Stranger is worth playing through.

5 Days a Stranger can be downloaded at <http://www.fullyramblomatic.com/5days>. The download size is slightly above 1.2MB so it should be easy to get a copy of the game even with a low-bandwidth connection.

The final grade is: 79/100.



**Developer:** Ben "Yahtzee" Croshaw  
**Publisher:** Fully Ramblomatic  
**Platform:** PC  
**Genre:** Adventure  
**Release Date:** 2003  
**Grade:** 79/100

**System Requirements:**  
Windows® 98/ME/2000/XP  
Pentium® 600MHz  
128 MB RAM  
Video Card Capable of 320x200 in 16-bit Color  
Windows Compatible Soundcard  
Keyboard, mouse, speakers  
(Note: This game may well run on slower machines than listed above)



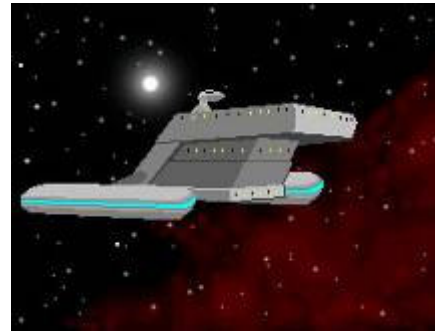




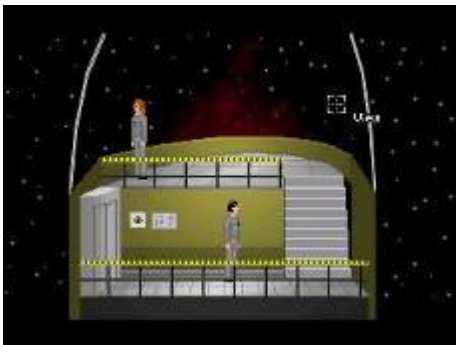
# 7 Days a Skeptic

PC Review by Erdalion

It is pretty much inevitable. When something, anything, be it a movie, a book, or a game, is successful, chances are there is going to be a sequel. After being greeted as one of the best independent adventure games of 2003, and winning several awards in the process, *5 Days a Stranger* was almost guaranteed to have a sequel. But sequels are a risky business as there seems to be an unwritten rule, a curse if you will, which says that they are never to reach the quality of the original. Perhaps with that in mind, the creator Ben "Yahtzee" Croshaw decided to place *7 Days a Skeptic* in a whole new setting and a completely different era.



It has been almost four hundred years since the gentleman thief, Trilby, decided to enter the DeFoe mansion and uncovered its dark secret, his story now pretty much forgotten. The setting this time is more fitting to the new era, a spaceship called the *Mephistopheles*, deep in outer space, filled with only a skeleton crew of six members. But if entering an old and abandoned mansion is ill-advised, being aboard a spaceship called the *Mephistopheles* is just asking for it. So it is not entirely surprising when bizarre killings start taking place aboard the ship, but not before the crew retrieves a mysterious relic floating in space. This is where the skeptic of the title comes in, Doctor Jonathan Somerset, a psychiatrist and the counselor of the ship, the person to which the rest of the crew turn to when things start becoming insane.



During the seven days that the game and the crew's predicament last, the story again unfolds like a good scary movie. Although, it has to be said that this time around you are more likely to have figured out who the killer is, even though his or her motives are not that clear at first. Due to the radical change in setting, the game has been likened to *Jason X*, a *Friday the 13* sequel with pretty much the same premise yet a very different setting than the original movies. But that is where the comparisons end. *Jason X* is more of a self-parody of the franchise and... not that good to begin with, while *7 Days a Skeptic* remains true to its prequel and retains the same level of seriousness.





The supporting characters are developed a lot better than in the first game, and we get to interact with them more, although a few of them (or perhaps all) do meet an untimely end before long. Still, that is to be expected, given that 7 Days a Skeptic is a “slasher” film in game form.



Generally, the game’s story is enjoyable and suitably gory, complete with an almost inevitable plot twist at the very end, that you will either love or hate. Sadly, some of the atmosphere of the original game was lost during the transition to the new setting, given that a spaceship, even in the middle of nowhere, is not as eerie as a tried-and-trusted mansion. Still, there is a lot more gore and violence than in the first game, so that may

make up for the lack of atmosphere, at least as far as fans of the horror genre are concerned.

From a technical point of view, 7 Days a Skeptic is very similar to its predecessor. The graphics are still functional, if a bit unspectacular even for an independent game, although the animation is noticeably better. The music and assorted sound effects are taken from other sources, and for that reason feel generic and do not complement the game very well. One really nice touch to the sound however, is the part where Dr. Somerset is outside the ship, in outer space, and the only thing audible is his own breathing. The interface is also similar to that of the first game, so it is simple and practical but also more flexible this time around. While on the subject, something that many miss while playing the game for the first time is that you are able to look at inventory items, even though it may not be that obvious at first, all you have to do is right-click on them.

This brings us to the gameplay, which is sadly one of the weaker parts of the game. That is not to say that it is unplayable, far from it actually, but it feels inferior to 5 Days a Stranger. In the previous game, the puzzles were logical and you usually had a good idea as to what you are supposed to do next. In 7 Days a Skeptic, you will often find yourself wandering around unsure what to do, and puzzles in general are less logical.



Moreover, the parts where it is possible to die in this game, such as certain chase scenes, seem a lot more unfair this time around. This happens because it is not always clear what you are supposed to be doing in order to survive, not to mention that the time you are given to react is limited. All the above make some parts of the game frustrating, and you may find yourself trying them over and



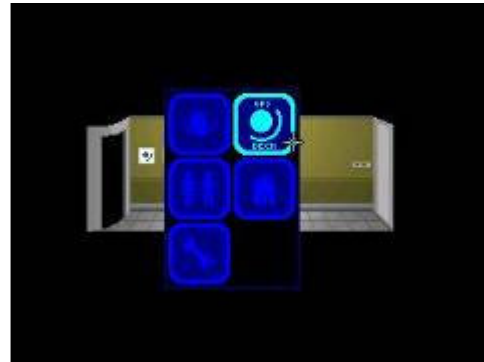
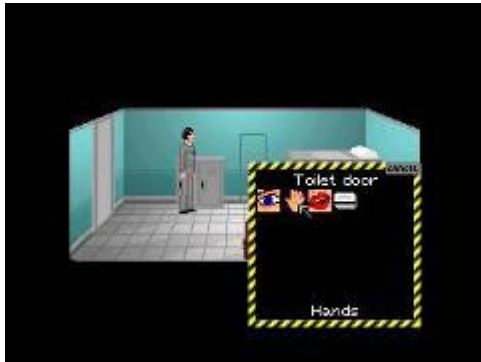


over again. Still, a few clever puzzles here and there do make up for these annoying parts.

In the end, it seems that despite Yahtzee's efforts, 7 Days a Skeptic did not manage to escape the curse of the sequels, as it ends up being inferior to its predecessor. It is still an enjoyable game, and if you enjoyed the first part you should definitely play this one as well, but be prepared for some frustration. As with 5 Days a Stranger, there is a special edition of 7 Days a Skeptic available for 5 dollars, offering several extras such as a commentary track and a new warning system for the chase scenes.

The game can be downloaded at <http://www.fullyramblomatic.com/7days> and is only around 1.3MB and thus easy to download even for modem users.

The final grade is: 71/100.



**Developer:** Ben "Yahtzee" Croshaw  
**Publisher:** Fully Ramblomatic  
**Platform:** PC  
**Genre:** Adventure  
**Release Date:** 2004  
**Grade:** 71/100

**System Requirements:**  
Windows® 98/ME/2000/XP  
Pentium® 600MHz  
128 MB RAM  
Video Card Capable of 320x200 in 16-bit Color  
Windows Compatible Soundcard  
Keyboard, mouse, speakers  
(Note: This game may well run on slower machines than listed above)





# Trilby's Notes

PC Review by Erdalion

Trilby, the classy, gentleman thief and star of 5 Days a Stranger is back, but this time he is a different man. No longer a burglar, four years after the events of the DeFoe manor, Trilby has become an agent for STP, the Special Talents Project (if you have not heard of it, you are not supposed to know it anyway) and we join him as he receives news that the evil he fought back then may still be around.

Trilby is not the only one who has changed during the years between 5 Days a Stranger and Trilby's Notes. The most notable change would be the user interface, which is a throwback to the 1980's, before the mouse-driven control system, when the text parser was still widely used. This may come as a bit of a shock to people who were either too young or were just not into



adventure games back then as it is something completely unfamiliar to them, but in reality it is not bad at all. Yahtzee's explanation of the inclusion of such an old control method was because he wanted to pay homage to those old games that paved the way for future adventures, but mainly because the story of Trilby's Notes reads exactly like that, a collection of notes written by Trilby, so to him it felt more appropriate for the player to in a sense "write" the notes along the way.

Despite what you may feel concerning the justifications behind the text parser, it works. It recognizes quite a few words, so you can type several different kinds of phrases when you want to perform an action. This is a welcome addition, because trying to guess what a game's author had in mind when designing a puzzle can be a terribly frustrating thing. Still, some of the puzzles demand a better than average knowledge of English in order to be solved, so some players may not be too fond of the inclusion of the parser. And regardless of anything else, there is no denying that the point and click control system eliminated some annoying problems related with the parser, after all, there are only so many times you can type "open door" before it becomes tedious.

As far as the puzzles are concerned, with a couple of notable exceptions, it can be said that they could have easily worked with a mouse cursor system as well. Still, that was not the real reason the parser was implemented so we can look beyond that. The puzzles themselves are for the most part logical, and that is a welcome change over 7 Days a Sceptic, the previous game in the series. Still, sometimes it is not clear what you are supposed to be doing next, yet thankfully this problem is not as common as in the aforementioned game. Last thing concerning the puzzles would be the fact that the design of one or two of them is







slightly suspicious, and it feels that their only point is to make the game longer. The following example of such a puzzle can be a bit of a spoiler, so read at your own peril: Why exactly are we not able to pick up the wine bottle the first time we see it? At least most puzzles do not suffer from this problem.



If there was one aspect of the “X Days a Y” games that made them really stand out, then that would be their atmosphere, and the latest installment in the series is no exception to this. The setting of the game, a hotel, is suitably eerie and its rooms and hallways are appropriately disturbing. The graphics are easily the best of the series yet, with more detailed characters and animation than ever

before. That is not to say that they can be compared to commercial games, as they are somewhat lacking even when compared to some of the better looking independent games, but they do their job exceptionally well. The quality of music is also a step up from the previous games, with some haunting tunes that fit perfectly with the game’s mood. It is worth mentioning that the themes have been written exclusively for Trilby’s Notes and for that reason are a lot more fitting than in previous games, and we also get to hear them a lot more often this time around. Some themes do get slightly repetitive after a while, but it is still better than absolute silence. Due to all the above, Trilby’s Notes is easily the scariest and most disturbing game of the series yet, and may even really frighten you once or twice.

Another interesting new feature of the game is the inclusion of two worlds which seem to mirror each other, “our” world and a much darker and dangerous one, in which you are transported during certain parts of the game. This will probably remind you of the same feature in the Silent Hill games, and can be seen as homage to that classic horror series. One more thing that may remind you of the Silent Hill games is the number of locked doors that can never be opened, something that can be slightly annoying for people that like to explore all areas. Still, in a game based so heavily on exploration such as this one, it is probably for the best. In any case, the two worlds in this game intertwine, and for certain puzzles, you may find that for example opening a door in one world means that the correlating door on the other world will be opened too. This makes for some interesting and entertaining puzzles, and it is also a quite original feature for an adventure game.



But perhaps the most important part of the game, as was the case with 5 Days a Stranger as well, is its story. Characterized by a complete lack of humor, with only the exception of two occurrences of dry sarcasm, it is darker, deeper, better-





written and definitely more disturbing than the story of both 5 Days a Stranger and 7 Days a Skeptic. Spanning almost 2000 years and offering a multitude of different characters (many of which are playable, in black-and-white flashback sequences), the story of Trilby's Notes not only covers any loose ends left by the previous games, it also manages to raise a multitude of questions on its own, yet also succeeds in answering all of them before the game is over, in a plausible fashion.



If there is one flaw with the game's writing, then that would be the supporting characters. Trilby himself is well-developed, but everyone else feels like a stock character, from the damsel in distress to the maniac antagonist with no real motive behind his actions. Still, the storyline of Trilby's Notes is plot-driven and not character-driven so this is to be expected, to a point at least. Some people might argue that if

they were interested in plot they would rather watch a soap opera like Dallas, but we are still talking about an independently developed computer game, so in the end the story of Trilby's Notes works.

In the end, Trilby's Notes is the most accomplished game of the series yet, both from a technical point of view, as well as with regards to the quality of its story and writing. I mentioned the curse of the sequels in the review of 7 Days a Skeptic, but I should also mention that there is another unwritten and less-known rule about the third part of a trilogy, which states that part is usually the best one. That is definitely the case here, so if you liked the previous games, you should definitely play Trilby's Notes, and you will be glad to hear that Yahtzee has mentioned that he will release a fourth and final part as well. The game is once again available in two forms, freeware and a special edition which costs 5 dollars, and offers author commentary, the full soundtrack with composer notes and prototype tracks, the Books of Chzo in Word format and an extended ending scene.

The game can be downloaded at <http://www.fullyramblomatic.com/notes>. Trilby's Notes is modem-friendly given the approximately 2MB download size.

<p><b>Developer:</b> Ben "Yahtzee" Croshaw  <b>Publisher:</b> Fully Ramblomatic  <b>Platform:</b> PC  <b>Genre:</b> Adventure  <b>Release Date:</b> 2004  <b>Grade:</b> 71/100</p>	<p><b>System Requirements:</b>  Windows® 98/ME/2000/XP  Pentium® 600MHz  128 MB RAM  Video Card Capable of 320x200 in 16-bit Color  Windows Compatible Soundcard  Keyboard, mouse, speakers  (Note: This game may well run on slower machines than listed above)</p>
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# Mr. Smoozles Goes Nutso

PC Review by Ugur Sener

It sure is hard being the main character of a video game. You can be enjoying the sunny weather on a pleasant afternoon with your friends one minute, only to have your planet invaded by powerful reality-altering aliens in the next. Before you know it, you might find yourself in the middle of an adventure to save the entire world! As if that were not enough, you will never find someone that will give you straight answers or help you out without expecting something in return.



Then again, the position of a video game main character comes with certain benefits. There is the tremendous potential for everlasting digital glory and heroism. There is the satisfaction of saving the world and serving the greater good. Unless that is you happen to be an anti-hero. And of course, there is the most important benefit of having a life that has a save-game function. No risk is too great when another attempt is just a load screen away.

Blissfully unaware of the impending doom, our main character Ed is perhaps enjoying the brilliant, sunny day. It sure looks like a wonderful opportunity to spend some quality time with his friends. But this is not the tale of a gray cat having a delightful picnic with his friends, because the evil Goragons have decided it is high time they try to invade another planet.



It begins as Ed and his friends see the Goragon ship fly over their heads. Being employees of the Galactic Council, Grik and Zoran immediately identify the aliens. The notorious Goragons most assuredly never arrive in peace. These diabolical aliens are known for altering the very fabric of reality. As if taking over planets were not bad enough, they have to shape existence according to their own will.

Unfortunately, Ed and his friends do not seem to have any high-tech gizmos to fend off the invasion. They do not appear to be particularly strong in the force either. In terror, Ed watches the aliens descend upon his planet. It is not long before the Goragons start firing at the crowd staring at the sky. Ed and the others try to get away. Almost everyone manages to escape the initial attack. Mr. Smoozles however is not as lucky as the rest of the group. The powerful blast alters Mr. Smoozles' mind. Picking up a gun with seemingly infinite ammunition, Mr. Smoozles starts to shoot at his friends!





Even as Ed tries to run away, his friends are enveloped by strange beams of light. Within moments, all of them disappear. To make things worse, a reality altering wave is headed towards Ed. Luckily, just when all hope seems sufficiently lost, the heroic cat figures out a way to get away.

Ed finds himself what used to be the house he shared with his friends. Reality seems to be already altered here. The winding corridors do not look familiar. But Mr. Smoozles is right there to make absolutely sure that Ed will learn every corner of the structure. His impressive gun clutched in his paws, Mr. Smoozles starts to chase Ed around the house.

Managing to get into one of the other rooms inside the building, Ed realizes that his friends have been captured. He will have to find a way to shut down the energy fields and release them. But getting rid of the force fields surrounding his friends will not be easy. It will not be the only thing Ed has to do either. It will be up to the heroic cat to fix Mr. Smoozles' mind, find a way to restore normality, stop the alien invasion, and in general save the world from relentless death and destruction. After all, the main character has to have some serious responsibilities.

Thankfully, Ed will not be completely alone in his arduous journey. Before long, the cat will come across a truly exceptional gadget called the Reality Enabler. Chock full of highly useful functionality and fully packed with a lifetime supply of sarcastic comments, the Reality Enabler will be instrumental in Ed's quest to save the entire world.

It is not every day that we get a chance to play a game as charming as Mr. Smoozles Goes Nutso. The first game to be released by Juniper Games, Mr. Smoozles Goes Nutso brings together strong adventure elements and classic arcade style game play mechanics in what amounts to be a highly addictive game. If you enjoy a lighthearted game with that will give you a few laughs Mr. Smoozles can certainly keep you entertained for quite a number of hours.



The game opens with a comic-book style introduction sequence that shows the attack of the Goragons. These infamous reality-altering aliens are supposed to be imprisoned for eternity. Yet they have somehow managed to escape their prison and launched an invasion against Ed's world. With most of his friends captured, Mr. Smoozles turned into a furry orange death machine, and no super







heroes in sight to save the day, it is up to Ed to clean up the mess and get everything back to normal.

Mr. Smoozles Goes Nutso is played from a third-person perspective and features an isometric top-down view. From the moment the application loads and you hear the music on the main menu, there is an unmistakable retro feel to the game. It is present in the graphics, the sound effects, the soundtrack, and the way the game plays. If you have spent any length of time with older consoles such as the Sega Master System, the game will most likely feel instantly familiar.



In many ways, its old-school charm is the greatest strength of the game. At first glance, Mr. Smoozles Goes Nutso can seem like a simple game best suited for casual gamers or children, and that is true to a certain extent. The game could easily be played for short amounts of time, experiencing the adventure at a relaxed pace. The cartoon-like style is free of content that might be considered inappropriate for younger audiences.

However, there is a deeper quality to Mr. Smoozles Goes Nutso. Packed within the imminent charming and relaxed tone of the game, there is a fairly entertaining storyline with plenty of twists and turns. There are also many nuances that are likely to be appreciated by the more seasoned gamers. Whether it is a joke about an older adventure game, a small jab at role-playing games, or a presentation style you may not have experienced in a while, Mr. Smoozles Goes Nutso has a lot to offer those who are willing to investigate all the details of the game.



The game features a fairly simple keyboard-driven interface. Players can move Ed around using the arrow keys on the keyboard. In order to pick up an item and put it in your inventory, all you have to do is walk over it. The Enter key is used to interact with other characters and objects. The Ctrl key allows you to examine objects or read notices that might appear on walls or computer screens.

Keyboard shortcuts are available to give players easy access the load and save game screens. Additional shortcuts are presented throughout the game as Ed obtains a number of special items.

In general, going through Mr. Smoozles Goes Nutso, players will engage in two primary activities. The exploration portion of the game will have you speaking to other characters, searching for important items, and looking for clues as to how you might be able to put an end to the alien invasion. In the meantime, players will also have to watch out for Mr. Smoozles' relentless attacks. In several of the





game's environments, the crazed cat will chase Ed around the screen. You will have to make good use of your surroundings to avoid getting hit by Mr. Smoozles' gun.

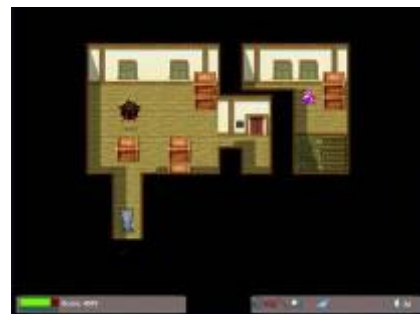


The orange cat will not be the only threat you will face either. You will have to watch out for deadly mines and robots bent on blasting away Ed. For the most part, you will have to use your surroundings to avoid getting hit by your enemies' attacks. However, Ed will not remain completely defenseless in his quest to save the world. With some exploration, you might find a couple of things to help you survive the journey.

It is also worth noting that Ed is quite a durable cat. You will start the game with a full health bar and three extra lives. Each time you get hit by an enemy attack, a portion of your health bar will disappear. When the entire health bar is depleted, one of your extra lives will be spent to refill it. If you lose all of your lives, the game will be over. Fortunately, there are a couple of things you can do to help Ed stay alive. You might find extra lives scattered around the environment. You might also find energy shields that offer Ed some protection.

Throughout the course of the game, you will have an opportunity to visit plenty of interesting locations. It will not be long before you make your way out of the initial building. Among other places, your quest will lead you into the sewers and a factory covered with high-tech equipment. You will also have a chance to visit a number of reality vortexes. A result of the Goragons' attempts at altering reality, these vortexes make up pocket dimensions that play as mini-puzzles. You will have to figure out a way to seal them if you want to restore normality.

While the game world is not massive, it does feature a good number of places to explore while giving players plenty of challenges to overcome along the way. Whether you are trying to avoid a series of mines or looking for an essential item, the game is fairly good at giving you individual objectives gradually leading up to your ultimate goal. As long as you examine your surroundings carefully and pay attention to details, you should hopefully not spend too much time aimlessly wandering.



Ed will also encounter a number of interesting characters during his adventure. Mr. Smoozles Goes Nutso is not a game that is extremely heavy on dialog. However, you will still get to have a number of fun conversations full of lighthearted humor. You will get to learn what it truly means to be a patient





fisherman in one scene while meeting very unusual creatures called Smoos in the next. Through the comic strips available on the walls, the references to other video games, and plenty of sarcastic comments from Ed and the Reality Enabler, it is very clear that Mr. Smoozles Goes Nutso does not take itself too seriously. That underlying humorous yet unpretentious attitude adds to the appeal of the game.



In general, the puzzles featured in Mr. Smoozles Goes Nutso deal with finding the correct items and using them in the right spot. You will also frequently need to consult other characters for information pertaining to your current quests. In addition, players will have to occasionally figure out how to operate a series of buttons to unlock a door. For the most part, a careful examination of the environment will reveal the answers. One nice

thing about having a tool like the Reality Enabler is that the machine remembers critical information for you. When you recover an important code, you do not need to make note of it on a piece of paper. When the time comes to use that piece of information, the Reality Enabler will automatically remind Ed.

The only real complaint about the game's challenges is the need to go back and forth between the various locations. While the world of Mr. Smoozles Goes Nutso is interesting to explore, players will occasionally have to traverse the same screens multiple times. This is not a huge problem, but it can slow down your overall progress and sometimes feel a bit tedious as you wish Ed would run a little faster. A map feature to simplify some of this navigation could have been useful.

If you are concerned about the arcade sequences, it is worth noting that Juniper Games has given players to select the difficulty setting at the beginning of the game. There are separate settings for the arcade portion of the game and the puzzles. While the game is quite manageable on the normal arcade difficulty, you can set the level to easy in order to make Mr. Smoozles and the other enemies less of a problem.



Players can also choose to receive additional clues with the puzzles. These extra clues should make it significantly easier to overcome many of the game's challenges. Since Mr. Smoozles Goes Nutso is not too difficult in the first place, it might be recommendable to at least try the game under the normal adventure setting.





Playing Mr. Smoozles Goes Nutso can certainly be an entertaining experience. Sure, the game is not a testament to the latest achievements in 3D graphics. It is not filled with the most creative ensemble of puzzles and it does not feature an exceptionally intricate plot. However, the game has an inherent charm that makes it quite memorable nonetheless. The look and feel of the game, the sound effects, and the music are almost assured to bring back memories to the seasoned gamers.



There is something immediately appealing about the cartoon-like presentation and the colorful, vibrant environments. The soft tunes of the game's soundtrack feel extremely appropriate for the underlying retro tone. They also manage to successfully set a mood for each scene that is appropriate for the environment you are exploring or the events that are transpiring. The storyline remains sufficiently interesting throughout the

game, giving some depth to the initial premise while staying on the humorous side and giving Ed plenty of tasks to accomplish. Though not exceptionally difficult, the puzzles do require players to pay attention to the environment and examine things carefully. The arcade sequences add some excitement to the game without shifting the focus away from the storyline or disrupting the casual tone.

Mr. Smoozles Goes Nutso is a truly charming game that can be easily recommended to players looking for a lighthearted and relaxed gaming experience. Between the old-school feel and the humorous tone of the game, there is definitely something to enjoy. Besides, how can you possibly dislike a game with a name like Mr. Smoozles Goes Nutso and a primary objective that literally asks you to save the world?

The final grade is 83/100.

Visit the official Juniper Games Web site at [www.Juniper-Games.com](http://www.Juniper-Games.com) to purchase the game.

<p><b>Developer:</b> Juniper Games  <b>Publisher:</b> 720 Games  <b>Platform:</b> PC  <b>Genre:</b> Arcade Adventure  <b>Release Date:</b> September 2006  <b>Grade:</b> 83/100</p>	<p><b>System Requirements:</b>  Windows® ME/2000/XP  Pentium® 1.8 GHz processor  256 MB RAM  32 MB video card  40 MB hard disk space  Direct X 8 or above</p>
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# Eternal Darkness: Sanity's Requiem

GameCube Review by Erdalion

Eternal Darkness is a horror game that was released by Nintendo, a company usually associated with more cute and child-friendly games, as part of their attempt to relinquish their image for their Gamecube console. However, given that both publishers Nintendo and developers Silicon Dreams are renowned for the originality of their products, this game could not be just another entry to the horror genre, and you will realize this as soon as you load the game for the first time, while a stanza from Edgar Allan Poe's "The Raven" is recited to you.



From a less lyrical point of view, Eternal Darkness tried to break new ground into the tired horror genre, with the use of numerous playable characters, a combat system based on magic rather than weapons and the game's most advertised feature, the "sanity effects" system. The latter was promised to scare the players directly, as it was supposed to blunt the line between the game and the player. Read on if you wish to know if it succeeded in doing so or not...



The aspect of the game that is most likely to grab your attention as soon as you start playing is the story. It all starts when young college student Alex Roivas is called in her family manor to identify the body of her uncle Edward, who has died under mysterious circumstances. Soon thereafter, Alex will find herself entangled in a conspiracy that spans almost two millennia, involving beings beyond her deepest fears.

The story in general is gripping, deep and will almost definitely remind you of H.P. Lovecraft novels sooner or later. Everything from the super-powerful, extra-dimensional beings that threaten to enter and destroy our world, to the many different characters without much apparent depth, the story of Eternal Darkness borrows heavily from Lovecraft's mythology and literary techniques, even though it never openly admits it. Or almost never, in fact, since one of the chapters is named after a Lovecraft story, the "Lurking Horror", which can be seen as a way of paying homage to one of the most renowned writers in the horror genre.

It has to be said that there are a few hiccups in the story, for example one of the characters at one point comes face to face with a corpse god and remains undaunted in his presence, only to be petrified with fear by two normal human





guards a few minutes later. However, regardless of minor inconsistencies and any ties to pre-existing literature, the fact remains that *Eternal Darkness* has a strong story that should appeal to fans of the genre.



*Eternal Darkness* was released for the Gamecube in late 2002, and what is more, it did not begin as a Gamecube project. Instead, it was originally intended to be a Nintendo 64 game, a console that came out in 1996. During the transition, it did not receive a full graphical overhaul and even retained some of special effects from the old version. As a result it was never the most graphically accomplished game when it first came out, and it goes without saying

that it has not gotten any better looking since. That is not to say that it is an ugly game, as some of the backgrounds and character models are really well-made, but it would never win any awards for visual accomplishments.

The presentation of the game, on the other hand, is extremely well done, with cinematic camera angles that often pan and twist around, giving you hints that something wicked is lying in that corner right in front of you, but never letting you see it until you get too close to it. This may sound more annoying rather than entertaining in theory, but it is much better in practice. Some of the visual effects also add to the high presentation values of the game, with the one that stands high above all others being the room containing the *Tome of Eternal Darkness*, a place that is most likely to give you the chills the first time you see it. All in all, the game's presentation creates a very spooky and creepy atmosphere, which is of course ideal for a game of this genre.

While on the subject of atmosphere, special mention should go to the game's voice-overs. In a genre that has suffered from some atrocious voice acting (*Resident Evil 1*, anyone?), *Eternal Darkness* brings some of the best voice acting to ever grace a videogame. Characters come to life through their voices, and their stories are easier for us to relate to when they are so well-told.



Other aspects that add to the game's atmosphere are the music and sound effects. Mysterious footsteps can be heard, as if from nowhere, doors open and close at odd times and whispers can be heard throughout the Roivas villa, when nobody else is around there besides Alex. The musical themes are also suitably creepy and moody, and though you may not find yourself humming them long after the game is over, they are still good enough.





As it has been mentioned before, the most advertised aspect of the game was the “sanity effects” system. All playable characters besides Pious have three energy bars, a health bar, a mana bar, and a sanity bar. The first two are pretty much self-explanatory, but the third one is directly related to how often you will experience these effects. This bar starts to drain as your characters come across opponents and circumstances that defy logic, and they start to lose their grip on reality.



You can replenish your sanity by performing a finishing move on your opponents after killing them, but you will find that often your sanity meter is being drained faster than you can recover it, and before long it will reach a low point. When this occurs, several weird things will start happening, I do not want to reveal what these effects are because it is better to experience them for yourselves, but I will say that the most innocent ones are just minor annoyances which you will pick up quickly, while the most potent ones will probably make you want to throw your joypad away. However, after all is said and done, this sanity system is nothing more than an entertaining gimmick, and little else. After a while you are most likely to have seen most of them, so you may even grow bored of some, and generally, they are not really that scary, in all honesty. Still, the ones that catch you off-guard *really* do so, and you may even find yourself fumbling for your “Alt”, “Control” and “Delete” keys on your Gamecube joypad.

Yet while the sanity effects were disclosed long before the game was completed and perhaps for that reason unable to live up to the hype, the Magick system was a well-kept secret until the release of Eternal Darkness. This made for a pleasant surprise, since this is perhaps the most interesting and downright entertaining



part of the game. There are several spells to compose through various runes that you can find throughout the game, and some of them you may even find yourself and experiment with them for results. The fact that Magick plays such an important role when it comes to fighting the various enemies in the game means that this part of the game is much more unique than the average horror game, and for that matter, a lot more entertaining than most.

Sadly, the game suffers from a clumsy control system that will get you killed oftentimes, even though you did everything right, and utilized the aiming system (which lets you target individual body parts) to the fullest. It is not so bad that it makes the game unplayable, but it does mean that you are likely to be frustrated with it a few times during the course of the game. Luckily, there are three





difficulty levels to choose (though it is not *that* obvious when you are given the choice) so if you have problems with the fights, you may opt for an easier difficulty level.

Lastly, a more elaborate presentation needs to be made on one other part of *Eternal Darkness* that makes it stand out from the crowd of horror games, its story. Its pacing may be somewhat slow, especially in the beginning, and definitely nothing like the action-packed storylines of the *Resident Evil* games, and it may not be as heavily influenced by symbolism as the storylines found in the *Silent Hill* games, but it is still special in its own way. The best thing about it is that it is multi-layered, so if you wish you may opt to ignore it completely and just focus on the gameplay. You do not have to be afraid of any hour-long cut-scenes. On a surface level the story is quite simple and told in short parts.



However, if you decide to delve deeper into it, you will find a lot of hidden symbolism and themes that may have eluded you otherwise. For example, the names of the main characters are not randomly chosen. The last name of the family that would become the saviors of humankind, "Roivas", is "savior" spelled backwards, while the betrayer of humanity, the man who pledged his life to the ancients is, ironically enough, called Pious, which as you may know means a devoutly religious person. It is also worth adding that the story has a few clever twists, one of which is probably going to catch you completely unaware. There is even an ultimate ending, once you complete all three different paths, but the less said about its quality, the better off we all are.

One last point on the subject of the game's storyline and its overall writing is the quality of characterization. While not all characters are equally explored (something expectable, given the sheer number of characters and how little time you spend with some), the ones that are explored make a prime example of how to develop a character in a game. From little things that some characters use to regain some of their sanity back, such as prayer and alcohol, to Maximillian Roivas' autopsies of the extra-dimensional monsters, such intricacies help make these characters seem more real, and their tales more plausible.

My favorite example of this would be the tragedy of the aforementioned Maximillian Roivas, a renowned doctor of his time and a man who lived during the Enlightenment, the dawning of the age of Reason, a time where all beliefs in anything supernatural were dismissed as mere superstitions. When this man of science is confronted by beings that defy all reason, his







mind is not capable of containing the madness he is facing, and this is chillingly obvious in his autopsy reports of said beings, through which we can see his gradual fall into insanity. All this is but a side-part of the game, and something that some players may ignore altogether, but this presentation of a man losing his sanity is so masterfully done, so wonderfully executed by the actor providing the voice-overs that it may very well scare you a lot more than any insanity effect could.



To summarize the above, *Eternal Darkness: Sanity's Requiem* is a memorable addition to a genre that became stale all too soon, as it brought several new features with it. While the controls leave much to be desired, and the sanity effects did not live up to the developers' ambitions, the unique combat system, the strong storyline and the high quality presentation make for a solid gaming experience. Sadly, *Eternal Darkness*

never achieved high sales so it is unlikely that we will see another game from Silicon Knights in the same universe. However, if you are a fan of both Nintendo and the horror genre, especially an H.P. Lovecraft fan (and if you are, allow me to commend you on having such diverse interests) you will find much to love in this well-executed game.

The final grade is: 89/100



**Developer:** Silicon Knights  
**Publisher:** Nintendo  
**Platform:** GameCube  
**Genre:** Survival Horror  
**Release Date:** October 2002  
**Grade:** 89/100





# Resident Evil (GameCube remake)

GameCube Review by Ugur Sener

Looking out the helicopter's window, you can see the dark forest. It is a seemingly calm night in the Arclay Mountains. But you can hardly bring yourself to relax. There is just something very sinister, very foreboding about the forest below. You can almost feel that it is hiding something... A secret far worse than what you could have expected to uncover when you got on the helicopter with your teammates.



You are a member of S.T.A.R.S., or Special Tactics and Rescue Squad, a unique police unit created to handle the most challenging situations. As you draw ever closer to your destination, you think about tonight's mission. You have been in dangerous situations many times, but reflecting on recent events still makes you uneasy.

Recently, a number of people have been found dead near Raccoon City. But this is hardly the kind of murder case your department is accustomed to handling. The victims were not strangled, stabbed, or shot to death... By all indications, it looked like they had been eaten alive. The bizarre occurrences have put the Raccoon City police department on high alert. Half of the S.T.A.R.S. unit, the Bravo Team, has been sent to investigate the murders. Yet currently, all contact with the Bravo Team is lost. It is now up to you and the rest of the Alpha Team to figure out what happened to your friends.



You eventually manage to locate the Bravo Team's helicopter. It seems to have crash-landed into the forest. Upon investigating the wrecked helicopter, you find the mutilated corpse of the pilot. What could have caused this? You do not have much time to contemplate however. Your team is attacked a group of guard dogs... But these are no ordinary creatures. In terror, you see that some of them are missing parts of their bodies. How is it that they are still alive

with those injuries? They look savage and menacing. Whatever force is keeping the animated has also given them great strength and ferocity. They do seem vulnerable to your bullets, but you do not have enough ammunition to fight all of them.

You want to run back to your helicopter and get away from this place. Unfortunately, your pilot Brad has the same idea and he is not even willing to wait for the rest of the team! The helicopter takes off and flies away. There is only





one thing you can do. You have to try and outrun these beasts. Perhaps somewhere in this damned forest there is a sanctuary. Then you see it. There is a mansion in the distance. If you can only make it there, you might at least be able to protect yourself from the horrors of the forest.



You and your remaining teammates make a desperate dash for the mansion. The dogs give you chase, trying to rip you into pieces. You run as hard as you can, only turning back to shoot at the beasts that are getting too close. You finally manage to make it to the mansion. But your team somehow gets separated. You do not know whether or not everybody has survived. It is too dangerous to go outside and search for them.

You are effectively trapped inside the mansion. You can tell that this is a huge structure. It looks like the building was erected many years ago in this secluded location. You can't help but wonder what must be hidden in its winding corridors and numerous rooms. The mansion is far from the city, far from civilization. Anything could have been going on here, completely unnoticed and unregulated.

The lights are on in the entrance hall; at least the power supply seems to be intact. At first glance, the building seems to be abandoned. But after the horror that you just witnessed in the forest, you cannot feel safe inside the mansion. What happened to the Bravo Team? Where did the rest of your teammates disappear? Just how many of those strange creatures are out there? How did they come to exist in the first place? You have many questions and you want to find your missing companions. Perhaps somewhere in this building you will find your answers. Perhaps you will find something that can help you find your friends. It is time to uncover the mansion's secrets. You know that the nightmare is just beginning...

Resident Evil is among Capcom's longest-running and most successful series. Sure, the original Resident Evil was not the first game that had a creepy atmosphere. Sure, it is all too easy to poke fun at certain aspects of the series. But nevertheless, the series has offered several greatly entertaining games over the years and played an instrumental role in thrusting the survival-horror subgenre into the mainstream.



The original Resident Evil was released in 1996 for the PlayStation gaming system. The game told the story of a special police squad sent into investigate some bizarre murders and the disappearance of the first team that was in charge of the investigation. Players had the chance to experience the game from the





perspectives of two police officers. With limited ammunition and healing items, players had to explore the entire mansion to unlock its secrets. You were deliberately unequipped to defeat every single enemy you encountered. You had to somehow survive the night and find a way to reach safety.



The original Resident Evil became a huge success, inspiring a number of sequels and influencing a number of other titles. But by the time Nintendo released the GameCube console, Resident Evil's graphics had become quite dated. Thus, when Capcom agreed to develop Resident Evil games for the GameCube system, the first project was to remake the original game. But the development team did far more than upgrading the graphics.

Besides stunning visuals that still look great four years after the release of the remake, the GameCube version of Resident Evil features a redesigned mansion with new areas to explore and a host of new challenges overcome. The end result is a game that stays true to the storyline of the original while still offering a distinct experience that both newcomers and fans of the first version can enjoy.

Resident Evil features two playable characters. Chris Redfield and Jill Valentine are both members of S.T.A.R.S. You choose the character you will be controlling at the beginning of the game. The introduction fills you in on the bizarre murder cases that have been recently troubling the Raccoon City area. After the encounter with the twisted guard dogs, you assume control of your character at the entrance of the mansion.

There are many doors leading deeper into the mansion from the entrance hall. The stairs in front of you give you access to the upper levels. It is immediately clear that you are in a sizable structure. Depending on the character you chose, events will unfold somewhat differently, but just a few minutes into the game, you will encounter your first zombie chewing on a corpse in one of the earlier rooms. As the zombie stops eating to turn his attention on the fresh meat that just walked in, you will begin to understand the nature of the nightmare you have just entered.



Your supplies will be extremely limited. As Jill, you start the game with a simple handgun and a small number of bullets. As Chris, your only weapon will be a knife, even though it will not be long before you find a gun. Of course having a measly handgun hardly means you are prepared to tackle every creature the game will throw at you. Unless you are lucky enough to get a headshot that will kill them instantly, it will take more than a couple of bullets to bring down even the basic zombies. Don't assume the zombie is dead just because it has







collapsed on the floor either. Unless you see a pool of blood oozing out of the undead creature, it will be standing back up to attack you again in just a moment. As you can expect, that is only the tip of the iceberg. Those vicious dogs from the introduction movie are not only found in the forest. And of course, the mansion has plenty of other monsters that are just waiting for you to come their way.

You are in the middle of a nightmare and you simply do not have the supplies to neutralize every single threat. Don't expect too much help from the other S.T.A.R.S. members either. Only a few minutes into the game it will become very clear that you are for the most part on your own. You will encounter a few other characters from time to time, but do not count on them to come to your aid whenever you are in danger. You are in the middle of a nightmare and you can only rely on yourself to survive.



The deliberate limitation on your supplies immediately gives Resident Evil, and many other survival horror games for that matter, a significantly different feel than the average action-adventure. When you spend five of your fifteen bullets to bring down the first zombie and you have only explored three rooms within the large building, you will know that the journey won't be easy. However, that is not to say Chris and Jill are incapable of fending for themselves.



First of all, both Jill Valentine and Chris Redfield are well-versed in handling firearms. They aim with a great deal of accuracy and can even occasionally inflict critical wounds on your enemies. And while the supplies are greatly limited, you will come across additional ammunition and even better weapons as you go through the mansion. Of course, you shouldn't expect the best weapons to be just handed to you. Chris and Jill might have to do a little bit of work first. More importantly, once you get used to the game's controls, you will find that it is quite possible to outrun your enemies in many situations. Especially in large open areas, you should be able to run around the zombies and avoid getting attacked.

When you are facing certain enemies, you can also take advantage of one of the new features introduced with the remake of Resident Evil. As you explore the mansion, you will come across defense items scattered throughout the place. If a zombie does manage to get a hold of Jill or Chris, you can use these items to attack them before they bite into your character's flesh. The defense item will be used up, but at least you will not sustain any damage. Both Jill and Chris can use daggers as defense items. Each character also has a unique item. While Chris will come across flash napalms, Jill will find battery packs to be used with her





stun gun. Flash napalms are particularly effective since Chris can stuff one into a zombie's mouth and shoot it to make the creature's head blow apart. Sure, it is gruesome, but hardly goriest thing you will see in the game.



The storyline will progress slowly as you explore the mansion. Resident Evil is not quick about giving you all the answers. As you gain access to different parts of the building, you will find a series of documents that will give you a few hints. But you will be very well into the game before you understand why the mansion is infested with numerous monsters. The plot will probably be most interesting if you have not played any of the other games in the series or seen the Resident Evil movies. Not knowing the true nature of the creatures and what happened to your teammates during the early parts of the game would most likely enhance the experience. However, even if you know everything about the earlier Resident Evil games, it should still be interesting to go through the redesigned mansion and explore all the new areas that have been included for the GameCube remake.

While the story behind Resident Evil may not be exceptionally detailed or thought-provoking, that is not exactly meant to be the strongest aspect of the game either. Being a survival horror game, Resident Evil focuses on creating a strong atmosphere. Many aspects combine to deliver a feeling of suspense and imminent danger throughout the game. First there is the design of the mansion. In the main building alone, there are numerous rooms to explore. At the beginning, many of the rooms are locked, keeping you wondering what might be behind them. Even some of the most ordinary rooms have a certain creepiness to them. At all times, you know full well that something might be jump at you from around the corner. To further intensify the effect, you gain access to areas of the structure slowly, frequently having to traverse certain corridors multiple times, knowing that a new threat or a monster you did not kill earlier will be waiting for you. While Resident Evil may not attempt to go deep and try to scare you at a psychological level, it still manages establish a sense of danger that makes you ever slightly hesitate when you open the door into a new room.

The game does not confine players to the mansion either. There are several other areas you will get to explore through the course of your investigation that are actually remarkably creepier than old building. The surrounding areas are home to a number of creatures that you will not want to disturb at all. One particular area of the game that is done exceptionally well is a room in the backyard of the mansion. After a long series of stairs, you will find yourself underground in a dimly lit room. Along the left wall are four slots for





different masks. On the opposite site of the room, there is a coffin hanging from the ceiling. It is being held up by four chains. There are gears mysteriously turning around the room, perhaps keeping whatever is inside the coffin locked. You have to discover the room very early in the game, but there is no doubt you will be returning to this place at some point. You know you will be facing something terrible. Perhaps it is a tad over the top, but the presentation still manages to build up suspense.

Further adding to the game's atmosphere are the graphics and the music. The developers have most certainly done an amazing job at the graphics department. The lighting effects and the rendering of the individual is truly remarkable. There is obvious attention to detail. You really get the impression that the developers were taking everything into account to make the mansion and its surrounding areas as creepy as possible. Even what could be considered insignificant corridors and passageways you explore in the later parts of the game look great. While pretty graphics alone would not have been enough to create the game's atmosphere, the detailed and realistic presentation of the environments certainly helps you get into the game and intensifies the eeriness of the mansion.



The character models are also fairly detailed; however they do not match the sophistication of the environments you will be exploring. In general the models look nice from a distance, but the facial expressions can feel a little lacking at times. The main characters occasionally appear somewhat devoid of emotion. It is not so much that the modeling is lacking in quality, it is simply noticeably less impressive than the rendering on the locations you get to explore.



The soundtrack is very fitting for the game. While it may not be exceptionally memorable, the music always fits the current scene and enhances the overall mood. The unsettling soft tunes definitely magnify the feeling suspense created as you explore the game's environments. The sound effects are also nicely handled throughout the game. From ambient sounds to the meaningless groaning of the zombies, the sounds feel fitting for the game. The

voice acting may not be the best you will ever encounter in a video game, but it certainly gets the job done and the characters for the most part sound believable. In fact, the voice acting and the animations are actually an improvement over the questionable production values of the full-motion video sequences from the original game.





The actual game play in Resident Evil has two major components. While you are exploring the mansion looking for important items and trying to find ways to gain access to new areas, you will also have to defend yourself against various monsters. You will have to solve a number of puzzles before all the mysteries of the mansion and its surrounding areas are revealed.



Especially for players who are experienced in adventure games, the puzzles should not be very challenging. For the most part, you will just be exploring each room looking for items that will allow you to get into new areas. At the outset of the game, most of the mansion and the surrounding areas will be inaccessible. It will be up to you to solve the puzzles and find the necessary items that will help you make progress. Thankfully, there is a little more to the puzzles featured in Resident Evil than finding a key in one room and using it to unlock another. Some of the rooms feature puzzles that will require you to pay attention to details and manipulate various mechanisms before you can acquire an item you need. While the solution is usually as simple as using the correct item on the right spot, you do occasionally have to do a little more work, which can make the game more engaging.

The key items you need to pick up at each location are clearly highlighted, making them very difficult to miss as long as you make sure you look at every corner of the room. However, on many occasions, finding the item is not enough. You may also need to take a look at it in your inventory to figure out what it is. If the item is a box or a book, taking a close look at it might even help you discover an altogether different item.

Finding the solution to the various featured throughout the game may not be exceptionally challenging. However, this is partly justified by a very significant restriction that increases the difficulty of the entire game. The restriction is that the character you are controlling can only carry a limited number of items at any given time. Chris can only have six items while Jill can carry eight. You will have to distribute all the weapons, ammunition,



healing items, and puzzle items across those six or eight slots. The only exceptions are Jill's lock-picking tools, Chris's lighter, and the special defense items that do not take up space like other items. Being limited to a very small amount of inventory space forces you to choose the items you are actively carrying very carefully. If you want to make progress, you simply cannot carry too many weapons or healing items. You will also always want to leave one or two spaces open for additional items you may find in rooms you have not explored.







Thankfully, Resident Evil does have a feature that prevents the inventory space restriction from being too much of a problem. Scattered throughout the game, you will come across several item boxes. These special boxes serve as storage spaces for all the items you do not want to actively carry. Thus, if you pick up a puzzle item you cannot use yet or if you accumulate extra weapons and healing items you don't want to take with you, Jill and Chris can store them in the boxes. Even though it does not make any sense at all, the boxes are connected to one another. Once you place an item into one of the boxes, you will be able to retrieve it from all of them. Illogical or not, this is a greatly helpful feature and a great time-saver. Besides, if you can accept Jill and Chris are trapped in a building filled with animated corpses, it should not be so hard to accept the same building also has a network of interconnected boxes that make your life easier.



There are a couple of other features that help you during the exploration and puzzle solving parts of Resident Evil. First of all, it is possible access the inventory screen to review the important documents you have found. Since some of these documents will contain hints to help you with the puzzles, it is nice to have access to them without having to go back to the place where you first found the document. A much more helpful feature is the map. As you explore the mansion, you will find maps of various areas. When you access the map, the rooms you have already explored will be marked, making it easy to figure out where you might need to go next. In addition, the map uses color coding to



indicate whether or not you have picked up all of the items available in any given room. While this includes items you may not have necessarily wanted to pick up, such as extra healing items you do not really need, it is still helpful in letting you know there is more to do in certain parts of the mansion. If you get stuck, the map will more than likely give you a few suggestions as to what areas you can revisit to make sure you did not miss an important detail.

Depending on what other games you have played, the control structure in Resident Evil can initially feel rather awkward. The basic controls for performing various actions are simple. You can examine various objects, pick up inventory items, or use objects with the touch of a button. Holding down the aim button, you can target your enemies and prepare to shoot. You will have to press a separate button to pull the trigger. Separate buttons are assigned to opening the map and the inventory screen. You can also hold down a button to make your character run.





It is the movement controls that can get a little tricky when you first start the game. Pushing the analog stick in any given direction will not cause your character to move that way. It is only possible to move Jill and Chris either towards or away from the direction they are facing. Moving the stick to the left or to the right turns your character in the indicated direction. Thus, if you are used to playing games where characters can turn around very quickly and move in the direction you push the analog stick, it might take a few minutes to adjust to Resident Evil's controls. Especially when you first start the game, it might be challenging to outrun the monsters trying to rip you apart. However, with any luck, you should get used to the movement controls after a few minutes of playing. By the time you reach the end of the game, you might even come to like the structure.



While you have to deal with having a limited amount of ammunition, the actual fighting in Resident Evil is fairly simple and straightforward. Since both Jill and Chris can automatically aim very accurately, you do not have to worry too much about targeting. In the event that the enemy you are facing is on the floor or above you, it is possible to use the analog stick to aim up or down. Besides the occasional requirement to adjust your aim and reload your weapon, the only complication in combat is that Jill and Chris cannot move when they are aiming at a target. If the enemy is getting too close, you will have to let go of the targeting button, put some distance between you and the monster, and try shooting from your new position. Since some of the enemies are quite fast, this does mean you will have to engage in a good deal of running around during some of the fights, particularly the boss fights.

The fact that Jill and Chris can only endure a fairly limited amount of damage can also complicate things. But then again, how many bites from a zombie or claw attacks from a monster can they be really expected to handle? Nevertheless, despite all the complexities involved, the fights in Resident Evil do not require a huge amount of dexterity on the part of the player. The true challenge is in making sure you have powerful guns and enough ammunition when you have no choice but to face a strong monster.



One new feature introduced in Resident Evil that changes the fighting experience is the inclusion of the "crimson head" zombies. In the original version, once you shot a zombie a sufficient number of times and saw the pool of blood underneath it, the creature did not come back to life. In the remake, you are not so lucky. Now, after certain events are triggered, the zombies you killed will come be reanimated. The monsters will be much faster when they rise from the dead for a





second time. As such, it will become significantly more challenging to defeat them. Fortunately, you do have a couple of ways to prevent the zombies from coming back for a second time. If you are lucky enough to get a critical hit that destroys the zombie's head, the creature will be permanently destroyed. Alternatively, you can figure out a way to burn the creature before it is reanimated. Fortunately, the game does provide players ample time to find out how they can set the zombies on fire before they rise again.

The character you choose to control will have a significant impact on your experience. The storylines for Jill and Chris do have considerable differences. Depending on your choice, you will encounter different characters as you go through the game. In general, Jill will be more able to rely on help from other characters where Chris will have to figure things out on his own more often. Jill also has a good understanding of chemistry and knows how to play the piano. While this might seem like an insignificant detail, as expected, it will have a significant impact on the game. The fact that Jill has access to lock-picking tools and Chris starts the game with a lighter will also have an impact on your exploration of the mansion. The weapons and ammunition available to each character is different as well.



The single greatest advantage Jill has over Chris is the fact that she has eight inventory slots as opposed to six. Being able to carry more items as Jill is almost assured to help you out in many situations. It will mean that Jill will need far fewer trips to the item box. It will also be easier to make sure Jill has some room for the new items you might find. Of course, Chris does have a couple of advantages to



compensate for having fewer inventory slots. He can withstand a little more damage than Jill, which can come in very handy especially if you are running low on inventory items. Chris is also more likely to inflict critical damage when he shoots an enemy. Even though the two characters may not have completely different scenarios, puzzles, and challenges, the existing differences make it well worth your time to finish the game with each character.

Resident Evil is by no means an exceptionally long game. Even though the mansion and the surrounding areas give you a good amount of ground to cover, you can still get through the game between eight to ten hours in your first attempt. While that might sound like a fairly short amount of game play time, it is worth noting that Resident Evil has been designed to be played several times. Besides the fact that the game features two different characters with somewhat different storylines, Resident Evil also has multiple endings. The ultimate outcome will change depending on certain decisions you will make in the later





stages of the game. In addition, Resident Evil has multiple difficulty levels and bonus features waiting for you to unlock. You will have to play through the game quite a few times before you discover everything there is to see in Resident Evil.



The GameCube remake of Resident Evil most certainly makes for a highly entertaining gaming experience. The game features a fairly interesting albeit slow-paced storyline, a solid engaging and delightfully creepy atmosphere, excellent graphics, and a fitting soundtrack. Especially if you play the game on your own with the lights turned out and the volume turned up, you will most likely find yourself immersed into the creepy mansion.

Of course, the game is not without its irritating features. For instance, the inventory restriction can cause a considerable amount of frustrating backtracking, even though some of this is clearly intended to make the game more challenging. If you are new to the Resident Evil series, it will most likely take you a while to get used to the controls. You will also have to be willing to deal with a few parts of the game that are over the top even with the underlying setting. Once you do figure out what exactly is going on at the mansion, you may find yourself wondering about certain aspects of the building's design. You will also have to deal with one or two poor camera angles and the load times are a little on the long side. But in the end, the frustrating aspects of Resident Evil do not at all significantly take away from the experience. You can have plenty of fun exploring the creepy mansion as you try to survive the nightmare. Even if you know every inch of the original game, you can still look forward to plenty of new ground to cover.

The GameCube version of Resident Evil offers much more than a graphical update. It is a solid game in its own right and a great entry point to the series if you were not able to play the first version. Four years after its release, Resident Evil remains one of the strongest titles on the GameCube console. If you are into survival horror games, it is most definitely a must have.



The final grade is 90/100.

<b>Developer:</b> Capcom
<b>Publisher:</b> Capcom
<b>Platform:</b> GameCube
<b>Genre:</b> Survival Horror
<b>Release Date:</b> 2002
<b>Grade:</b> 90/100







# Silent Hill 3

PC Review by Thaumaturge

Her head resting peacefully upon the table, her eyes closed in sleep, Heather Mason might look just like any other seventeen-year-old girl. It is to be hoped, however, that most girls do not share the dream which wraps her about behind her eyelids. In that dream fog drifts through the twisted scenery, half-obscuring rusted metal and decaying wood, tile and brick. Strange sounds float on the air – and the weirder and louder presage the presence of terrible creatures, such as surely exist only in such nightmares – creatures seemingly intent on Heather's death. Above the gates bright letters read "Lakeside Amusement Park."



Waking from her nightmare, Heather finds herself once again in the warm orange sunlight that streams into the little shopping centre restaurant in which she slept. She goes to a public telephone and makes a call to her father, smiling and happy, letting him know that she's about to head home. As she finishes her call Heather notices a man standing at the corner, looking at her. His clothes are unkempt – his collar ruffled and tie half-undone under a brown trench coat – the image completed with a brown fedora and graying stubble. She sends a question with a look and gesture, but he shakes his head; no, he doesn't want to use the 'phone. She walks away, but he calls to her, and he knows her name.



He introduces himself as a detective, his name Douglas Cartland, and tells her that he has been sent to find her, for some reason related to her past, to her birth. There's someone who wants to meet her, it seems. Wanting little to do with the stranger, Heather refuses his requests to have an hour – even half an hour – of her time, eventually escaping his persistence in a lady's room.

The pattern drawn on a mirror in that bathroom doesn't bother her overmuch, beyond a headache and a nagging sense of familiarity. It will appear many more times, however, on the path which she has unknowingly begun to traverse.

The return to the mall finds the metal shutters down before many of the shop doors, and most of those remaining locked. And while the corridors, shops and back rooms may seem empty, not all are. Horrific creatures stalk the mall as they did Heather's nightmare, and with no more peaceable intents on her. Even when she escapes the shops, Heather's trials have not ended. Her world





seemingly lost to madness and populated by terrible monstrosities and supernatural events, she struggles onwards. Her goal is to reach home and to her father.



Worse still, at times the environment about her changes. The buildings show signs of decay, corrosion and neglect, surfaces alter, many floors being replaced with rusting metal plating or grates. Doors that were locked might be open, open ones closed. More, doors, corridors or rooms may appear that were not there at all, ones that were there may be gone, or much changed. New, gruesome and twisted appointments are scattered about, perhaps the most common being hospital gurneys, on which rest long, low forms, obscured by sheets stained a reddish-brown.

Heather's journey will for the most part be taken alone, but there are other players in this game. The detective Douglas, sent to find Heather for reasons unknown to him. The mysterious Claudia, who speaks of the coming of a Paradise, to which Heather must lead. The enigmatic – and slightly sinister – Vincent, to whom this warped setting is “fascinating.”

But home is not the end of her journey either, for Heather's past contains a dark secret. A secret intimately connected to the tainted, mist-wreathed town of Silent Hill...



Silent Hill 3's story is well-conceived. Heather begins her journey trying only to reach her home. Claudia's cryptic words offer her little comfort or insight – what cares she for Paradise, and what does this strange woman mean when she says that Heather should remember her “true self”? The answers will come in time, but not without a great cost to Heather, and much danger. The story has as its background the events and characters of the

first game in the series, and weaves about it themes of vengeance, hate, fanaticism, and achieving a goal at any cost.

The characters of Heather, Douglas, Vincent and Claudia are very well realized, with fluid animations and expressive faces. They “act” well, for the most part (although they do at times overact, and their faces are at times perhaps a little overwrought, especially when portraying shock or surprise), and most are similarly well-voiced. Heather in particular stands out to me as one of the better performances, her lines generally (if not always) being delivered well and with a great deal of emotion (and she does seem – perhaps understandably – to be





particularly prone to anger). On the other hand Douglas is probably the least well-acted, often sounding a little stiff, the pacing of his speech a little off. The cut-scenes are very well directed, making good use of camera angles and the characters' acting and expressiveness.



Cut-scenes, documents and even at least one tape are used well to describe the characters, the latter two forms adding insight into elements of the characters that they might not have said aloud, giving them form and depth, becoming, to my mind at least, an interesting cast. We see the reasons behind the actions of two of the major characters, elevating them from the simplistic roles into which they might have fallen.

Silent Hill 3's graphics are very good indeed. The characters and objects are well-modeled, with convincing textures. The characters are particularly effective, hair and skin textured especially well. Adding to this are some good special effects. Clouds of fog drift past the screen, obscuring the middle distances and further. An overlay of noise lends the game a slightly grittier feel. The light from Heather's torch casts a strong light, its source flaring brightly and casting lens flares when she faces the camera, casting its light over the scene before her, that and other sources of light leaving convincing shadows in the leas of objects and creatures. Furthermore, Heather not only casts shadows onto the objects and environment around her, but onto herself as well, an effect which I feel, if not always perfect, adds well to the overall realism of the graphics.

The game is played in the third person, as though viewed from a hovering camera. Often the camera follows Heather, hovering above and behind her, but in many places specific camera angles have been defined, either to draw the player's attention to something or for dramatic effect. In both of these aims the camera often succeeds particularly well. It might frame an important item or feature, hint at something unnerving to come, hide the results, or reveal it for the player's disquiet. This system is not without flaw, however. At times the camera's orientation can obscure elements that the player would probably want to see – such as approaching monsters.



Sometimes on entering a room the camera will be set to show Heather, and while this perspective prevents the player seeing the monsters present in the room, audio cues betray their presence – an effect that, combining knowledge of their presence with the lack of knowledge of which way to aim or how many they might





be and the overall atmosphere, can at times potentially cause one to panic and run. However, once that initial fright is over, such limited angles can prove more frustrating than fun. This is alleviated to some degree by the ability to, while a key is pressed, take a point of view over Heather's shoulder, using the mouse to look around within a limited range. However again, this is at times limited, in a few cases to near uselessness.

As mentioned earlier, at times the world about Heather will change, and this change is accompanied by notable differences in the appearance of her surroundings. While for the most part this is enacted in a change of scene, having scope over the entirety of Heather's current location, at others the textures change as she walks, or only begin to take place on or shortly after her entry. In these cases the resultant texture often resembles flesh or blood, even flowing or pulsing as if it were alive. These transitions are smooth and well-done. They do a good job of adding to the sinister, otherworldly atmosphere.



The sounds that accompany these graphics are similarly very good. Heather's footsteps have different sounds to describe her walking over different surfaces – they might clang on metal grating, thud on wood and carpet, or tap on stone and tile, for instance. Strange ambient noises help to maintain the atmosphere even when there is little of note occurring. The monsters howl or moan or whine, depending on their form – some of those weird moans carrying the hint of humanity. Furthermore these effects are crisp or dull as is appropriate to their origin, and are seldom less than effective, and in some cases truly eerie.



Of particular note are the sounds associated with the presence of monsters. When living monsters are in the area, a strange sound makes itself heard, a half music, half ambient noise that has a discordant, clashing quality appropriate to both conflict and the unnatural feel of the adversaries that Heather faces.

In addition, Heather will at one point discover a small radio that, when turned on, will emit static when monsters are near, the volume depending both on the radio's volume setting and the proximity of the creatures in question. This warning, and that of the noises mentioned above, can be valuable assets in preventing being taken by surprise by threats – but their ominous tones can also contribute to unnerving the player, I found, especially when the danger is as yet unseen.







For the most part in-game music is eschewed in favor of ambient noises, a choice which, I feel, adds to the sense of Heather's isolation. When it is used, however, the music of Silent Hill 3 is another element which I would consider to be a success. Most often noticed in cut-scenes, the music is on the whole well-chosen and very effective.

The majority of Silent Hill 3 involves exploration of the areas in which Heather finds herself, usually with the goal of reaching some place (for instance Heather's home, at the start of the game), but also at times in search of a person (as in her search for a man named Leonard in Brookhaven Hospital).



The areas through which the game takes the player are often large, and the route to their exits or objectives not often direct. Often the player is required to explore the available areas well in order to discover all of the items and clues relevant to passage through to the end of the area.

It can at times be easy to lose one's way amongst the many floors and rooms of some of the areas, or to miss a door in the dark or under a covering of pulsing red; for this reason a map can be a useful discovery. Most areas hold a map for Heather to find somewhere about them, in some cases placed near to the entrance to that area, in others further in. Once a map is found, Heather will mark off in red any important discoveries that she makes about the area shown on the map, including whether doors are open, locked, or inaccessible (as a large number of doors are), noting the positions of important features, such as puzzles, and, in a few cases, adding areas not already included on the map.

Sometimes progression calls for more than simply picking up a key with which to open a door. In most cases these problems are solved through the appropriate use of some item or items that Heather has acquired. These inventory puzzles are in general not too difficult, as long as all of the appropriate items are in the player's possession, as clues are often to be found in the inventory descriptions of those items. The items themselves are in general not difficult to find, as long as the player searches their environment fairly well, and pays close attention to the objects in their surroundings.



At certain (infrequent) points along the journey, however, Heather will face another form of puzzle: riddles. These involve determining a code with which to unlock a door (in general a numeric code, but in one case a positional code), the





clues to which will be found nearby – in some cases covering appropriately grisly themes and images (the riddle associated with a keypad in Brookhaven Hospital springs to mind). The difficulty of these riddles is determined by a setting chosen at the start of the game, the player being asked to select from “easy”, “normal” or “hard” levels – the “hard” level producing some riddles which can call for some thought, knowledge, or interpretation. These riddles provide, I found, a welcome intellectual element to the experience of the game.

Not all events are directly related to the story of Silent Hill 3 (at least not obviously so). In various places through which Heather passes strange things happen, eerie reminders of the supernatural nature of the story being told. Ranging from things as simple as the sound or sight of footsteps to some truly creepy events (which I won't spoil for those who have yet to play this game), I feel that these set-pieces add a very great deal to the tense, creepy, supernatural atmosphere that the game builds.



The exploration of the environs of Silent Hill 3 is not by any means safe, however. Over and above any environmental dangers such as pits, terrible creatures stalk the passageways, tunnels, rooms and streets through which Heather passes. Their only apparent goals are grisly feeding and Heather's death. The design of these creatures is very good indeed; many include some human elements, or appear to be mostly human, albeit changed and warped. In some cases the design includes a suggestion of madness – one creature, for instance has an almost wormlike head that twitches seemingly randomly, while another, a human-like creature with a conical head, crawls about on its elbows and knees. All seem decidedly unnatural, from the bandaged dogs whose heads are split down the centre to the creatures which seem to each be a pair of human-like torsos and heads joined at the waist, mounted in a bladed metal frame, and which either crawl on the ground like monstrous insects or float through the air emitting a loud mechanical whine.



Some areas end with a greater combat challenge – a boss fight. Like the standard creatures (if such beings can be called “standard”), these bosses are designed to be creatively twisted. Each of them fights in a particular way and there is a key to defeating them. Some have specific weak spots that are only displayed in certain poses, or move in such a way as to foil targeting. Some attack at close range, others with ranged





attacks. One is defeated not by combat, but rather by uncovering a particular item. Each is very different, a fact which makes them in my opinion more interesting to fight.

It is perhaps worth noting that the difficulty of the combats in Silent Hill 3 is set in much the same way as the difficulty level of the riddles, by an option given at the start of the game.



In conclusion, Silent Hill 3 is a very good game indeed. Exploring the creepy environs of the game can be a great deal of fun, the monsters adding well to the sense of danger and the atmosphere of the unnatural. The puzzles are good, the riddles (on "hard" mode, at least) interesting.

While the exploratory gameplay allows for a great deal of atmosphere, the story is revealed only slowly, especially at the beginning. Nevertheless, the environments are well designed and exploring them can be a great deal of (potentially unnerving – for me at least) fun.

Although only sporadically told, the story is good, and is enacted by characters who are, for the most part, interesting and more complex than the simple roles that might have been given them, and who are, again for the most part, well-acted and voiced.

While perhaps not the scariest game in the world (although I'll admit that some of the set-pieces did scare me), it is nevertheless a truly creepy game, with an excellent and twisted atmosphere.

Finally, I would like to note that this is definitely not a game for the squeamish. There are scenes and events that are violent and potentially unnerving, and the story itself involves some dark and unpleasant themes.

Final Score: 89/100

<p><b>Developer:</b> Konami  <b>Publisher:</b> Konami  <b>Platform:</b> PC (version reviewed); PS2  <b>Genre:</b> Survival Horror  <b>Release Date:</b> 2003  <b>Grade:</b> 89/100</p>	<p><b>System Requirements:</b>  Windows® 98/ME/2000/XP  Pentium® III 1 GHz  256 MB RAM  4.7GB free hard drive space  32 MB GeForce3Ti/Radeon8500  DirectX® 8.1b  SoundBlaster Compatible Soundcard  DVD-ROM Drive  Keyboard, mouse, speakers</p>
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## Nancy Drew: The Creature of Kapu Cave - Walkthrough

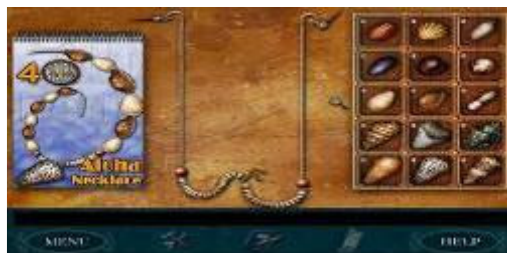
Written by Southern Belle

Welcome Nancy Drew admirers of all ages to the next adventure in the series. Instructions for game play may be found by clicking on the Help tab on the Main Menu screen. Junior and Senior Detectives play the same. Senior Detectives will not have the “To Do” list. Also, they may find one of the puzzles more difficult toward the end of the game. In this particular episode, the Second Chance button was useful. As in “Danger by Design”, the opening scene is in Nancy’s bedroom. You may look around her room, at her case file and other items on her desk, but it is not necessary. There is a Wiki Tiki game at Big Mike’s that you can play, but that is not required either. This game includes the Hardy Boys. You will use your cell phone to stay in touch with them. Making a call to them will switch the primary investigator from one to the other. You will engage in conversation with several people. Exhaust all conversation with each person. Remember ladies and gentlemen, boys and girls, this is a walkthrough. There are things to see that are left out because they did not contribute to the end game.

***Please do not read further if you don’t want the answers.***

And now, Adventure Lantern and Southern Belle invite you to kick off your shoes, walk in the sand and enjoy - “Nancy Drew: The Creature of Kapu Cave”.

- Click on the plane ticket. Watch the destruction of Dr. Kim’s camp.
- Walk forward and enter Big Mike’s Excursion Immersion shop.
- Talk with Big Mike.
- Pick up the box, turn around and exit the shop.
- Turn right and go forward twice. Turn right again.
- Go forward, turn left, go forward, turn left and go forward again.
- Go forward and look closely at the table used to make necklaces.
- Click on the picture of the necklace on the left and turn the pages until you find the Aloha necklace. Notice the shells you need to make that necklace.
- Click on the box on the right and see the shells you are carrying. You need two brown shells, two white shells and one large white shell with black spots.



- Back away from the table and turn around.







- Go forward, turn right, go forward and then left.
- Follow the path to the beach.
- When you get to the landing, turn left and go onto the beach.
- Talk with Ned.
- Talk with the Hardy Boys.
- Call Ned. Click on the cell phone on the bottom of the screen. Click on the DIR button. Click on Ned Nickerson at the top of the screen. Click on call. Click on the X in the right hand corner when the call is over.
- Go forward onto the beach. Shell hunting is random. You will find shells at the little pool, in the dark patch on the beach, under the fallen tree, at the pile of rocks on your left as you face the dock and by the log under the dock. As you face the dock, go diagonally to the right and turn left to get to the log.
- As you collect shells, check the shell box in your inventory to see if you have enough shells to make the necklace. You need a total of three white, three brown and one white shell with black spots. When you have enough, go back up to the table to make a necklace.
- Look closely at the table. Before you open the box, make sure the picture of the Aloha necklace shows on the left.
- Open the box. Beginning with the white shell on either side, alternate white and brown until you have three of each color on each side. Place the white shell with black spots on the string in the center.
- Take the necklace to Big Mike.
- When the conversation is over, take the key.
- Turn around and exit the building.
- Go forward through the fence.
- Click on the car.
- Click on Camp Quigley.
- After you get stuck, turn left and look at the tape recorder by the log near the lower right hand corner of the tent.

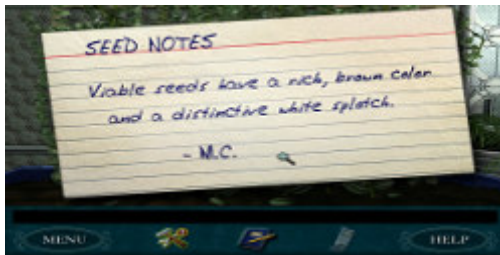


- Pick up the tape recorder, rewind the tape then press play and listen to Dr. Kim. Note the tones – Blee, blah, blih, bluh, bluh, blah, blah and blue as the Dr. Kim opens her chest.
- Back away from the log and enter the tent.
- Turn right and look closely at the trunk. Press the buttons in the following order – 6, 4, 5, 1, 1, 4, 4 and 3.
- Look at Dr. Kim's journal. Note the telephone number on the last page.





- Take the hook.
- Take the security pass.
- Back away from the chest and turn right.
- Look at the radio. Click on the power button in the upper left corner.
- Click on the yellow sticky note in the binder on the right.
- Back away from the radio, turn around and exit the tent.
- Turn left and approach the winch.
- Click on your inventory, pick up the hook and attach it to the receiver dangling from the wire on the left.
- Click on the hook and attach it to the loop just above the license plate on the front bumper of the car.
- Back away from the car and look at the winch. Press the red button.
- Back away from the winch and look at the solar panel on the left.
- Click on the car.
- Click on Hilihili Research Facility.
- Click on the speaker on the left and swipe the card in your inventory.
- Talk with Dr. Craven.
- Turn right, go forward and go downstairs.
- Turn right, go all the way forward and turn right.
- Click on the white card that is up and to the right.



- Pick the pods and take the brown seeds with a white splotch until you have twelve viable seeds.
- Back away twice, turn around and go back upstairs to talk with Dr. Craven.
- When the conversation is over, turn right, go downstairs, turn left and exit the building.
- Click on Camp Quigley.
- Click on the solar panel until you have a close up. Place the new cells so that the numbers 1 – 9 appear in each quadrant.





- Click on the hook and attach it to the solar panel.
- Back away and click on the winch. Press the red button.
- Back away and turn left.
- Enter the tent.
- Go to the left and click on the radio.
- Click on the power button.
- Enter the frequency found on the yellow paper in the binder. You must look at the yellow paper or the game will not accept your entry. Enter 18.305 by clicking on the arrows above, below and left, right of the dials. The left dial enters the number. The right dial moves to the next position.
- Back away from the radio and pick up the microphone.
- Back away from the microphone and turn around.
- Turn right and look at the clipboard in between the crates in the corner.
- Back away and call The Hardy Boys.
- Go talk with Mike.
- Exit the building and go down to the dock to go fishing.
- Click on the rod at the end of the dock.
- Click on the bait.
- Click on the water.
- Hold your cursor on the handle of the pole and wait until the bobbin sinks. Immediately click on the handle and catch a fish.
- When you have six Ulua, you run out of bait.
- Go talk with Big Mike.
- Exit the building and go talk with Pua at the hut behind Mike's place.
- When the conversation is over, go search Mike's.
- Click on the calendar.
- Click on the sticky note and take the key on the nail.
- Click the key on the door knob and it opens.
- Open the fourth drawer from the top and see the map.
- Turn right and click on the car.
- Enter the coordinates you got from Joe. N 19, 24', 42" and W 155, 09', 01".

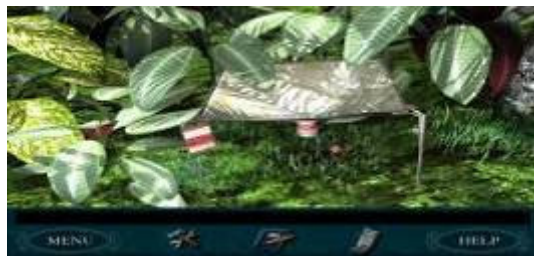


- Click on the white check mark.
- Click on 3 Finger Rock.
- Follow the path to Dr. Kim up in the tree. You can't get lost.
- Look up and talk with Dr. Kim.
- When the conversation is over, turn around and go back to the car.

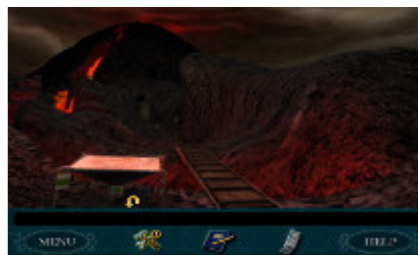




- Go back to Camp Quigley.
- Enter the tent, turn around, turn right and pick up the clipboard.
- Go back to 3 Fingers Rock, down the path and talk with Dr. Kim.
- When the conversation is over, turn around and look at the purple flag. Move forward and turn right.
- Click on the purple baggie. Click again and take one. Click on the purple frass jar and empty it into the baggie. Click on the baggie to put it in inventory.
- Back away, turn left, go forward across the bridge to the yellow flag. Use the same method for the rest of the flags that you used for the purple flag.
- Back away, turn left, go forward to the blue flag.



- Proceed right down the path to the red flag.
- Click on the clipboard in inventory. Turn the page and get the coordinates for Kapu Cave.
- Go to the car and click on it.
- Enter the coordinates for Kapu Cave. N 19, 20', 30" and W 155, 5' 33".
- Go to Kapu Cave.
- Go forward to the green frass jar on the left.



- After you collect the frass, turn right and go forward to the orange frass jar on the right.







- Turn right and go back to your car.
- Go to Camp Quigley.
- Call the Hardy Boys for help with these plants.
- Talk with Frank. When the conversation is over, go inside Big Mike's.
- Pick up the pawn ticket on the floor next to the counter.
- Talk with Big Mike.
- When the conversation is over, go to the machine left of the desk.
- Click on the slot and automatically insert a Big Island Buck.
- Click on the monitor.
- Click on Hawaiian Plants.
- Click on the turtle in the bottom right corner and look at all the plants.
- Click on return to main menu and then click on yes.
- Move away from the monitor, exit the building and call Nancy.
- Go into the tent and to the table with the microscope on it.
- Look at the microscope.
- Go back to your car and go to the Hilihili Research Facility.
- Click on the speaker and then on the white button.
- Ask Dr. Craven if you can use a microscope.
- When the conversation is over, turn right and go downstairs.

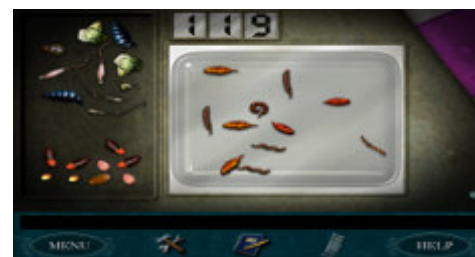
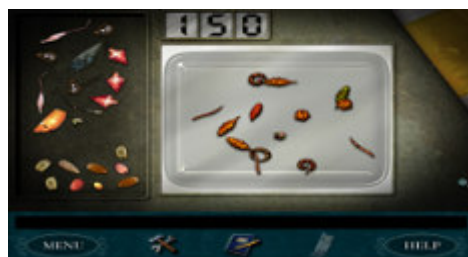
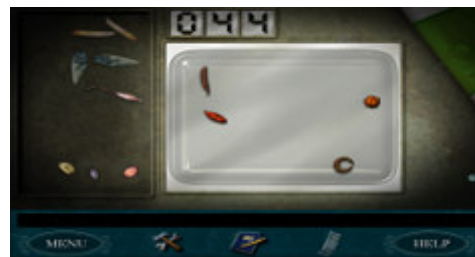
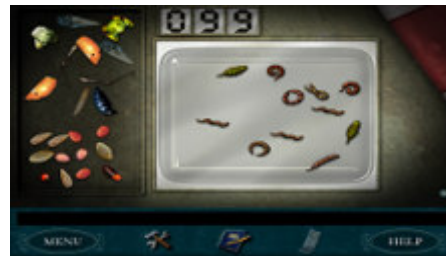


- Turn right and go forward twice.
- Turn right and look at the container with the company logo on it.
- Use the key with the company logo on it to open the container.
- Insert the key and then turn it.
- Number the fertilizers from left to right. Click on 6 (orange), 2 (aqua), 2 (aqua) and 1 (green). Press the green button to spread the fertilizer after each selection.
- Go back up to Dr. Craven and get the microscope lens.
- Go back downstairs and exit the building.
- Go to Camp Quigley.
- Go in the tent and use the microscope lens in your inventory to replace the broken lens. The information you need to sort frass is on the clipboard.





- Click the blue frass sample bag on the tray. Click on the insect parts and the seeds and move them to the left. For the blue bag, the frass weight is 108, the number of seeds is 8 and the detritus predominance is 505. The detritus predominance figures are on the clipboard. Continue this for all the bags. You must back away from the microscope to select another bag. Then click on the microscope again.



- Enter the information you have collected on the clipboard.
- The information you need for the vegetation code is in your notebook. You got it in a phone call from Frank.





ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS TABLE				
TYPE/ID	HEALTH/LOG	THAL/WEAR	NUMBER/VIDE	OTHER/RECORDING
RED	10	99	12	40G
BLUE	08	108	8	50G
PURPLE	04	119	9	10G
GREEN	11	44	3	50G
ORANGE	11	37	8	30G
YELLOW	06	150	9	10G

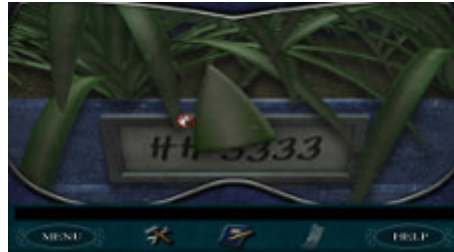
NAME	LOCKER	STATUS	RECORDING
TOM	LOCKER 100	LOCKER 100	105
SHIRLEY	LOCKER 100	LOCKER 100	105
LOCKER 100	LOCKER 100	LOCKER 100	105
LOCKER 100	LOCKER 100	LOCKER 100	105
LOCKER 100	LOCKER 100	LOCKER 100	105
LOCKER 100	LOCKER 100	LOCKER 100	105

- Insert the clipboard into the Formula machine and turn it on.
- When the process is complete, turn the machine off and take the clipboard.
- Go talk with Quigley. Talk with her twice.
- Go to the Hilihili Research Facility.
- Go to Dr. Craven and find him asleep.
- Search the pocket of the shirt hanging next to him.
- Back away and turn right.
- Go to the counter and pick up the PDA.
- As soon as the cut scene is over, click on the settings at the top right.
- Click on Mute.
- Click on the Employees tab at the top left.
- Find the employee that was fired. His name was Fiderman. See that his employee number is 14-667-93.
- Click on the Lockers tab in the center at the top.
- Scroll down to find Fiderman's employee number. He had locker number 13. See the combination for his old locker is R4 L2 L7 R9.
- Put the PDA down, back away, turn right and go downstairs.
- Go straight ahead to the locker room.
- Go right and look at locker 13.
- Enter the combination R4, L2, L7 and R9. Place your cursor on the right side of the combination lock so that you see a blue circle arrow. Click on the right side to 4, the left side to 2, the left side to 7 and the right side to 9.
- Take the yellow suit.
- Back away twice.
- Go to the door. Before you open the door, click on the yellow suit in you inventory, then click on the door.
- Go left and forward to the wall.
- Turn right and go forward to the wall.
- Turn right, go forward, turn left and enter the door.
- Click on the computer.
- Using your keyboard, type in 1466793 and press enter.
- Click on the Shipping tab.
- Click on Extract Codes.
- Exit the room and turn right **immediately**. You are hiding. If you get caught use the Second Chance option on the menu.
- Go to the wall.
- Turn around and go back to the plant bed HH3333 straight ahead of you.





- Click on the screen left center to take a cutting of the plant.



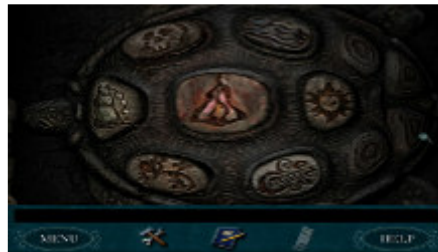
- Click on the cutting.
- Back away, turn around and go forward to the wall.
- Turn left and go to the wall.
- Go forward.
- Go left, right, forward and left. Wait until the man spraying moves slightly to the right then go forward to the wall.
- Turn right and go to the wall. If the man is visible, wait until the man moves back to the middle then go forward to the wall.
- Turn right.
- Let Avery move away some then move forward, turn left and click on the door.
- Exit the building and go to Camp Quigley.
- Enter the tent and go to the table.
- Click on the table.
- Click on the baggie in the bottom right corner.
- Click on the bottle of Bq19.
- Click the dropper on the test tube.
- Click on the pineapple sample.
- Click on the bottle of Bq19.
- Click the dropper on the test tube.
- Back away twice, turn around and exit the tent.
- Go to 3 Fingers Rock and talk with Quigley.
- Look down and click on the backpack.
- Take the samples.
- Go back to Camp Quigley.
- Enter the tent and go to the table.
- Click on the samples in your inventory and put them on the table.
- Click on a sample.
- Click on the bottle of Bq19.
- Click on the test tube. Do this for all the samples.
- Exit the tent and go back to talk with Quigley.
- When the conversation is over, open the backpack and take the ring.
- Go to Kapu Cave.
- Go forward and enter the cave.
- Go forward to the back of the cave.







- Click on the ring in your inventory and click it on the nose of the statue above the etched teeth.
- Call the Hardy Boys.
- Talk with Pua.
- Call Nancy.
- Call Frank back.
- Call the pawnbroker.
- Call Johnny Kuto.
- Talk with Pua.
- Talk with Big Mike.
- Make a shave ice for Big Mike. Mike's favorite flavor is mango, coconut and lime.
- Take the shave ice to Big Mike.
- Exit the building and go to the trunk by the chairs.
- Click on the trunk until you have a close up.
- Using the up and down arrows, enter Honi 'awa.
- Take the chart.
- Go to the back of the cave for the teeth puzzle.
- Click on the teeth to turn them. The top row, from left to right, is - shark, eel, turtle and octopus. The bottom row is – porcupine fish, crab, urchin and manta ray.
- Go forward. Follow the path jumping from ledge to ledge. Touch the statues. One will stick out his tongue and a ledge will be revealed.
- Continue moving forward until you reach the elements puzzle.



- Click on the drawings in the following order – water in the upper right, air on the bottom row below water, fire in the center and falling rocks left of the center.
- Cross the bridge to the story blocks.





- As soon as you place the last block, go right to get out of the way.
- You can either fish or make necklaces to earn the 30 Big Island Bucks you need for the snorkeling gear.
- Once you have enough, rent the snorkeling gear.
- Take the dry bag.
- Go to the dark area on the beach and face the water. Click on the water to go snorkeling.
- Keep moving forward until you have a choice of going left or right. Go left and click on the eel.
- Go through the entrance.
- Click on the shark.
- Click on the turtle.
- Click on the octopus.
- Click on the porcupine fish.
- Click on the crab.
- Click on the urchin.
- Click on the manta ray.
- Go forward until you see the giant boulder.
- Look down and click on the ladder.
- Go up the ladder.
- Go left and around the ledge.



- Go up the story blocks.
- Continue forward until you reach a door. Press the button on the right.
- Enter the large chamber.
- Click on the crate covered in bugs.
- The tile puzzle is random. Jumping from tile to tile, you must reach the stairs behind Big Mike before he reaches the stairs where Pua is standing.

**Developer:** Her Interactive  
**Publisher:** Her Interactive  
**Platform:** PC  
**Genre:** Adventure  
**Release Date:** October 2006

**Minimum System Requirements:**  
 1 GHz or greater Pentium® or equivalent CPU  
 128 MB of RAM  
 1 GB or more of hard drive space  
 32 MB DirectX compatible video card  
 16 bit DirectX compatible sound card  
 24X CD-ROM drive, mouse, and speakers





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## Sam and Max: Season 1 - Culture Shock Walkthrough

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Written by Tim

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**[Editorial Note:** The following walkthrough was written by Tim and originally posted at the Independent Gaming blog available at [IndyGamer.BlogSpot.com](http://IndyGamer.BlogSpot.com). Gnome's edited version of the walkthrough, which is reprinted here, can also be located at his blog: [GnomesLair.BlogSpot.com](http://GnomesLair.BlogSpot.com)]

*Some humble words of wisdom (a definite oxymoron) before we begin:* **Sam and Max: Season 1 - Culture Shock** is a brilliant game. It's also rather easy, thus making a walkthrough mostly unnecessary. Unless of course you get horribly stuck, in which case your frustration might force you to use one (a walkthrough, that is) for your nirvana's sake. Anyway, only allow yourself to peek at this walkthrough twice, and don't forget to try everything that isn't mentioned here, just to enjoy the game's mostly hilarious responses. Mind you, what's included is only what's absolutely essential to finishing the game.

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### In the amazingly 3D office

Oh dear, a rat's got your phone. And he wants some bloody Swiss cheese. The nerve! Grab the Boxing Glove, grab the Bowling Ball, open the closet door, use Sam's gun to shoot the cheese, take a piece of the now-Swiss Cheese and place it near the rat hole.

The pesky little rodent will go for it and end up being interrogated. During the conversation start off with Sam's threats, cunningly switch to Max's, and when the rat complains about his headache switch back to Sam to ask about said headache. Mr. Jimmy Two Teeth will inadvertently reveal his weakness (that's.. uhm... heights). Click on Max's portrait and select the "hang out to dry option". Nice work. Got your phone back. Leave the place, preferably by clicking on the door.

### Bringing justice to celebrity vandals

Better start by gearing up. Go to Bosco's. Talk to Bosco the slightly paranoid and security-obsessed shop owner. Ask him about the munchkin terrorist, then say you've got it. Tell him you want to buy something, ask him what he's got, then about the item behind the counter. Now you'll want the Tear Gas Launcher, he'll want 10,000\$. Easy.

Leave the shop, head left and grab the Spray Paint from the car behind the DeSoto. Hop into the DeSoto to drive around and pull a few poor motorists over. Enjoy. Now, click the gun icon and shoot a car's taillights. Enjoy. Click on the





megaphone and actually pull someone over. The motorist's offence is obvious: hideously broken taillight! Get the Bag of Money, head back to Bosco's and get yourself a nice tear Gas Launcher (of sorts). Enjoy.

Now, to apprehend the irritating terrorist. Take the piece of Cheese next to Bosco. Head left and use the bathroom. Quickly place the Cheese into the kid's basket before he exits the bathroom. The security system will handle the rest. Exit the (in-)convenience store.



Head left, past your office and enter Sybil's lot. Exhaust all conversation topics or end it outright. It really doesn't matter and I don't really care. This isn't the real Sybil. It's another of them former brat stars. Open the closet door to release the real Sybil. Good. Ask Sybil (the real one and not Peepers trying to be a she) about "charges", then about what Sam and Max can do to help. Obviously use your new Onion Tear Gas launcher on Peepers and then quickly hit him with the Boxing Glove. Sweet. The ensuing cutscene will reveal a method to cure hypnosis. Now, do as I tell you and leave Sybil's office.

Return to the (in-) convenience store and click on Whizzer to wake him up. Exit the inconvenience store.

And now, it being down to the last foe, it's graffiti time. Three cheers for Art then! Use the Spray Paint on the graffiti just outside Sam and Max's office building (it might be obscured by the staircase). Head back to the illustrious S&M office and look out of the window by clicking on it. Drop the BOWLING BALL from your inventory on Specs' head. Head back down and click on Specs (who is unconscious) to cure him.

A chase sequence will ensue. It's slightly arcadey, but fun and easy. Just avoid all the videos thrown out of the van to close the distance. The trick is to trail the van. When it swerves left or right just follow its direction. Stay right behind it to avoid all boxes, even when it's far away. When you're close enough, click on the







gun icon and shoot at the tyres. The van will stop and you, oh most racing player, will learn about the mastermind's hideout.

### **Towards the end...**

Nice place. Shame it's all locked up. Grab an Admission Form from the stash located next to the ticket booth. Enter the lovely DeSoto and safely head for the office. Enter Sybil's place and show her the Admission Form, then end the conversation. Examine the Symptoms Form and note down all three symptoms (they may vary from game to game). Talk to Sybil again and get some free psychoanalysis.

Take the inkblot test first.

Answer five questions with the best description that matches the first symptom.

1.

Pennies on the eyes of a dead mime (money)

A pair of oxen boxing in a rowboat

Susan Lucci holding an Emmy (fame)

The results of the last time I let Max drive

2.

A bunch of bacteria playing basketball

Pigeons on a the marquee at Mann's Chinese Theater (fame)

An SUV crashing into an opulent mansion (money)

The St. Valentine's Day massacre

3.

A squirrel that got run over twice

My uncle Louie's moth-eaten wallet (money)

Coded love notes from space aliens

An autograph written in Braille (fame)

4.

Elephants at the New York stock exchange (money)

A cheering crowd of lanky albinos (fame)

The exhaust manifold of a bread truck

Twenty nuns with machine guns.

5.

That blotchy thing a flashbulb does to your eyes (fame)

An orangutan escaping from the trunk of a DeSoto

A war between two teams of abstract shapes

A debit card fed through a document shredder (money)

Get them right, and Sybil will check the first symptom in the form. Now, you'll usually need to exhibit a violent reaction to dentistry during the free association test. A rather normal thing to do, but it works. Just pull your gun out and attempt to shoot Sybil whenever she mentions anything related to dentistry. This is





usually the second word she mentions and key words include: crown, drill, filling, flouride and polish. Mind you, you will fail the test if you're being violent when a non-dentistry word is mentioned. Oh, and the Boxing Glove can also be used on Sybil as a substitute method, but not the Launcher.

The third test involves a dream analysis. Things couldn't be simpler:

You merely have to dream about items related to the third symptom. (To exit your dream at any time, just click on the open window or office door.)

If the third symptom is:

a need to know your peer's age - choose a birthday cake and Max  
marry your mom - choose a wedding cake and you (Sybil)

Now that you've made it into the certified loonies club, leave Sybil's office and head for Brady's hideout. Use the Symptoms Form on the form reader to open the right gate. Enter the building. After the cutscene, Max will end up at the inconvenience store.



### ... the ... err... Almost Last Act of the Game

Grab the Cheese from the table next to the counter. You'll enter your dreamworld again. Only this time, it's infested. You'll have to make that irritating sod Brady Culture disappear. Talk to Max's head. Pull out your gun and shoot at the one way sign next to the open office door, thus turning the room upside down. Use (in a very loose sense of the term) Max's head on his body. One Brady's gone.

To turn off the fan, use the light switch located next to the one way sign. Now, take the Coat Hanger from the top of the television. Two more Bradys down. Open the closet door, confront a cheesy Brady and quickly use the Bicycle Pump. Your dear rat will do the rest. That's it, you're a free man .. errr... dog... errr... anthropomorphic canine. No more Brady in your head!

Back in Bosco's, end the conversation with Bosco and head for Sybil's office.





Talk to Sybil and asks if she can help. She'll provide with a Helmet Diagram. Leave her place and head back to your office. Grab the Coat Hanger from the top of the television and head for Bosco's inconvenience store. Give the Helmet Diagram and then the Coat Hanger to Bosco. Now, leave the inconvenience store and hop into your DeSoto. There's silly work afoot.

### The Final Act (definitely)

Let's be brief now. Enter the building through the right gate. Sam will wear the device automatically.

Click on the Soda Poppers and select become... Brady Culture!

The worship option will appear. Select worship... me!

Click on the Soda Poppers again and select attack... me!

...THE END...

**Developer:** Telltale Games  
**Publisher:** Telltale Games  
**Platform:** PC  
**Genre:** Adventure  
**Release Date:** October 2006

**Minimum System Requirements:**

Windows® XP  
Pentium® III 800 MHz \*  
256 MB RAM  
32 MB 3D-accelerated video card  
230 MB hard disk space

\*Processor requirement is 1.5GHz if using a video card without hardware T&L





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# Barrow Hill - Walkthrough

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Written by Southern Belle

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I can honestly say that this is the only game I have played that actually made me jump. As you collect items, they are placed in two areas. If you move your cursor to the top of the screen, you will find items that you can use anytime and in any place. They are on the right end. In the center, you will find items that you have made. You can access the Menu at the top left of the bar. Moving your cursor to the bottom of the screen will show you items that will be used in certain places. You will automatically use an item at the required place just by clicking on it in your inventory. The Sentry Stone appears randomly. When you see it, do not touch it or linger in the area. Turn your back and walk away. From time to time the phone will ring. Answer it. This is a walkthrough. Anything that did not contribute to the end game was left out.

Keep a lookout into the darkness.

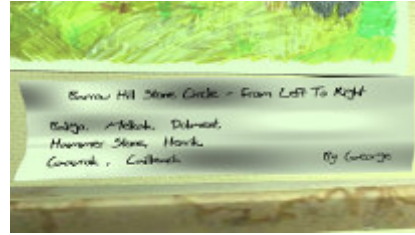
Adventure Lantern and Southern Belle invite you to turn out the lights, get someone to watch your back and be prepared to flinch as you creep through the woods solving the mystery of – “Barrow Hill”.

You are alone in the dark and your car has stalled . . .

- Move forward 18 times to go to the gas station.
- Look at the red mailbox on the left.
- Approach the mailbox and take the card from Elsie.
- Once you have read it, click on it to put it down.
- Move the cursor to the bottom of the mailbox so that it shows a minus sign and click to back away.
- Turn right and move forward 3 times.
- Turn left and move forward 3 times.
- Look at the ground by the car.
- Click on the blue crayon. Click again to put it in inventory.
- Look at the ground to the right at the pile of debris and take the Cornish Fungi Kingdom book.
- Turn right and go in the Men’s Room.
- Go into the stall and take the matches.
- Exit the rest room.
- Go forward and turn left.
- Enter the building.
- Go forward, turn left and knock on the door. Visit Ben and he might give you clues.







- Back away from the door, turn right and go forward to the bulletin board.
- Look and the picture of the stones. Click on it to get the names of the stones.
- Back away from the bulletin board and turn left.
- Read the pamphlets there.
- Turn left, go forward and turn left again.
- Enter the diner.
- Go forward, turn left twice and go behind the counter.
- Look at the cash register.
- Look at the note under the cash register. The code for the door in this game is 451. The code is random.
- Back away, turn left and go in the kitchen.
- Turn right and look at the lantern.
- Click on the lever on the top of the lantern.
- Click on the base of the lantern to turn the reflector.
- Use the matches in your inventory to light the lantern.
- Pick up the lantern and turn around.
- Look closely at the fuse box.
- Click on the button at the bottom of the fuse box.
- Click on the fourth fuse from the left. Click again to remove the top.
- Click on the wire in the upper left corner. Click on the bottom contact point.
- Click on the top to put it back on.
- Click on the button on the bottom to turn on the lights.
- Back away from the fuse box, turn right and go forward.
- Turn right, go forward, turn left and see the radio. Tune in 15.3 and hear Emma Harry. Leave the radio on. You are able to get clues from the radio. Once you have turned the radio on, you have to wait until Emma is done before you can back away.
- Back away and turn right.
- Go forward and open the cupboard. Take the basket.
- Look down and open the box. Take the eggcups.
- Exit the kitchen and go talk with Ben. Talk with him again.



- Leave the building and go past the gas pumps to the motel.





- Enter the motel using the steps on the right by the picnic table.
- Go to door 2 and enter the code you got at the cash register on the keypad above the doorknob. The code is random. In this game it was 451.
- Go to the desk.
- Turn on the radio and leave it on.
- Open the tool box and take the trowel.
- Read the letter in the box behind the toolbox.
- Open the right hand drawer and take the cell phone. Read the letter that was under the cell phone.
- Back away, turn left twice and put the cell phone on the charger. Read the letter to Lucy from Pete that is under the pencil.
- Look at the bed.
- Read the journal.



- Look at the map on the wall next to the nightstand.
- Exit the room, go back in and the cell phone is charged. Take it.
- Go back outside, turn left and go toward the fence.
- Turn left just past the picnic table.
- Go forward and turn on the lantern.
- Go forward until you have a close view of the sign that says Stop The Dig on your right.
- Turn right, then go forward twice to the trail sign.
- Turn right, go forward.
- When the Sentry Stone appears, don't touch it. And don't linger. Turn your back and move away.



- Go straight down the path, past the trail sign and out to the road.
- Turn left and go back to the gas station.
- Go forward to the playground.
- At the edge of the fence with the poster on it, turn left.
- Enter the playground and click on the fence slat.
- Go through the fence.
- Turn right, then left and go forward.
- Go forward, turn left and look at the trashcans.





- Turn right, go forward, turn left and look in Ben's window.
- Back away, turn left, go forward, turn left and read the newspaper.
- Back away and go to the fence by the tower.
- Enter through the hole in the bottom of the fence.
- Go forward, turn left and open the box on the tower.
- Look closely at the manufacturer's label.
- Back away from the label and open the gray box.
- The goal is to get the output to be between 830 and 865 MHz.



- Press the red button.
- Leave the tower and go back inside the building to talk with Ben.
- Get the code for room one. The code for this game is 871, but it is a random number.
- Exit the building and go to room one.
- Enter the code Ben gave you into the keypad.
- Enter the room, go forward, turn around and take the GPS by the wall on the left.
- Leave the motel room and go out to the road.
- Turn left and follow the road. Find Conrad Morse's jeep.



- Look at the ground next to the Jeep.
- Pick up the PDA.
- Back away, turn right and see a radio. Turn it on using the button at the bottom. Tune into Emma, you have to wait until she is done talking before you can continue.
- Turn right, move forward, turn right and enter the woods.
- Go to the barn door.
- Turn left and go to the drum.
- Click on the crate to pick it up.
- Turn right and put the crate on top of the drum under the window.
- Move your cursor towards the top of the screen and click to go up.
- Go forward towards the table.
- Turn right twice and look in the box in the cart. Take the gas torch.





- Turn right and look at the ground to the right of the drum. Take the black tubing.
- Back away and turn right.
- Click on the gas tank.
- Click on the black tubing in inventory and attach it to the gas tank.
- Click on the gas torch in inventory and attach it to the black tubing.
- Click on the valve next to the gauge to turn on the gas.
- Use a match to light the gas torch.
- Before exiting, use the ladder to go upstairs. When you get to the top, back away and look at the table. Look at these items, if you would like. There is a camera in the pot that pictures in it if you would like to look at them.
- Turn left and look in the niche on the left.
- Pick up acorns.
- There are items in the niche on the right that you may look at if you wish.
- Turn right and go back down the ladder.
- Exit the building.
- Turn right and go back out to the road.
- Look at the notes in the PDA and get the code to Conrad's room.
- Go back to the motel and go to room 3.
- Enter the code from the PDA. In this game it was 766.
- Look around the room.
- Open the drawer in the desk and listen to the tape player.
- Read all the papers in the room that you can pick up.
- Look in the trash can and put the torn paper together.
- The combination to the briefcase is related to the license plate on Conrad's Jeep.
- Go to the briefcase and enter the result of multiplying  $4 \times 68578$ , Conrad's license number.
- Enter 274312.
- Read everything in the briefcase.
- Exit the room and go stand in front of the Men's Room facing the pumps.
- Activate the GPS.
- Walk forward.
- Click on the fire extinguisher and take the piece of the broken seal.
- Call Emma at the radio station. 585-2131.
- Go listen to Ben.
- Back away from the door, turn around and go through the diner. Use the exit directly in front of you.
- Turn left, go forward, turn left and go through the fence.
- Go around the back of the building to Ben's window.
- Enter, turn around and play all the videotapes.
- Back away from the videotapes, move forward, turn around and go through all three drawers in the filing cabinet.







- Go to the desk. Take the blank paper from the right drawer and the batteries from the left drawer.
- Back away, turn around, go forward, turn right and unlock the office door.
- Exit the building and go to the road.
- Turn left and continue down the road to the scarecrow.
- Turn right.
- Go over the fence.
- Go forward past Wincey and over the fence.
- Continue forward.
- When you get to the planks, go forward once then turn right. Continue forward to the trailer.



- Enter the trailer.
- Go left to the computer.
- Enter Wincey. The password is case sensitive.
- Go through all of Emma's favorite places.
- Back away from the computer and turn around. Listen to all the tapes, in particular the one top center.
- Exit the tapes and look at the mushrooms closely. Take mushrooms from the two left most pots on the bottom shelf. You can identify them using the book you picked up at the gas station. They are Destroying Angel and Liberty Cap.
- Read the Metal Detecting Beginners Guide.
- Turn right, go to the bed and put the metal detector together. Place the wire on the rod, the rubber handle on the right end of the rod, the black box on the rubber handle, the black rubber piece on the left end of the rod and the ring on the left end.
- Open the battery compartment and insert the batteries.
- Exit the trailer and go back across the planks and take the first right.
- Move forward and then left toward the ruined church.
- Go forward and turn left to look at the monument.
- Go forward and left to get behind the monument.
- Click on the trowel and you will open the back of the base.
- Read the red book, take the metal artifact and look at the picture of St. Aneka's well.
- Go across the planks to the church ruin.
- Click on the metal detector at the top of the screen. Turn it on.
- Move forward until the metal detector's needle goes to the right and you hear a buzzing noise.
- Look closely at the ground and use the trowel to dig up a piece of the seal. Read the note you find with it.





- Turn off the metal detector, turn around and go forward to the planks.
- Turn right and go straight back to the road.
- Turn left and go to the phone booth.
- Turn right and go forward and take the False Death Cap mushroom.



- Turn around, go back to the road and go right toward the gas station.
- Pass the gas station and go to the mailbox. Move forward three times and turn right.
- Look at the bush on the left of the tree. Pick the red berries.



- Turn left and go back to the stalled car.
- Take the Saggy Ink Cap mushrooms on the left.



- Turn left and go forward to St. Anneka's well. Take the stairs on the left.
- Go forward, turn right and take the Dryad Slumber mushrooms.



- Back away from the mushrooms and turn left.
- Go forward until the path is blocked and turn left.
- Go forward to the stones.
- Pass the stones and the tent to the pile of debris next to it.
- Turn on the metal detector and use the trowel to unearth the hip flask.
- Click on the eggcups and get an offering. Take the offering. Turn off the metal detector.
- Back away from the debris and turn left.





- Go straight down the path and go down the stairs and turn right.
- Take the Parasol mushrooms.



- Back away from the mushrooms, turn right, climb the stairs and go back to the tent.
- Turn right. Go past the four stones. When the lantern lights, turn left and go back to the gas station.
- Go into the diner.
- Go all the way to the back table and turn right. Move the menu. Click on the shaker in the back. Click on the eggcups and get the salt offering. Take the offering.
- Back away from the table and turn right. Go to the cash register.
- Use the trowel on the cash register to get some coins.
- Enter the kitchen, go forward to the stove, turn right and click on the basket in your inventory.
- Put the berries, acorn and Dryad Slumber mushroom in the mortar. If you make a mistake, click on the trashcan and begin again.
- Click on the pestle, then click on the eggcups.
- Take the offering.
- Exit the kitchen and go into the office.
- Turn left, go forward and go out the back door.
- Turn right, turn around and look at the Mini Casino.
- Click on the gold coins in your inventory and put one in the slot. Pull the handle. You need silver coins. Continue to play the slots until you get silver coins. To play a subsequent time, back away and then look closely again.
- Back away from the slot machine and go forward, turn right, forward, right, forward and then right again.
- Look down and take the headlight lens.



- Back away, turn around and see a ladder.
- Go forward and pick up the ladder. Turn left and click on the ladder to place it against the building.
- Go up the ladder until you are on the roof. Turn left and go forward to the metal ladder. Turn right and go up the metal ladder.
- Look closely at the skylight and unlatch it.





- Enter the garage through the skylight and turn right.
- Enter the office.
- Turn left and pick up the oil can. Click on the eggcups. Click on the lever on top of the oil can. Take the offering.



- Exit the office. Turn right and click on the ladder. Go down the ladder turn around, go forward and turn right.
- Click on the latch on the door. Click on the doorknob and exit the garage.
- Turn right and go back through the office and out to the motel.
- Go past the rooms to the corner and turn right.
- Go to the vending machine.
- Use the silver coins to purchase drinks. You need pear, gooseberry and blackberry. Remember to take the drinks after you buy them.
- Back away from the vending machine and turn around.
- Go out to the car and look at the debris on the right side.
- Pick up the Omega 3 Regeneration Tonic. Click on the eggcups. Click on the lid of the bottle. Take the offering.
- Go to the kitchen.
- Enter the kitchen and turn right. Go forward and turn right to look at the blender.
- Look closely at the blender and take off the lid.
- Click on the blender in the following order, blackberry twice, pear once and gooseberry once. Take the juice offering.
- Exit the diner and turn right.
- Go to St. Anneka's well.
- Turn left, then right and look at the stone monolith.
- Turn on the lantern.
- Use the paper on the stone.
- Use the crayon on the paper.



- Take the paper.
- Turn left and light the lantern.
- Enter St. Anneka's well.
- Turn left as soon as you enter and open the tin can.







- Read the visitor's register.
- Back away and turn right.
- Enter the grotto.
- Go forward and turn right.
- Go in the alcove and see the hole in the wall.
- Click on the metal artifact you picked up at the monument near the church ruins.
- Click on it again.
- Turn right and look at the box behind the stone.
- Click on the box and open. Study the contents of the box.
- Back away from the box, turn right and enter the grotto.
- Turn right.
- Using the matches in inventory, light the blue candle and then the brown candle.



- Click on the eggcups.
- Take the water.
- Turn around and exit St. Anneka's well.
- Go back out to the road and take the stairs across from the well.
- Go up the stairs and follow the path until it is blocked. Turn left.
- Go forward to the stones.
- Go to the first stone and turn left. Look closely.
- Use the paper on the stone.
- Use the crayon on the paper. Take the paper.
- Do this for all four stones. The paper is on the top bar now.
- Go forward past the tent to the stone circle.
- **Save your game here.** You are about to make offerings to the stones. If you make a mistake, you will have to go back and get a new offering. It is advisable to save your game after each offering so that you don't have to start over.



- The first stone on the left is Fish. The second eggcup in your inventory.
- Turn right and go to the next stone and turn left. It is Oil. Oil is the first eggcup on the top inventory bar.





- Turn right. The third stone is Plant. Choose the sixth eggcup in inventory.
- Go right again and look at the fourth stone. Whiskey is the offering here and it is the fourth eggcup.
- Go right and look left at the fifth stone. The Blessed Water should be used at this stone. Select the third eggcup.
- Turn right, then left to see the sixth stone. You will need fruit Juice for this stone. It is the seventh eggcup.
- Turn right, then left for the last stone. Salt is required for the offering. It is the only remaining eggcup.



- Exit the stone ring and answer the phone.
- Go back to the tent area and pick up the third piece of the seal.
- ***Do not use the pieces of the seal at the dig site yet. The game will end before you are done.***
- Go forward twice and turn right.
- Follow the path and go down the stairs to the altar stone.
- The altar stone is on your left. Go forward to the end by the stone pillar. Turn left to get behind the altar stone.
- Look closely at the altar stone and place the three pieces of the seal in the depression in the stone.
- Back away and turn left.
- Look closely at the hole in the top of the stone. Put the headlight lens in the hole.
- Turn right and go to the other stone pillar. Place your hand in the handprint.
- Take the restored seal and go back to the stone circle.
- Go around to the back of the mound and see a dig site.
- Look closely and use your trowel.
- Turn right and click on the table. Look closely at the center. Place the restored seal in the center.

**Developer:** Shadow Tor Studios  
**Publisher:** Got Game Entertainment  
**Platform:** PC  
**Genre:** Adventure  
**Release Date:** 2006

**Minimum System Requirements:**  
Windows® 98/SE  
Pentium® III 450 MHz or better processor  
128MB RAM (256 MB recommended)  
SVGA Graphics card or better with 32-bit color  
DirectX 9 Compatible sound card





## Nancy Drew: Message in a Haunted Mansion - Walkthrough

Written by Southern Belle

There are a few things you should be aware of before you play. The magnifying glass will turn red around the edges when you can interact with an item. An arrow will appear at the right or left of the screen to turn in that direction. A “U turn” arrow will be at the bottom of the screen to back away from a close up or turn around. At a certain point you will need to rotate puzzle pieces. Use the right mouse button. You may use the telephone to call people, but, with the exception of one case, you don’t have to use the phone. The alarm clock can be set to change the time of day. You can tell what time it is by clicking on the pocket watch in the lower left corner. As you move around and open items, such as luggage, cabinets, wardrobes, etc., you must close them before you can back away.

This walkthrough will help you accomplish the game without seeing everything there is to see. Only the actions necessary to get to the end game have been included.

***Do not read further if you don’t want the answers.***

And now, Adventure Lantern and Southern Belle present – “Nancy Drew: Message in a Haunted Mansion”.

- Turn right and look at the tapestry hanging on the left side of the door.
- Click on the tapestry.
- Turn right and look at the luggage.
- Open the luggage using the key in inventory and read the journal. Close the lid on the suitcase.
- Back away from the luggage and turn around until you see the fireplace.
- Look closely at the green dragon on the fireplace.

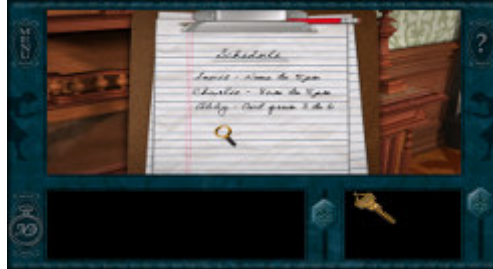


- Click on the plaque attached to the dragon’s base and see the Hanzi symbol for daughters. ***All of these symbols are very important. You will need to know the form of the symbol and what each symbol means toward the end of the game.***
- Step away from the fireplace, turn around and exit your room.
- Go straight to the intersecting hall and go left.
- Click on the door on the left and talk to Abby. Exhaust all conversation.





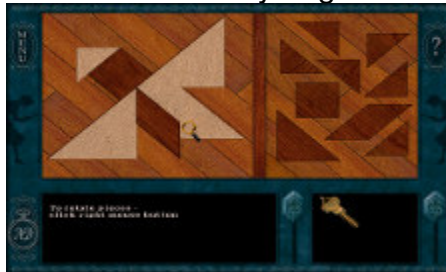
- Step away from Abby's door. Go to the end of the hall and turn right.
- Go all the way down the stairs.
- Turn right and enter the double doors to the dining room.
- Talk with Rose.
- Turn around and look at the buffet cabinet behind you.



- Look closely at the work schedule on the buffet.
- Put the work schedule down.
- Look in the drawer on the right. Click on the white paper on the right. Get the Hanzi symbol for fire.



- Turn back around and click on the floor under the white cabinet behind Rose. Continue to click until you get a close up of the puzzle.



- Match the grain in the wood closely. Rotate the pieces by right clicking. A piece will highlight just before you place it. You will hear - "I did it." - when the puzzle is complete.
- Step away from the puzzle and talk with Rose.
- Turn around and exit the dining room.
- Go toward the door with the stained glass, but do not enter.
- Click on the door to the right of the one with the stained glass.
- Go downstairs and talk with Charlie until he says he has work to do.
- Go back upstairs and enter the door with the stained glass window.
- Move forward and turn left.







- Look at the painting supplies under the scaffolding. Move the paint tray by the door and pick up the scraper.
- Step back from the painting supplies and turn around.
- Enter the parlor door to the left of the clock.
- Turn around and look at the cabinet in the corner.
- Open the door and find a fire extinguisher. Close the door on the cabinet and step away from it.
- Turn right and look at the lamp on the table by the sofa.
- Look in the box on the chair in front of the fireplace.
- Step away from the box and turn around.
- Go to the writing desk in the corner.
- Click on the desk and then on the little drawer on the lower left. Read the letters.
- Exit the parlor and turn left.
- Take the staircase on the right to the top landing.
- Turn right, then left and go back to your room.
- Look at your journal in the top suitcase.
- Turn around and click on your alarm clock. Set the time to noon or any other time when Louis is at work. Press alarm, using the up and down arrows, set it to 12:00 p.m., press set.
- Go back downstairs to the parlor.
- Enter the parlor and turn right.
- Enter the study's double doors.
- Turn left and talk with Louis.
- When the conversation is over, turn around and look at the book on top of the boxes to the left of the globe.
- Turn right and look at the Mah Jong set. Look closely at the bottom right and see the Hanzi symbol for four.



- Turn around.
- Look at the bookcase to the left of the desk.
- Click on the books when the magnifying glass turns red.
- Click on the right end of the books.
- Take the tile behind the books.
- Exit the study.





- Exit the parlor.
- Go upstairs to Abby's room.
- Enjoy the séance.
- After the séance, go back downstairs to the cellar.
- Move toward the fireplace.
- Look at the table in the right corner.
- Look at the base of the table.
- Find a projector, tape cassette and smoke machine. Take the tape cassette.
- Back away from the table and turn left.
- Look at the cash register.
- Click on the 10 to open the drawer. Take the key.
- Back away from the cash register and turn right.
- Look at the toolbox on the table. Take the screwdriver.
- Move away from the toolbox, turn around and move forward once.
- Turn left and around to look at the piano bench.
- Open the piano bench and find the sheet music for "Swanee River". Note the Hanzi symbol for River.



- Back away from the piano bench turn around and go back upstairs to your room.
- Set the alarm clock for 6:00 a.m.
- Go to the foot of the bed and open the bed post finial with the paint scraper.
- Exit your room.
- Go down the hall and turn right.
- Go straight to the ladder.
- Climb the ladder.
- Use the paint scraper to remove the eight damaged tiles in the ceiling.
- Use the key from the cellar cash register to open the hidden trap door.
- Enter the attic.
- Turn right and open the writing desk with the red top. Use the key you found in the bedpost.
- Look at the sheet music for "The Bandit's Treasure". Notice the highlighted notes on the top staff.

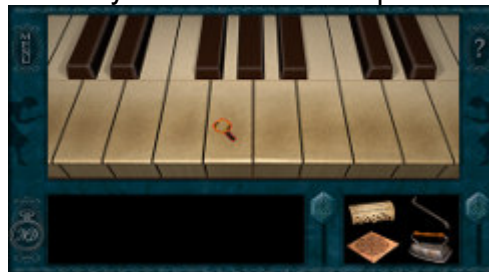




- Look at the bottom of the sheet music.
- Click on the very faint words you can see.
- Click on the pigeonhole in the upper left corner. Find the Hanzi symbol for beginning.



- Back away from the desk and look to the right.
- Look at the toolbox and take the crowbar.
- Look right again.
- Open the box by the doll's head and take the old fashioned iron.
- Look to the right and take the ceramic tile from the barrel with the bottles on it.
- Move away from the barrel and turn right.
- Look at the trap door in the floor.
- Pull on the rope.
- Use the crowbar to lift the trap door.
- Exit the attic and go downstairs to the cellar.
- Click on the piano.
- Click on the keyboard until you have a close up of the keys.



- If you read music, the notes are BEGAG.
- If you do not read music, number the keys from left to right, 1 – 8. Press 6, 2, 4, 5, 4.
- After the doors open, take the paper lying on the bottom of the compartment.
- Exit the cellar.
- Go back to the attic.





- Open the desk and use the paper from the piano on the lyrics from “The Bandit’s Treasure”.



- The letters showing through the holes are – Find Diego on stairs.
- Exit the attic and go left to the staircase.
- Stop on the landing and look at the banister.
- Turn the spindles to spell the word DIEGO. Once you have Diego, the spindles will begin to turn and show you three more words: Coins, False and Floor.
- Take the Hanzi symbol.
- Read the letter. This is a clue for a later puzzle.
- Back away from the banister.
- Go to the dining room and talk with Rose until all that is left to say is that you can see she is busy.
- Exit the dining room.
- Turn around and click on the dumbwaiter on the left wall.
- Use the iron on the rope.
- Go upstairs using the spiral staircase by the dining room.
- Look at the dumbwaiter on the left wall.
- Take the ceramic tile.
- Look at the broken teacup. See the Hanzi symbol for eye.



- Go back to your room.
- Look at your journal.
- Turn left and click on the door to exit the room.
- Pick up the letter and read it.
- Go downstairs to the parlor and find the box on fire.
- Moving as quickly as you can, turn left and open the cabinet in the corner.
- Take the fire extinguisher.
- Go right and move toward the burning box.
- Use the fire extinguisher in inventory on the fire. If you don’t complete this in time, click on Second Chance in the Menu.







- When the fire is out, you will talk with Rose.
- After you talk with Rose, go back to the parlor and look in the burned box.
- Exit the parlor and go back to your room.
- Check your journal.
- Set the alarm for 10:00 a.m.
- Leave your room and go to the study.
- Click on the fireplace to get a close up of the empty tile spaces.
- Place the tiles in inventory in the empty spaces.
- Click on the left andiron.
- Enter the secret passage.
- Go forward.
- Click on the plaque on the bottom of the picture of the girl. See the Hanzi symbol for child.



- Back away from the picture.
- Look up and right at the lantern. Take it.
- Look up the wall to the right of the lantern and see a loose brick.
- Click on the brick and then click on the sliding panel.
- Look through the eyeholes. Close the panel and the brick then back away.
- Use the handle on the right to exit the secret room and then go back to your room.
- Set the alarm for 7:00 p.m.
- Exit your room and go to the cellar.
- Click on the fireplace to get a close up of the grate.
- Use the crowbar on the grate.
- Enter the secret passage and use the lantern to light your way.
- Avoid the hole by staying left.
- Click on the box.
- Move forward.
- Read the postcard.
- Take the diskette.
- Look at the take out food box and see the Hanzi symbol for king.





- Exit the cellar up the stairs on the left.
- Go back to your room and set the alarm for 3:00 p.m. or any other time when Abby is out of the house.
- Exit your room and go to Abby's room.
- Turn around and see a black box with flowers on the lid under the stereo unit.
- Open the box and take the spider.
- Turn back around and click on the wardrobe until you have a close up of the lock.
- Use the spider to open the wardrobe.
- Look down at the cassette play back machine.
- Insert the cassette and press play.
- Take the cassette and back away from the wardrobe.
- Turn around and look at Abby's desk.
- Click on the drawer to open it.
- Take the Moon incense and see the Hanzi symbol for moon.



- Back away from the desk and turn left.
- Look at the blue book on the shelf under the picture of Abby and a friend.
- Back away, turn around and put the spider back in the black box.
- Leave Abby's room and go back to the study.
- If the phone rings in the parlor, answer it.
- Enter the study and turn left.
- Click on the laptop on the desk.
- Click on Maze Game. Use the arrow keys on your keyboard to move around in the maze until you find a blue pool on the floor. Step in the pool and get access to Louis's security codes. The code for the briefcase is 4653-4868. If you look in the filing cabinet, click on the filing cabinet at the top left to exit. The same is true for the key and the disk.
- Back away from the laptop and put the blue disk in inventory in the slot on the lower right.
- Type in Louis and press enter on your keyboard.





- Type in Antiques and press enter on your keyboard.
- Click on the blue disk on the laptop screen and look through Charlie's outline.
- Move away from the laptop and look at the book about chess, then go to the briefcase.
- Click on the left lock and enter 4653.
- Click on the right lock and enter 4868.
- Pick up the book and read about Gum Bo Fu.
- Read the letter on the left.
- Read the magazine with the flowers on it on the right.
- Look at Louis's business card.
- Exit the study and go in the parlor.
- Use the telephone to call Emily. It works just the way a push button phone works. Talk with Emily until the only thing left to say is that you should be going.
- Go upstairs to your room and set the alarm so that Charlie and Louis are at work. Noon will do it.
- Exit your room and go to the cellar and talk with Charlie.
- Go up to the study and talk with Louis.
- Ask Louis about Gum Bo Fu, but tell him you read it in a magazine, not in a book.
- Exit the study and go to the dining room. Talk with Rose.
- Go upstairs to your room and read the letter from Emily that is on the chair by your luggage. See the Hanzhi symbol for gold. It is the first symbol on the left.



- Turn around and look on the right side of the bed. Click on the lower wall for a close up. Press the tiles in the following order – Rat, Ox, Tiger, Rabbit, Dragon, Snake, Horse, Goat, Monkey, Rooster, Dog and Boar.





- Enter the combination to the safe in the following order – Child, Beginning, Daughters, Four, Eye, Fire, Moon, King, River and Gold. Click on the arrow to “set” a symbol. Click on the center to reset. Click on right or left to get a circle arrow to move the dial.



- Once the safe is open, place the gold Hanzi symbol in your inventory on the pyramid box.
- Change all the moons to suns by flipping them. Junior Detectives press all four corners and then the center. Senior Detectives move like a knight in a chess game. Press, in order, squares number 2, 8, 15 and 9.
- Solve the slider puzzle. It is a picture of a Phoenix.
- Back away from the safe and set the alarm to 4:00 p.m.
- Go downstairs. Put the red gem in the eye of the Phoenix finial on the banister that is nearest the door to the parlor.
- Look closely at the Phoenix in the floor.
- Use the crow bar to pry up the floorboards.
- **Immediately** after the cut scene is over, run up the stairs on your right and across the landing. Go down and click on the cleat holding the rope. Click three times and drop the chandelier on Louis.

**Congratulations!**

<p><b>Developer:</b> Her Interactive  <b>Publisher:</b> Her Interactive  <b>Platform:</b> PC  <b>Genre:</b> Adventure  <b>Release Date:</b> 2000</p>	<p><b>Minimum System Requirements:</b>  Windows® 95/98/ME/XP  166 MHz Pentium® Processor  16 MB RAM  8X CD-ROM Drive  150 MB Hard Disk Space  16-bit Color DirectX compatible video card</p>
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## A Final Note...

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If The Simpson's can have Halloween specials, why not Adventure Lantern? Well, we couldn't think of a good reason, not that we tried really hard, so we went off and prepared the first special Halloween edition of our magazine.

We hope you enjoyed the collection of articles on new and old games we were able to put together this month. While Donna gave us her impressions on the newest Broken Sword installment, Gnome brought us the scoop on the first episode of Sam and Max Season 1. While Erdalion took a look at Dave Gilbert's The Shivah, Thaumaturge provided his impressions on the first episode of The Exchange Student. Over on the Uncharted Waters section of our magazine, we had a chance to look at Juniper Games' Mr. Smoozles Goes Nutso.

Of course, we couldn't have had a Halloween themed issue if we only covered newer releases. So, going back to our archives, we explored a number of horror themed adventure games including Necronomicon and Shivers, completing our tour with a look at several survival horror games including Silent Hill 3, Eternal Darkness, and Resident Evil.

The selection of walkthroughs included in this issue was not arbitrary either. While Southern Belle provided a detailed walkthrough for the newest Nancy Drew game, Tim joined us from his Independent Gaming blog to provide a walkthrough of Sam and Max: Season 1 – Culture Shock. The archived walkthroughs of Nancy Drew: Message in a Haunted Mansion and Barrow Hill were intended for players who may need a little help with a couple of games suitable for the season.

As we prepare future issues of Adventure Lantern, we will continue to provide you themed issues every few months with the goal of delivering four throughout the year. We are hoping that the themed editions will provide a nice occasional break from our regular issues. While we will always do our best to cover the newest adventure game releases, having a theme for the retro reviews and walkthroughs will hopefully give our issues a distinct flavor and provide you an interesting read.

In case you are wondering, the clipart featured on the corners of the pages is from [www.hersheys.com](http://www.hersheys.com).

Until next month...

-Ugur Sener

